



These are 5 perspectives that you need to consider when you are planning strategies and tactics to change or improve something important.

- Economic/financial perspective
- Employee perspective
- Environmental perspective
- Futuristic perspective
- Legislative/regulative perspective

And to develop the thinking of your people.

Focus means anything that you need to change/improve/implement. You do not need to ask or answer all questions. Only the ones that resonate and relate to your focus.



Economic/financial perspective

1. What is the impact of this situation on profit and loss? How will this situation affect net profit or cash flow if there is a change in sales volume or gross margins? How could cash flow affect our focus? What are the possible threats to cash flow in this situation?
2. What are the fixed and variable costs involved to fund this situation? What are the potential cost blowouts and how will we manage them? How could we factor in the costs associated with this situation with current or future budgets? How could we factor in cost of ownership – operating costs, maintenance costs, replacement costs, training costs, cost of disposal, etc?
3. How could our budgeting process incorporate planned revenues and expenditure as well as plans for assets and liabilities and estimates for cash receipts and payments?
4. What are the projected profit margins? What is our minimum return on investment? What do we need to do to demonstrate fiscal responsibility in this situation? What are our projected profit margins based on? What must happen for us to achieve these profit margins?
5. How are we going to obtain the revenue required in this situation? How are we going to manage our cash flow requirements? How are we going to manage any adverse effects on cash flow in this situation? What could be the on-going operational costs?
6. How are we doing a cost benefit analysis in this situation?
7. What monitoring process do we need so that we can track budget versus actual on a regular basis? How well does our account code structure allow accurate coding of expenditure?
8. What controls need to be put in place so that we can take effective corrective action to remedy any discrepancies between budgeted costs and actual costs?
9. How might this situation have any unusual features which will affect budgeting or cash flow? How could we incorporate any taxation requirements? Depreciation?
10. How does the business plan for this situation contribute to our long-term strategic plans?
11. How might a lack of funds or misplaced funds prevent us from solving this situation?
12. How might an emphasis on making money blind us to other possibilities and strategies in this situation?
13. How could we evaluate the value we are getting for the money spent? Are we allocating money into the areas where we get the best return? For example?
14. What are the areas for potential waste of money in this situation?
15. How are we separating fact from opinion? How well are we drilling down to get the facts?
16. How might our current ways of thinking about economic and financial perspectives be limiting our effectiveness or future success?
17. What ways of thinking about economic and financial perspectives might serve us better?



Environmental perspective

Ask/answer questions which relate to your focus.

1. How does this situation affect our environmental policy and vice versa? What ecological sustainability values could we apply in this situation? How could we incorporate harmonious co-existence with the environment and the surrounding community?
2. What could be the possible impacts on the environment in this situation? Where is the potential for damage to the environment? What are the risks? How could we assess those risks? What are the potentially high-risk aspects of this situation in relation to environmental damage? What could be adverse effects on our operation?
3. How could we effectively manage those risks? How have we targeted the more serious potential impacts for immediate remedial action?
4. What are the legislative/regulatory, environmental requirements in this situation? How are we at risk of infringing those requirements?
5. How could we apply our environmental and waste management standards in this situation? How could we identify what, where and how we are wasting in our total operation? How does that affect our focus?
6. What could we do to comply with legislative/regulatory environmental requirements and environmental and waste management standards in this situation?
7. What are our environmental objectives and targets in this situation? What process will need to be initiated to achieve environmental objectives, targets and compliance in this situation?
8. What does this situation require in the way of training, documentation, operational controls and emergency preparedness and response? In this situation, how are we monitoring and measuring operational activities including record keeping?
9. How does this situation affect our Environmental Management System audit procedure? How does this situation require us to review our Environmental Management System for continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness?
10. How well are we working to: reduce the material intensity of products and services; reduce the energy intensity of products and services; reduce toxic dispersion; enhance material recyclability; maximise sustainable use of renewable resources; extend product durability; and increase the service intensity of products and services in this situation?
11. In this situation, how could we assess the environmental impact of a product using the 'cradle-to-grave' approach in which all life stages of the product from raw material usage to final disposal are assessed?
12. How are we separating fact from opinion? How well are we drilling down to get the facts? How well are we identifying and challenging our assumptions about waste and pollution?
13. How might our current ways of thinking about environmental perspectives be limiting our effectiveness or future success?
14. What ways of thinking about environmental perspectives might serve us better?

Develop Thinking



Futuristic perspective

Ask/answer questions which relate to your focus.

1. What are the potentially best case and potentially worse case scenarios in this situation? Local and global?
2. What are the key things about this situation that could come under most threat?
3. What are the possible future trends that could impact on our situation?
4. What new opportunities are possible in the future? What things could happen in the future that if we miss out we will be seriously disadvantaged?
5. What is the worst thing that could happen in our market segment? What is the worst thing that could happen to our customer base? How could we anticipate the conditions that could cause these to happen? How well are we assessing the probabilities?
6. What are the less than obvious threats that we may not even have considered?
7. What things are we relying on that may be subject to change or reduction or loss?
8. For us to be successful in this situation, what things must remain constant or have acceptable variations in the future?
9. What are our assumptions and how valid are our assumptions about the constancy of things important to our focus?
10. What things are essential to the success of our focus?
11. How are we stepping outside our own perspectives to incorporate the perspectives of other experts who can raise perspectives and possibilities unknown to us? For example: new marketing concepts, new technologies, different materials, changing consumer trends, environmental considerations, political changes, new competitors, new alternatives to our products and services, changes to costs of parts and raw materials, etc.
12. How effectively are we considering the likelihood and impact of best case/worse case scenarios?
13. How effectively are we planning to deal with best case/worse case scenarios? What are our contingency plans? What actions can we take to mitigate the impact of identifiable factors that are beyond our control?
14. How could we identify the major current trends that are likely to affect our future viability, success and sustainability? What could be the expectations of whoever might be our critical stakeholders in the future?
15. How are we separating fact from opinion? How well are we drilling down to get the facts?
16. How might our current ways of thinking about future scenarios be limiting our effectiveness or future success?
17. What ways of thinking about future scenarios might serve us better?



Legislative/regulative perspectiv

Ask/answer questions which relate to your focus.

1. What legislation or regulations or acts apply to this situation? How could our focus affect our legislative/regulatory requirements? What are our legal obligations?
2. What government agencies should we contact in relation to existing and impending legislation and regulations governing our situation? Local and/or global.
3. In what ways might our situation contravene legislation and regulations? How might we be at risk of infringements?
4. How could we incorporate the requirements of legislation and regulations in this situation?
5. How could we comply with good corporate governance in this situation?
6. How aware are all key stakeholders of our legislative and regulatory requirements in this situation? How could that affect our focus?
7. How could are our legislative, regulatory and legal requirements be built into our systems, procedures and work practices in this situation?
8. How could we monitor compliance with legislative, regulatory and legal requirements? What 'fail safe' controls do we have in place or will we have in place to ensure compliance with our legislative, regulatory and legal requirements?
9. What amendments to contracts affected by this situation will be required?
10. What could be the possible risks of litigation in this situation?
11. What are the requirements for permits and licences in this situation?
12. How could we protect our intellectual property in this situation?
13. How are we separating fact from opinion? How well are we drilling down to get the facts?
14. How might our current ways of thinking about legislative/regulatory perspectives be limiting our effectiveness or future success?
15. What ways of thinking about legislative/regulatory perspectives might serve us better?