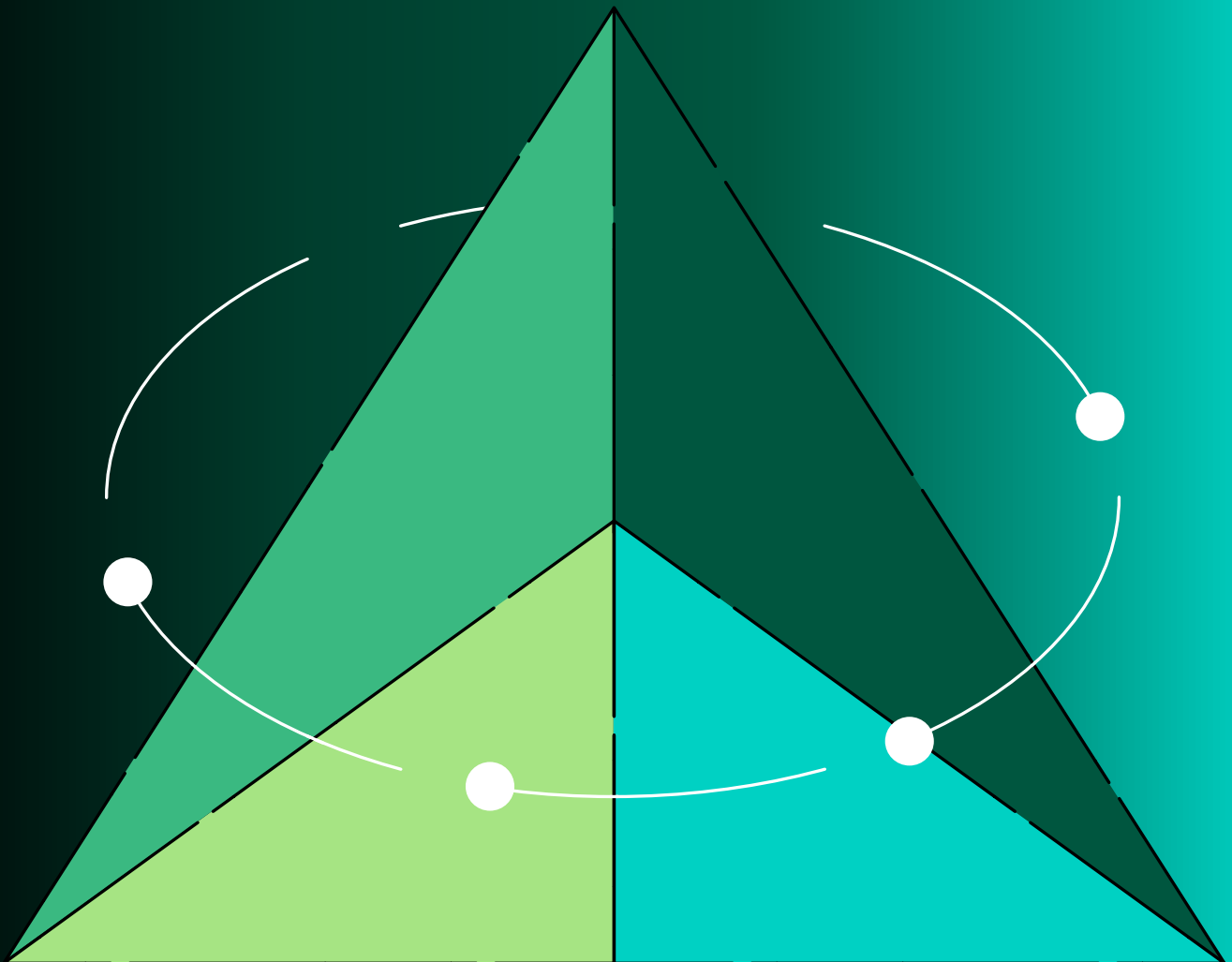


Build Buy-In For Your Technology Strategy

A Four-Step Framework To Build Consensus And Drive Strategic Technology Outcomes



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One of the biggest pain points for technology executives developing a technology strategy for the future is gaining alignment and buy-in. As technology becomes a bigger differentiator for businesses, every business unit, function, and region across the enterprise has its own technology use cases, goals, and objectives. Today, many business leaders use the plan-on-a-page approach to build a strategy that meets the goals of the entire enterprise, an approach Forrester endorses for technology executives.

