

# Evaluating your strategy: Is it ambitious enough?

*7 questions you need to ask  
about your strategy today*

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**Setting and executing on a clear strategy that drives transformation is crucial in today's business environment.** At Karrikins Group we spend a lot of time with executives who are working out what they need to do next in their companies to transform their businesses and maintain an edge over the competition while staying a step ahead of what the market wants.

Setting an ambitious strategy is hard work, and companies invest a lot of time and energy into it. Unfortunately, the results can be lackluster, often because of the combination of unaligned execution and a strategy that lacks ambition.

**When you are setting business strategy, there are seven key questions you should ask to understand if it is ambitious enough to drive transformation.** These are based on the reality that if nothing changes, nothing changes. Your strategy must be bold enough to shake apart deeply held beliefs, relationships, and organizational habits, otherwise it will fail to transform your company.

You can also use these questions to look back and evaluate how well your strategy delivered. We have seen plenty of companies pat themselves on the back because they met the revenue targets in their strategy, but they did it through draconian cost reductions and goosing the existing revenue streams. These tactics only work for so long before causing internal burnout and market exhaustion. You can't just measure based on bottom line results. You must look at how those results were achieved to know if you were ambitious enough.

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Use these questions to challenge yourself and your team. Are you being ambitious enough? Are you really succeeding at transformative growth? Some of them might make you uncomfortable, but it is only through discomfort that ambitions are achieved.

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## 1 What are the new / different sources of revenue?

More than just financial targets, which can be manipulated in the short term to look good, an ambitious strategy should alter what sources of revenue look like for a company. If you just intend to wring more out of the same markets, customers, products, or brands, you won't go far enough.

## 2 What are the new / different cost drivers?

If the main cost drivers for the business haven't been reshaped in some way, the strategy might fall short. Remember, though, that cutting cost shouldn't be the ultimate goal. Spending in the right places at the right levels should be. Costs may go up in the near term to achieve an ambitious strategy.

## 3 What changes are required in your supply and distribution models?

Supply and distribution chains should change dramatically in an ambitious strategy. New relationships, partner models, and value creation should be explored – you may even need to prod your existing partners to be equally ambitious, and to work on new shared value models that force them to change.

## 4 What are the new capabilities your workforce will need?

Balancing the need for legacy skills with the skills of the future is one of the biggest challenges of any strategic transformation. Colleagues may be unsettled or even angry at the prospect of changing, but if they aren't changing as a result of your strategy, you will not transform your business.

## 5 What leadership habits and behaviors need to change?

Decision making, leader behaviors, and group dynamics are deeply embedded impediments to ambitious strategies. Does your strategy force the need to be specific about what needs to change? If the answer is 'nothing', you might not be pushing far enough, or your leaders are in the way of the ambition.

## 6 What are the process outcomes that need to change?

Too often, processes are changed as new platforms or technologies are introduced, but they create the same outcomes, which isn't much progress. An ambitious strategy needs to go beyond re-platforming and push into fundamentally changing the outcomes processes produce – doing the same steps in a new technology won't accelerate your growth.

## 7 Who might leave the organization?

This might seem counterintuitive, but if no one feels compelled to leave because of the strategy, it may not be very ambitious. Senior leaders, experts, and tenured people should be expected to feel uncomfortable, and some of them may leave. That is not a bad thing, and when it happens it is important to remember the modern version of an old saying – 'graveyards are full of indispensable people.'



**Perhaps the best way to know that a strategy is ambitious enough is that it seems like it will be hard to accomplish.**

If it seems easy, you may not have tackled a big enough ambition. There are certainly years when a steady strategy is appropriate, but for the times when you want to unleash ambition, it should feel a little daunting as you lay it out.

We know delivering on strategy is both hard and worthy work. We have seen first-hand the positive impact of the **KARRIKINS Diamond Triangle** to help you succeed with your most ambitious strategies through the power of aligned leadership.

**Let's chat about how you can leverage it to build and deliver on accelerated growth and impact.**

**Say [hello@karrikinsgroup.com](mailto:hello@karrikinsgroup.com)**

# About the author

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**KARRIKINS**  
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Julie is a growth-minded leader who believes executives set the standard for others through the example they provide. She is a strategist, technologist, and a social scientist who puts her energy toward working with leaders around the world as they tackle some of the biggest challenges in their industries and organizations.

In today's increasingly complex and interconnected world, Julie knows the power of aligned leaders to deliver on strategy and create value. That's why she focuses her time and energy on helping senior leaders come together to deliver the work that matters most.



## KARRIKINS GROUP

## We are **Karrikins**.

We're world-class facilitators, cultural changemakers, behavioral scientists, and experience creators, but above all, we're people looking to make a lasting and positive impact. With decades of diverse experience in helping companies set ambitious strategies and act on them, our leaders guide our collective impact and enable transformative growth for leaders and teams.

Visit us at [karrikinsgroup.com](https://karrikinsgroup.com) to learn more about our game changing alignment solutions for executive teams, delivery teams, and individuals who are ready to lean into the power of alignment to deliver on their most ambitious goals. Through our Alignment Institute we offer catalytic workshops, individual programs, and smaller group experiences.

**KG** **Dynamic Strategy**

**KG** **Alignment Journey**

**KG** **Alignment Institute**



**KARRIKIN (n):** *a group of compounds found in the smoke of burning plants that stimulates seed germination and catalyzes growth.*