



SETTING EFFECTIVE MILESTONES FOR FLEET MANAGERS

MAPPING OUT A SUCCESSFUL STRATEGY FOR 2019



INTRODUCTION

When you're about to set off on a long journey, it's not enough to know only your destination. You also need to have a clear route in mind for getting there. Making a plan for your business is no different. Whether you are strategizing for the whole year ahead or just a single project, if you haven't realistically clarified the steps you'll be taking to achieve your goal, success is unlikely.

This is why setting and monitoring effective company milestones is so vital. These are the signposts that you should expect to pass as you close in on your destination, each one representing crucial forward momentum.

As well as illustrating what is expected before beginning a project and helping to track your progress as you work, milestones also help you to

precisely identify areas of your business that may be underperforming, aspects of your business plan that might be unrealistic and expectations for employee performance that may either be too high or too low.

In short, they are a key aspect of any long-term vision you might have for your company.

But how do you make sure you're getting everything you can from the milestones you set?

This quick guide can help with that. Breaking down the main characteristics of effective milestones, it gives you the tools you need to develop them successfully and monitor and measure them once your plan is in motion.



DEVELOPING MILESTONES

So, what does a good milestone look like? While, obviously, the specific characteristics will vary from strategy to strategy, there are some elements that should always be present if they are to help you get where you need to go.

GOAL-SPECIFIC

Each milestone you set needs to be directly linked to a specific goal. It's not enough for it to be generally beneficial. It must represent a clear step towards a larger objective.

QUANTIFIABLE AND TIME DEPENDENT

A milestone requires an agreed upon metric for judging success and an agreed upon deadline. While the metric establishes whether or not the milestone has been reached, the deadline is equally important. Again, think of a long journey. If you've reached an expected signpost but done so several weeks after you expected to reach it, then you will need to re-assess when you expect to reach your destination and possibly re-think your route.

RELATED

Your milestones cannot be a random string of valuable tasks. Rather they will connect with one another, in a sequential fashion, each milestone building upon the previous one and supporting the next, all the time propelling you towards the core goal.

ASK THE QUESTION

What key goal are we looking to eventually achieve and how does this step take us closer to it?

How do we know when this milestone has been reached and when do we expect that to happen?

Does one milestone naturally put us on the path to achieving the next?





ASSIGNED

While your milestones might require the work of many to be reached, it is crucial that key responsibility for making each specific step is assigned to either one individual or one small team. As well as avoiding operational chaos, at the review stage this offers you valuable information on how different areas of your business are performing. Are certain teams being overloaded with work? Will some need more flexible deadlines in future? Is one team member being given too much responsibility? By clearly assigning each milestone you can answer these questions and improve your planning processes going forward.

BUDGETED

It is likely that you will need to spend some money to get where you want to go. Breaking it down, step-by-step, helps to clarify how valuable each of these milestones is and, when reviewing the process, helps you identify areas where you may have overspent or underspent on certain activities.

AGREED UPON

If people are expected to do things that they do not fully understand or do not think are possible, this journey will start on a very rocky path.

ASK THE QUESTION

Who is the right person to oversee this step of the process?



How much is this milestone worth?

Is everybody involved aware of what is expected and do they understand the logic behind the plan?



Here's a simple example of what a set of milestones might look like from the world of fleet management.

GOAL: IMPROVE ANNUAL PROFIT FROM DELIVERIES BY 5%

Milestone one *Increase number of drivers by 2% by end of Q1*

Milestone two *Reduce driving events and instances of speeding by 10% by April*

Milestone three *Reduce fuel costs by 2% by May*

Milestone four *Increase average ETA accuracy by 3% by June*

Milestone five *Increase jobs completed by 3% by end of Q3*

Keep in mind the sequence. Increasing the number of drivers comes before improving driver behaviour across the entire fleet, which in turns leads to increasing the number of jobs completed. In other words, as increasing the size of the workforce is essential to increasing productivity, the first milestone should be reached before you expect to reach the second. This is a journey - not a collection of separate goals you're chasing all at one time.

TACKLING AND TRACKING YOUR MILESTONES

Once the plan is in action, it's vital that the person or team responsible for reaching each milestone is carefully monitoring progress at all times.

One of the best ways for the whole team to keep track of the entire project is to use a Gantt Chart - a tried and tested spreadsheet tool that makes it clear what milestones need to be reached, when they should be reached and whether or not they have yet been reached.

Want a ready-to-use Gantt Chart? **[Download our template here.](#)**

HOW CAN WEBFLEET HELP?

WEBFLEET is TomTom Telematics' award winning fleet management solution that provides real-time information about the location of your vehicles, lets you communicate directly with your drivers and helps to improve driving behavior and lower fuel costs.

WEBFLEET allows you to create customizable reports on individual KPIs. So, on a bi-weekly, monthly or quarterly basis, you'll receive the most up-to-date statistics needed on the key metrics you are using to meet your milestones. No need to go digging around in the system - it's all there in clear, simple stats, graphs and charts.

Find out more about WEBFLEET here.