The first step in developing a successful strategy on a page is strategic stakeholder engagement. For technology leaders, this is about more than just getting everyone on the same page. It means identifying and aligning the most critical leaders whose support will make or break your technology strategy. Based on your business strategy, you can target the identified power brokers with focused conversations that secure their commitment. This selective engagement with key stakeholders is what separates winning technology strategies from boardroom wallpaper.

This guide provides a roadmap for how to do this by identifying four key activities that technology executives can use to gain buy-in from critical stakeholders when developing their technology strategy. Master these steps, and developing a technology strategy that maps to business priorities becomes much more streamlined. This guide also includes a technology strategy-on-a-page template that communicates your strategy more efficiently to other leaders across the business.

What You'll Learn

This guide outlines four activities you can undertake to build stakeholder engagement along your journey to developing a technology strategy.

After reading this guide, you'll be able to:

- Identify and categorize key stakeholders
- Articulate the necessity for a technology strategy
- Develop a 120-day charter for strategy development
- Engage executives through strategic briefings

In addition, you'll have access to a template to get started on your own technology strategy on a page.

Activity One: Identify And Categorize Key Stakeholders

Identifying key stakeholders in the development of a technology strategy is more complicated today than in the past because more business units and teams rely on IT to deliver on their goals. But the ultimate success of your technology strategy depends on pinpointing the right stakeholders who are truly invested in the outcomes to which your strategy aligns. By involving decision-makers with significant influence and vested interests, you can ensure that the strategy reflects diverse insights and priorities, making it more effective.

HOW YOU DO IT: The best method for identifying and assessing the parties who are influenced by or can influence the technology strategy is to develop a stakeholder map. These can vary based on your goals, but in essence, this is a visual representation outlining each stakeholder's sphere of influence, their level of interest in the IT strategy, and the nature of their involvement. Developing this document will expedite buy-in by determining who to approach and what message will resonate. These stakeholders may include internal departments, company executives, employees, customers, suppliers, regulators, and partners.

