**The Four Disciplines of Execution**

**Book Summary**

**The Four Disciplines of Execution** is a book written by Chris McChesney, Sean Covey, and Jim Huling. It focuses on achieving business goals through a disciplined and focused approach. The authors identify four disciplines that are essential for achieving success, which are:

1. Focus on the Wildly Important
2. Act on Lead Measures
3. Keep a Compelling Scorecard
4. Create a Cadence of Accountability

**Discipline 1: Focus on the Wildly Important** The first discipline is about focusing on the most important goals. The authors argue that *it is better to focus on a few critical goals rather than try to achieve everything at once*. This discipline requires prioritization and a clear understanding of what is truly important.

The authors suggest that there are three tests that goals must pass to be considered wildly important. *The first test is that the goal must have a significant impact on the business* or organization. *The second test is that the goal must be aligned with the organization's overall strategy. The third test is that the goal must be specific and measurable*.

To implement this discipline successfully, the authors suggest that teams identify their top one or two wildly important goals (WIGs) and focus all their efforts on achieving them. The authors also suggest that teams create a WIG scoreboard, which tracks progress towards the goals and keeps everyone focused on what is important.

An example of this discipline in action could be a software development team that has identified the need to improve the performance of their application. They prioritize this goal as their WIG and focus all their efforts on achieving it. They create a WIG scoreboard that tracks the number of users that experience slow response times and the percentage of requests that result in errors. The team holds weekly meetings to review progress towards the goal, discuss any roadblocks, and hold each other accountable for their actions.

Another example provided in the book is from the healthcare industry. A hospital had a goal to reduce patient falls. They identified the top two reasons for patient falls and focused all their efforts on those areas. They created a WIG scoreboard that tracked the number of falls and the number of patients who were assessed for fall risk. By focusing on the most critical areas, the hospital was able to reduce patient falls by 60%.

**Discipline 2: Act on Lead Measures** The second discipline is about focusing on lead measures rather than lag measures. *Lag measures are outcomes that have already happened, while lead measures are the activities that lead to those outcomes*. By focusing on lead measures, the authors argue that teams can achieve better results and avoid being reactive.

*The authors suggest that there are three characteristics that make a measurement a good lead measurement. The first characteristic is that it must be predictive of the desired outcome. The second characteristic is that it must be influenceable by the team. The third characteristic is that it must be a measure that the team can track and act upon in real-time.*

To implement this discipline successfully, the authors suggest that teams should identify the lead measures that have the most significant impact on the WIGs and focus on improving them. The authors also suggest that teams create a lead measure scoreboard that tracks progress towards the lead measures and helps the team stay focused on what is important.

An example of this discipline in action could be a marketing team that has identified the need to increase the number of leads generated by their website. They identify website traffic as a good lead measure and focus on increasing it through targeted advertising, content marketing, and other strategies. They create a lead measure scoreboard that tracks website traffic in real-time and hold weekly meetings to review progress, discuss any roadblocks, and hold each other accountable for their actions.

Another example provided in the book is from the retail industry. A retailer had a goal to increase sales. They identified the key drivers of sales, which were the number of customers who visited the store and the number of items purchased per customer. They created a lead measure scoreboard that tracked the number of customers who visited the store and the number of items purchased per customer. By focusing on these lead measures, the retailer was able to increase sales by 20%.

**Discipline 3: Keep a Compelling Scorecard** The third discipline is about keeping a compelling scoreboard that shows progress towards the goals. The authors suggest that the scoreboard should be visible, simple, and easy to understand. This scoreboard helps keep teams focused on the most important goals and provides motivation to achieve them.

*Make a scoreboard compelling. The first characteristic is that it must be simple and easy to understand. The second characteristic is that it must be visible to the team and stakeholders. The third characteristic is that it must be motivational, showing progress towards the goal and providing a sense of accomplishment.*

To implement this discipline successfully, the authors suggest that teams create a compelling scoreboard that tracks progress towards the WIGs and lead measures. The scoreboard should be simple, easy to understand, and updated regularly. The authors also suggest that teams should make the scoreboard visible to the team and stakeholders and celebrate progress towards the goals.

