



## Roadmap Building Business Rigor™ Series of Offerings

Business Rigor™ Roadmap Building helps your team quickly build a 36-month strategic growth roadmap, including major milestones, financials and metrics. Roadmap Building, designed to last less than 100 days, provides your management team with the methodology, tools and the coaching needed to create your company's future growth. Your roadmap will ultimately identify growth strategies for sales channels, product offerings, promotion, partnerships and resources.

Roadmap Building uses a pragmatic approach that empowers your team with ownership of the business planning process. This phase translates textbook concepts into practical, bite-sized tasks that help sales-centric organizations plan for future business growth.

Roadmap Building includes five phases:

- Building the Baseline
- Assessing the Market
- Bridging the Gap
- Defining the Roadmap
- Management Reviews

### **Building the Baseline**

Building the Baseline lays the foundation for Roadmap Building. To initiate the process, the GAJ Services coach and your internal project leader will be introduced to each other. Together, they will customize the best-suited work plan for your organization, which will outline major milestones in the Business Rigor process, deliverables and management reviews.

Roadmap Building combines our proven market assessment and business planning methodology with the tools to accelerate the process and the coaching to keep the process on track. At the beginning of the process, the project leader will be responsible for obtaining analysis inputs, such as customer data, product information and financial data, and any resources required for the Roadmap Building offering.

One of the first tools we use is the rights-of-passage exercise. It will help your management team maximize limited company resources by identifying the tough decisions surrounding its investment evaluation criteria. This is an essential Business Rigor exercise because it will give your organization an objective way to evaluate the opportunities that emerge during the planning process.

The second exercise is a baseline assessment that will help your organization evaluate its current offerings and activities. This will lay the foundation for market assessment and customer interviews. During the baseline assessment exercise, your organization will examine its current cost model and begin to clearly determine what it offers clients and how it makes money.

As Building the Baseline comes to an end, the project leader will develop a list of potential interviewees for Market Assessment. The GAJ Services coach and project leader will also review the strategic plan guidelines and customize the final deliverables outline for your organization.

## **Assessing the Market**

Assessing the Market will transform traditional market research concepts into a practical format for your organization to implement. During this phase, your organization will start a secondary research process to understand if experts have sized, defined or characterized your market and/or your competition. If experts have not sized the market, the Business Rigor process will help your organization build a credible model. This process is designed to help your management team crystallize around market challenges.

GAJ Services believes there is no substitute for speaking directly with your customers and partners. That is why primary research is such a significant part of Roadmap Building. Moving forward, the project leader will facilitate one-on-one conversations with significant decision makers in your target market. These conversations are designed to help you understand unmet market needs, your customers' business challenges and the competitive landscape. The data uncovered during Assessing the Market will become the foundation of your strategic growth plan. It will also help your organization make fact-based decisions.

Engaging customers and partners in a focused dialog is not a one-time event and should become a regular part of your company culture. As a matter of fact, before Business Rigor ends, we will go back to the market to validate our models, assumptions and the final strategic roadmap.

## **Bridging the Gap**

After market data is collected, the Bridging the Gap phase will prepare you to make end strategy decisions. This phase will begin with proprietary Business Rigor bridging exercises that help you weed through the data collected during the Assessing the Market phase. This will help your management team understand current realities and paint growth potential pictures. It will also enable your management team to reach logical conclusions about the appropriate growth strategy.

One bridging exercise is market positioning. Positioning is defined as “the pathway into a customer's mind.” Establishing a clear and unique market position is the foundation for accelerated company growth activities. During Bridging the Gap, you will learn what customers think when they hear your company's name, what they should think when they hear your name and how your company can most effectively transition to where it needs to be.

You will also begin building business growth strategies for channels, offerings, promotion, partnerships and resources. These strategies include initial financials and metrics for tracking progress. Bridging exercise form an initial draft of the strategic roadmap and give the management team a preview of the final plan.

## **Defining the Roadmap**

The Defining the Roadmap phase focuses on finalizing the strategic business plan. This will include finalizing execution metrics for roadmap implementation and defining how your organization will measure the success of its adopted strategies. Financials and major milestones will also be approved during this phase.

During Defining the Roadmap, the rights-of-passage exercise will be applied to any investment your team is considering. This will validate the rights-of-passage criteria and the Business Rigor recommendations. You will also develop an internal communications plan that outlines the next steps for your organization.

At the end of this phase, your management team will sign-off on the strategic 36-month roadmap. Your organization will then be ready to quickly move into our next offering – Business Rigor Operations Planning. During Operations Planning, Functional Owners will each develop a 12-month operating plan, which defines the "blocking and tackling" needed to meet the revenue goals. These plans will detail specific tasks, budgets, major milestones and metrics.

## **Management Reviews**

As with all GAJ Services' offerings, management buy-in is essential for success. During Business Rigor Roadmap Building, GAJ Services encourages three progress review sessions and a final management review.

The first management review session will be a rights-of-passage exercise review. During this session, management will reach an agreement on how to evaluate investments.

The second management review session will be an initial market research review. During this session, your management team will gain a clear understanding of market findings and will be given an opportunity to direct subsequent research.

The third management review session will give your team an outline of the strategic roadmap. During this session, some initial findings and recommendations will be presented. The team will be encouraged to question the material and to provide input. This session is designed to facilitate discussion and debate among the team prior to the final review.

Roadmap Building concludes with a final management team review. During this session, the final strategic roadmap will be presented. The management team will also receive an overview of the next steps that need to take place during Business Rigor Operations Planning.

Even though there are only four official management reviews during the Roadmap Building program, the project leader and Business Rigor coach should provide regular updates, via meetings or conference calls, to the CEO and/or Business Rigor champion. The Business Rigor champion must clearly understand the Business Rigor process, where it is going and what findings are surfacing. The project leader will also be responsible for communicating with Functional Owners regarding progress and deliverables.

The goal of Business Rigor is for your entire organization to own the process. This involves enabling your executive team to understand the tough decisions that need to be made to accelerate business growth.