

Strategy models and frameworks

The Strategy Lifecycle Model



The **Strategy Lifecycle Model** shows the strategy lifecycle divided into three sequential stages (produce, adopt and adapt), and the activities and outputs that occur at each stage.

The Strategy Lifecycle Model features in Goal Atlas Director, Mike Baxter's book '[The Strategy Manual: A step-by-step guide to the transformational change of anything](#)' and is also covered in our [Strategy Workshops](#).

The Strategy Lifecycle Model

How to use it:

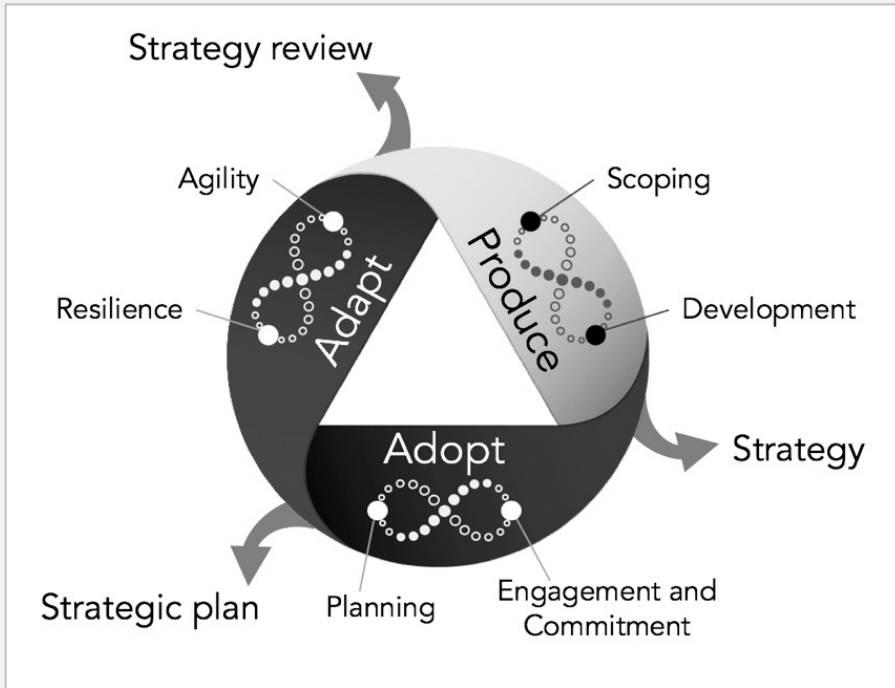
The strategy lifecycle model can be used to prompt deeper conversation on an organisation's strategy, the stages involved and the activities that need to be pursued in order to achieve strategic success. (See also the [Separation Model of Strategy](#))

Explanation:

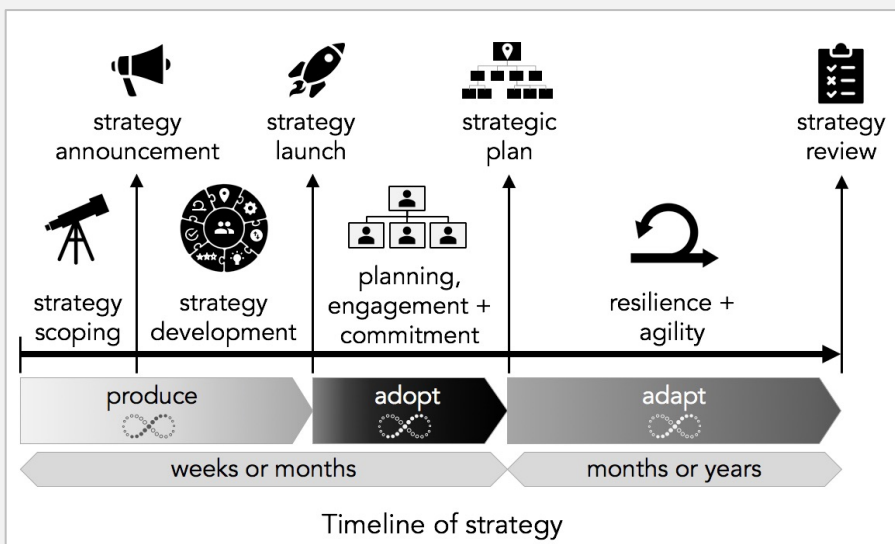
The strategy lifecycle model shows that strategy progresses through discrete, sequential stages across its lifecycle (produce, adopt and adapt). Each stage marks its completion with a specific output (strategy, strategic plan, strategy review). The activities that happen within each stage are functionally different and don't necessarily occur in any fixed sequence. The three stages of the strategy lifecycle are defined as follows:

- 1. Produce:** This is where the strategy is invented, designed, crafted and brought to life. The strategy production stage is complete when the **strategy** is produced and launched. Strategy production has two core activities:
 - i. Scoping** - Strategy scoping produces the 'brief' for strategy development. It summarises the main strategic opportunities and challenges and identifies the main drivers and aspirations for the new strategy. It also serves as a vital communication role across the organisation, by explaining simply and clearly what is going to be done in order to produce this strategy. Strategy scoping defines:
 - a. What strategic change is sought - what is included in the strategy, and what is not;
 - b. How the strategy will be developed - who will do what by when, what evidence needs to be gathered and what decisions need to be made;
 - c. The acceptance criteria by which the new strategy, once written, will be judged good enough for launch.
 - ii. Development** - Strategy development is how you analyse, synthesise, imagine and commit to a new strategy, and how you write it and prepare it for dissemination throughout the organisation. Development involves the creative imagination of strategic ideas, informed by research and analysis, and validation of those ideas to ensure that the strategy you develop makes sense, has internal consistency and is conducive to adoption and adaptation.
- 2. Adopt:** The strategy adoption stage of the strategy lifecycle takes a completed written strategy and creates a delegated, scheduled, prioritised, measured and resourced plan necessary for its strategic success. It is where high-level, organisation-wide strategic goals are translated into actionable goals, applied to local circumstances, that front-line individuals and teams can achieve. Strategy moves from being owned by those who produced it, e.g. senior leadership, to being adopted by those who need to align behind it, e.g. most people in the organisation. It involves not just **planning** but **engagement and commitment**, i.e. securing active interest and a willingness to get involved. This is brought about by high levels of consultation, and by influence and autonomy being afforded to individuals and teams. The strategy adoption stage results in a **strategic plan**.
- 3. Adapt:** Strategy adaptation is the cycle of sense-making, decision-making and change-making that keeps the organisation responsive to significant change. It involves both strategic **resilience** and **agility**. The strategic plan you have at the end of strategy adoption, sadly, won't last long in its original form. The world will move on. Circumstances will change. And the plan will need to be adapted. If the plan changes so much it can no longer meaningfully derive from the strategy, it is time for a new strategy – strategic plans change but strategy doesn't. And if you are going to produce a new strategy, what better place to start than with a review of the current strategy? Strategy adaptation, therefore, ends with a **strategy review**.

Strategy Lifecycle Model: Downloadable Image Assets



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