



Strategy and Business Objectives

- Tell me about your vision. Where are you going? Where do you want to be; so what do you need to do now?
- Describe your Strategy? What are your business objectives?
- What is it you are trying to achieve and why?
- What needs to change in order for the business to achieve its objectives?
- How well is the business aligned with the strategy? How are you ensuring that all functions / teams / individuals understand the plan?
- Are performance systems and reward underpinned by the strategic objectives? Is there a succession plan linked to the business plan milestones?
- How does the vision match the personal objectives of management / owners?
- How well is the business performing relative to the plan?
- Where are you in your marketplace, where do you want to be in x years' time?
- What issues keep you awake at night?

Management & People

- What is your structure in terms of people? Is it a right fit for your strategy?
- How do you communicate with your people and how do they communicate with each other?
- Are you spending enough time working on the business as opposed to in the business?
- Describe the 'employee experience' in your business. How are you measuring engagement across the organisation?
- How are you ensuring that you are getting the very best out of your people?
- What appraisal systems do you have in place? How do you deal with under performance and over performance?
- How well equipped are your people to take on change and the challenge of growth?
- What are the key strengths and skills required to deliver success? How confident are you that your people are of sufficient quality to drive growth?
- What developmental opportunities are available for your people?
- How do you motivate and reward your staff?

Marketing & Sales

- Who / what is your competition?
- Explain the needs and expectations of your chosen market. What makes customers buy your products and services?
- What value do you provide to your customers? What is different about your product/service?
- What would make you a winner in your market?
- How do your marketing and sales messages communicate your value and qualities to the market?
- How do you ensure that you deliver great service to your customers?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your competitors - what can you exploit?
- Where are the high growth opportunities?
- How do you measure the effectiveness of your marketing and sales activity?
- How good are your supplier and customer relationships - are they a barrier to the competition?

Business Processes & Systems

- What are your key performance indicators and what are they telling you?
- How efficient and effective are your current processes and systems?
- How do you check the profitability of each individual product line and customer?
- How satisfied are you that your costing systems incorporate all relevant costs?
- Describe your information needs for monitoring departmental/sector performance and profitability?
- How timely is the production of information?
- Which areas of your business could suffer as a consequence of weak controls?
- What financial software system do you use? How often do you upgrade your software?
- Do you feel that you have the right level of relevant, accurate and timely information to help with management decision making?
- What would you change about your current systems if you could?

Finance

- Tell me how the business is performing financially?
- How does performance compare with your industry's norms?
- What do you need to do to improve your performance/return on investment?
- If you were to sell your business, how much would you want to get and when? What's it worth now?
- Does your strategy maximise the projected value?
- How strong is the business' cash flow? Is it strong enough to drive your plans?
- How would any funding requirement be met and how clear are you on all of the available options?
- How clear are the financial prospects for the next 2 years?
- If the business trades in foreign currencies, how do you mitigate exchange risks?
- What financial information is shared with the management team and the rest of the business? How are all your people made accountable for financial performance?