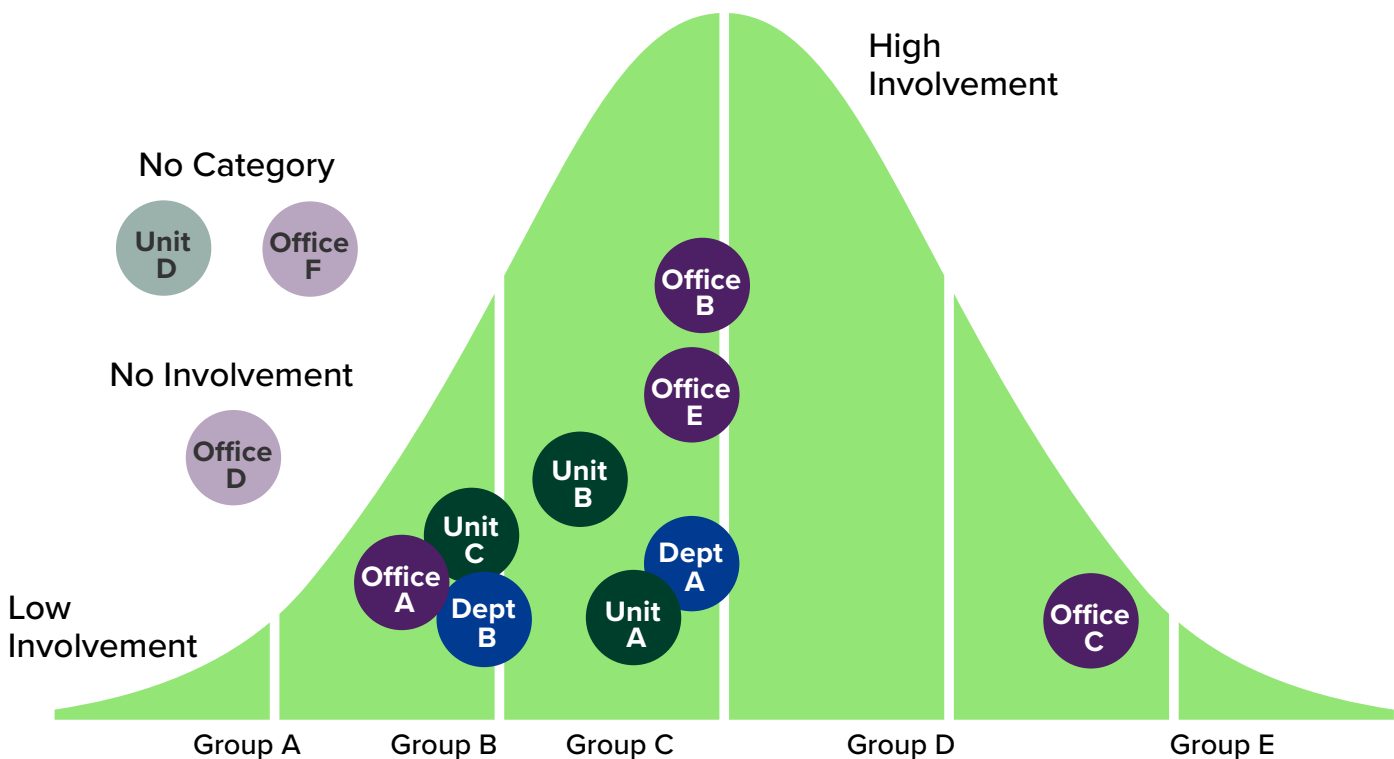


The first step in building a stakeholder map is to group stakeholders by common attributes such as strategic role, interest, influence, and attitude. Then use a two-by-two matrix to assess the level of interest and influence of each stakeholder. By doing this, you'll be able to easily identify, prioritize, and align the most important stakeholders to involve in developing your tech strategy and take the next step to develop engagement strategies. You'll be able to see who your proponents will be and who the challengers may be.

The example stakeholder map below is a version that illustrates how each stakeholder's influence, interest, and involvement level may be displayed. Once finalized, the map can then be used to prioritize communication and tailor your outreach strategy for these stakeholders, which will be covered in the next steps.

Stakeholder Map: Involvement In A Tech Strategy

Use a bell curve to categorize stakeholders by their involvement in a technology strategy



Activity Two: Articulate The Necessity For A Technology Strategy

Once you have the key stakeholders identified and assessed, you need to create a concise, engaging one-pager to communicate the urgency and importance of a technology strategy to them. This document helps you clarify for stakeholders what your technology strategy development process entails, how they will engage with it, and what you expect from everyone involved.

HOW YOU DO IT: Develop a clear narrative document that details how the input from stakeholders will be incorporated into your IT strategy. It should accomplish three things: Clarify the process for developing your IT strategy on a page; engage and invite the stakeholders to action; and establish expectations for stakeholders.

Some of the key components this document should include are:

- An executive summary
- Why this technology strategy is needed
- How the strategy will be developed
- Stakeholder involvement and expectations
- Calls to action/next steps

When done correctly, this document can function as an invitation and a roadmap for stakeholder participation. It clarifies who is involved and what will be expected of them in the development of a technology strategy. For instance, at a healthcare provider, the strategy document can outline how clinicians, administrative staff, and IT teams will collaborate to ensure that the IT strategy meets clinical needs, improves patient outcomes, and adheres to compliance standards.

Activity Three: Develop A 120-Day Charter

If activity one is the “who” and activity two is the “what,” this activity is the “how.” A 120-day technology strategy charter provides a roadmap for building a comprehensive strategy over four months. It outlines the essential actions, key milestones and timelines, and expected deliverables to ensure a successful technology strategy. This charter not only keeps stakeholders aligned, but also sets clear expectations throughout the process.

HOW YOU DO IT: Start with your end goal — a complete and validated technology strategy on a page document — and work backward to define the following:

- Key milestones (such as stakeholder engagement, data analysis, and the formulation of strategic goals)
- Activities that will help you reach these milestones
- Deliverables you must complete within each milestone
- Timelines for each set of activities and deliverables
- Roles and responsibilities for your whole team

With those defined, you can develop the 120-day charter, which can include sections such as a purpose statement, team rosters, a table of stakeholders, engagement plans, a schedule of workshops, KPIs, and other necessary elements. The final charter should be clear, concise, and adaptable, with enough detail to guide daily activities. Treat it as a living guide, updating as new insights shape your direction.