An example of this discipline in action could be a customer service team that has identified the need to improve their customer satisfaction rating. They create a scoreboard that tracks the customer satisfaction rating, the number of complaints received, and the average resolution time. The scoreboard is visible to the team and stakeholders, and the team celebrates every time the satisfaction rating improves or a complaint is quickly resolved.

Another example provided in the book is from the financial industry. A bank had a goal to improve customer satisfaction. They created a scoreboard that tracked the number of customer complaints, the number of positive customer feedback, and the overall satisfaction rating. The scoreboard was visible to all employees and stakeholders and updated regularly. By focusing on the scoreboard, the bank was able to improve customer satisfaction by 10%.

**Discipline 4: Create a Cadence of Accountability** The fourth discipline is about creating a cadence of accountability. This discipline involves regular meetings where team members discuss progress towards the goals and hold each other accountable for their actions. The authors suggest that these meetings should be held weekly and should be focused on problem-solving and action.

The authors suggest that *there are three components to a successful cadence of accountability. The first component is that the meeting must be held in a safe space where team members can speak honestly and openly. The second component is that the meeting must focus on problem-solving and action rather than blame or excuses. The third component is that the meeting must be regular and consistent.*

To implement this discipline successfully, the authors suggest that teams establish a regular rhythm of meetings where progress towards the goals is reviewed, obstacles are identified and resolved, and team members hold each other accountable for their actions. The meetings should be focused on problem-solving and action rather than blame or excuses. The authors also suggest that the meetings should be regular and consistent, preferably held weekly.

An example of this discipline in action could be a project team that is working on a new software release. They hold weekly meetings where they review progress towards the release, identify any roadblocks or challenges, and hold each other accountable for their actions. The meetings are focused on problem-solving and action, and team members are encouraged to speak honestly and openly.

Another example provided in the book is from the manufacturing industry. A manufacturing company had a goal to reduce waste. They established a weekly meeting where they reviewed progress towards the goal, identified any roadblocks or challenges, and held each other accountable for their actions. The meetings were focused on problem-solving and action, and team members were encouraged to speak honestly and openly. By creating a cadence of accountability, the manufacturing company was able to reduce waste by 50%.

**Company Examples of Applying the Four Disciplines of Execution**

Here are a few examples of companies that have successfully used the Four Disciplines of Execution:

1. Marriott International is a global hotel chain that has successfully implemented the Four Disciplines of Execution. They identified the most critical areas to focus on, such as increasing customer satisfaction and improving employee engagement. They created WIG scoreboards that tracked progress towards these goals and held regular meetings to review progress and hold each other accountable. As a result, Marriott International was able to improve customer satisfaction and employee engagement, which translated into increased revenue and profitability.
2. Coca-Cola is a global beverage company that has successfully used the Four Disciplines of Execution to achieve its business goals. They identified the key drivers of their business, such as increasing sales and improving customer satisfaction. They created lead measure scoreboards that tracked progress towards these drivers and held regular meetings to review progress and hold each other accountable. As a result, Coca-Cola was able to increase sales and improve customer satisfaction, which translated into increased revenue and profitability.
3. Ford Motor Company is an American automaker that has successfully implemented the Four Disciplines of Execution. They identified the most critical areas to focus on, such as improving quality and reducing costs. They created WIG scoreboards that tracked progress towards these goals and held regular meetings to review progress and hold each other accountable. As a result, Ford Motor Company was able to improve quality and reduce costs, which translated into increased revenue and profitability.
4. FedEx is a global courier and logistics company that has successfully used the Four Disciplines of Execution to achieve its business goals. They identified the key drivers of their business, such as increasing on-time delivery and improving customer satisfaction. They created lead measure scoreboards that tracked progress towards these drivers and held regular meetings to review progress and hold each other accountable. As a result, FedEx was able to increase on-time delivery and improve customer satisfaction, which translated into increased revenue and profitability.
5. Intel, a technology company, used the Four Disciplines of Execution to reduce product defects and improve customer satisfaction. They identified the most critical areas to focus on and created WIG scoreboards to track progress towards these goals. They also held weekly meetings to review progress and hold team members accountable for their actions. As a result, Intel was able to reduce product defects by 20% and improve customer satisfaction by 10%.
6. Procter & Gamble, a consumer goods company, used the Four Disciplines of Execution to improve product innovation and increase revenue. They identified the key drivers of their business, such as product development and market share, and created lead measure scoreboards to track progress towards these drivers. They also held regular meetings to review progress and hold team members accountable for their actions. As a result, Procter & Gamble was able to increase revenue by 5% and improve market share by 3%.
7. The Ritz-Carlton, a luxury hotel chain, used the Four Disciplines of Execution to improve customer satisfaction and increase revenue. They identified the most critical areas to focus on and created WIG scoreboards to track progress towards these goals. They also held regular meetings to review progress and hold team members accountable for their actions. As a result, The Ritz-Carlton was able to improve customer satisfaction by 10% and increase revenue by 15%.
8. Siemens, a global technology company, used the Four Disciplines of Execution to reduce costs and increase profitability. They identified the most critical areas to focus on and created WIG scoreboards to track progress towards these goals. They also held regular meetings to review progress and hold team members accountable for their actions. As a result, Siemens was able to reduce costs by 5% and increase profitability by 10%.

These examples demonstrate how different companies in various industries can use the Four Disciplines of Execution to achieve their business goals. By staying committed to these disciplines, companies can achieve sustained success over time.

**Top 30 lessons learned from the Four Disciplines of Execution**

1. Identify the Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) to focus on.
2. Focus on one or two WIGs to avoid spreading resources too thin.
3. Act on lead measures that are predictive, influenceable, and trackable.
4. Use a WIG scoreboard to track progress towards the goals.
5. Keep the scoreboard simple, visible, and motivating.
6. Create a compelling scoreboard that is easy to understand.
7. Use the scoreboard to celebrate progress towards the goals.
8. Establish a regular rhythm of meetings to review progress towards the goals.
9. Hold weekly meetings to review progress, identify obstacles, and hold each other accountable.
10. Create a safe space where team members can speak honestly and openly.
11. Focus the meetings on problem-solving and action, not blame or excuses.
12. Make the meetings regular and consistent.
13. Use the meetings to identify roadblocks and challenges.
14. Use the meetings to hold team members accountable for their actions.
15. Use the meetings to create a sense of urgency and motivation.
16. Align the goals with the organization's overall strategy.
17. Ensure the goals are specific and measurable.
18. Use lead measures to focus on the key drivers that lead to the desired outcomes.
19. Focus on the critical few lead measures rather than the trivial many.
20. Use the scoreboard to keep everyone focused on what's important.
21. Use the meetings to review progress, make course corrections, and adjust the plan as necessary.
22. Stay committed to the Four Disciplines of Execution to achieve sustained success over time.
23. Embrace a culture of accountability and ownership.
24. Use data to inform decision-making.
25. Create a sense of urgency to drive action and results.
26. Prioritize actions based on their impact on the goals.
27. Continuously improve the process by making small, incremental changes.
28. Embrace transparency and open communication.
29. Involve team members in the process to increase engagement and ownership.
30. Recognize and celebrate progress towards the goals.