Activity Four: Engage Executives Through Strategic Briefings

With your stakeholders identified and your strategy documented and articulated, it's time to bring it out into the world. In this final step, you engage the key stakeholders identified in the first step with a presentation to effectively communicate the core components of the technology strategy development process. The goal is to have a constructive dialogue that presents the core elements of the proposed technology strategy and development process to the stakeholders and helps them connect the technology strategy to corporate strategy.

HOW YOU DO IT: This interaction should be guided by an executive kickoff deck and serve as an opportunity to gather pertinent feedback and secure executive commitment to the strategy. Success hinges on developing a clear and impactful presentation, tailored for one-on-one or group briefing sessions with the previously identified key stakeholders.

The kickoff deck typically includes:

- **Introduction.** This should include the motivation behind developing a new technology strategy.
- **Objectives.** Clearly define what the strategy aims to achieve and its significance for the business.
- **Development process overview.** Present an overview of the process, including the stages involved from engagement to the formulation of the strategy-on-a-page document.
- **120-day charter.** Lay out the timeline, key milestones, and deliverables that you expect to complete during the collaborative strategy development process.
- **Value proposition.** Articulate the expected benefits of this strategic approach, including potential impact on business performance, competitive advantage, and operational efficiency.
- **Governance and ownership.** Identify the teams and leaders responsible for guiding strategy development.
- **Call to action.** Encapsulate what you expect from executives, specifically in terms of support, resources, or decision-making.

When done right, this deck can be your “elevator pitch” to communicate the strategic journey and 120-day charter to key stakeholders, secure executive buy-in, and maintain support throughout the tech strategy development process. The goal is to maintain transparency and prevent surprises by openly communicating the journey that the organization will undertake to arrive at a well-crafted technology strategy, fostering a shared vision and commitment from the outset.

Key Recommendations For Strategic Briefings

- Keep the deck focused on the strategic process, avoiding specific technology solutions
- Use concise, visually appealing slides to maintain executive attention
- Foster a collaborative environment where executives feel that their input is heard

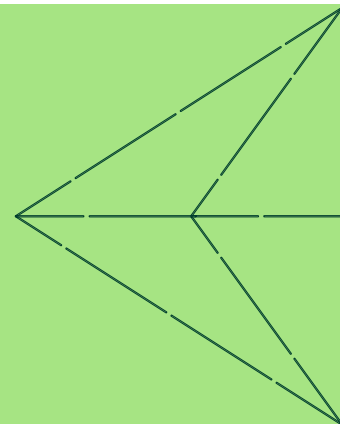
Homework: What To Do Next

Here are five actions to take after reading this guide:

1. Create a stakeholder map to identify the key decision-makers and influencers who will shape the IT strategy.
2. Develop a compelling one-pager that articulates the urgency and significance of a high-performance IT strategy.
3. Establish a 120-day charter to provide a clear roadmap for the strategy development process, including milestones, timelines, and required resources.
4. Engage executives through strategic briefings to secure their commitment and feedback on the proposed IT strategy development plan.
5. Conduct a thorough assessment of the current state of the IT organization to understand its performance, capabilities, and alignment to the overall business strategy.

Only The Beginning

This guide is based on the first step in Forrester's IT Strategy Solution Blueprint, which is available to Forrester clients. The next steps in the blueprint focus on assessing the current state of your IT organization, holding strategy workshops, and finalizing your technology strategy on a page. Each step is supported by Forrester's practical templates and engaging activities. The overall blueprint is a hands-on roadmap designed to bring your vision of a technology strategy to life through a clear plan on a page.



Additional Resources: How Forrester Can Help

Technology & Innovation Summits

Want to get more hands-on with your technology strategy development? Maybe meet with one of our analysts to discuss your strategy one on one? Join us at one of Forrester's Technology & Innovation Summits in North America, EMEA, or APAC.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Forrester Decisions for Technology Executives

Forrester Decisions clients have access to research, frameworks, and guidance to help them build winning business cases for emerging technologies. Here are just some of the resources available.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Guidance Sessions

Forrester clients can schedule 50-minute personalized guidance sessions with a technology analyst to help them contextualize this research, apply the framework and tool to their organization's specific challenges, and review progress toward desired outcomes.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

From the birth of the internet to generative AI, Forrester's been helping technology executives assess and build business cases for emerging technologies for more than 40 years. Get in touch to find out how we can help your organization today.

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