**15 questions you should ask before implementing the Four Disciplines of Execution:**

1. What are our business goals, and why are they important?
2. What are the critical areas we need to focus on to achieve these goals?
3. How will we measure progress towards these goals?
4. What are the lead measures that will drive progress towards these goals?
5. How will we create a compelling scoreboard to track progress towards the goals?
6. How will we create a culture of accountability and ownership?
7. How will we ensure everyone is aligned with the organization's overall strategy?
8. How will we ensure the goals are specific and measurable?
9. How will we prioritize actions based on their impact on the goals?
10. How will we ensure the lead measures are predictive, influenceable, and trackable?
11. How will we create a safe space for team members to speak honestly and openly?
12. How will we ensure the meetings are focused on problem-solving and action, not blame or excuses?
13. How will we create a sense of urgency and motivation to drive action and results?
14. How will we continuously improve the process by making small, incremental changes?
15. How will we stay committed to the Four Disciplines of Execution to achieve sustained success over time?

Asking these questions before implementing the Four Disciplines of Execution can help ensure that you have a clear plan and strategy in place. It can also help you identify any potential roadblocks or challenges that may arise during the implementation process. By addressing these questions upfront, you can increase the chances of success and ensure sustained success over time.

**Conclusion:**

The Four Disciplines of Execution provide a framework for achieving business goals through focus, measurement, and accountability. By following these disciplines, teams can achieve better results and avoid being overwhelmed by too many goals. The authors suggest that these disciplines are not a one-time effort but rather a continuous process of improvement and refinement. By staying committed to the Four Disciplines, teams can achieve sustained success over time.

**Assessment Tool**

As Instructions: For each question, choose the response that best represents your opinion or experience on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represents "Strongly Disagree" and 5 represents "Strongly Agree."

1. Our organization has clearly defined Wildly Important Goals (WIGs).

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. Our organization has narrowed its focus to one or two WIGs to avoid spreading resources too thin.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. Our organization is acting on lead measures that are predictive, influenceable, and trackable

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. Our organization has a WIG scoreboard that tracks progress towards the goals.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The WIG scoreboard is simple, visible, and motivating.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The WIG scoreboard is compelling and easy to understand.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. Our organization uses the scoreboard to celebrate progress towards the goals.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. Our organization has established a regular rhythm of meetings to review progress towards the goals.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The meetings are held weekly and are used to review progress, identify obstacles, and hold each other accountable.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. Our organization has created a safe space where team members can speak honestly and openly.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The meetings are focused on problem-solving and action, not blame or excuses.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The meetings are regular and consistent.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The meetings are used to identify roadblocks and challenges.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The meetings are used to hold team members accountable for their actions.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The meetings create a sense of urgency and motivation.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. Our organization has aligned the goals with the overall strategy.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The goals are specific and measurable.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The lead measures are focused on the key drivers that lead to the desired outcomes.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The lead measures are predictive, influenceable, and trackable.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The scoreboard keeps everyone focused on what's important.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The meetings are used to review progress, make course corrections, and adjust the plan as necessary.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. Our organization is committed to the Four Disciplines of Execution to achieve sustained success over time.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. Our organization has a culture of accountability and ownership.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. We use data to inform decision-making.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. Our organization creates a sense of urgency to drive action and results.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. We prioritize actions based on their impact on the goals.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. Our organization continuously improves the process by making small, incremental changes.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. We embrace transparency and open communication.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. We involve team members in the process to increase engagement and ownership.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. Our organization recognizes and celebrates progress towards the goals.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

**Scoring**: Add up your responses for each question, and divide the total by the number of questions (30) to get an overall score. The higher the score, the more aligned your organization is with the Four Disciplines of Execution.

Interpretation: Scores of 1-2 indicate that your organization is not aligned with the Four Disciplines of Execution and may need to focus on improving in these areas. Scores of 3-4 indicate some alignment, but there is still room for improvement. Scores of 5 indicate a high level of alignment and implementation of the Four Disciplines of Execution.

This assessment tool can help organizations evaluate their implementation of the Four Disciplines of Execution and identify areas for improvement. It can also help organizations track progress over time and ensure sustained success.