HER EXECUTIVE ASCENT

Turning AI Ambition Into a Real Plan

The AI Strategy Blueprint

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Objective

This isn't a slide template, and it isn't a mission statement. It's a working document — the kind that only holds up if you're willing to name a real priority, a real owner, and a real decision gate, not just describe an aspiration.

This tool is adapted from Module 4: AI Strategy & Governance in the AI-Enabled Executive Decision Lab, Her Executive Ascent's 12-week executive cohort program. It's available on its own to paid subscribers of Her Executive Ascent's Substack newsletter. Interested in bringing the full program to your team? Reach out to corporate@herexecutiveascent.com.

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Participant Handout

Use this framework when you need to build or pressure-test a real AI strategy — not brainstorm one in the abstract.

1. Strategy Scorecard

Purpose: score where AI creates real value, what it actually requires, how it scales, and how you'll know it worked — then force a defensible Proceed / Pause / Stop call, same as any other initiative.

Business priority	
Owner / sponsor	
Decision needed by	
Current stage	Idea / Pilot / Live / Scaling

Pillar 1 — Where will AI create value?

What good looks like: a business priority with 2–3 use cases scored on impact and feasibility, not a single idea chosen because it's popular.

Evidence checklist: choose at least 2.

- Business priority is named
- 2–3 candidate use cases identified
- Impact scored for each
- Feasibility scored for each
- Lowest-scoring options parked, not pursued

Notes: Business priority: _____ | Top use case: _____ | Impact score: _____ | Feasibility score: _____

Red flags: Every use case scores high because none were scored honestly; the idea came before the priority; no use case was ruled out.

Score each candidate use case before you commit to one:

Use case	Impact (1–5)	Feasibility (1–5)

Only carry forward use cases scoring 3 or higher on both. A high-impact idea with low feasibility isn't a strategy — park it.

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Pillar 2 — What capabilities are required?

What good looks like: data, technology, talent, and governance needs are named specifically, not assumed.

Evidence checklist: choose at least 2.

- Data source is named — the actual system, not “customer data”
- Technology and integration path identified
- Talent or skill gap identified
- Governance or change management process defined

Notes: Data source: _____ | System owner: _____ | Talent gap: _____ | Governance step: _____

Red flags: “We'll figure out the data later”; no named owner for governance; a talent gap is acknowledged but there's no plan to close it.

Pillar 3 — How will implementation scale?

What good looks like: a named decision gate — a date or metric threshold — not just short-, medium-, and long-term hope.

Evidence checklist: choose at least 2.

- 6–12 month action defined
- Medium- and long-term scaling action defined
- Decision gate named — a specific date or metric
- Scale / pause / kill criteria set in advance

Notes: 6–12 month action: _____ | Decision gate: _____ | Scale trigger: _____ | Kill trigger: _____

Red flags: no decision gate, just momentum; “we'll know it when we see it”; the scaling plan assumes the pilot succeeds.

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Pillar 4 — How will success be measured?

What good looks like: specific KPIs and one named owner, not a committee.

Evidence checklist: choose at least 2.

- KPI(s) defined — ROI, efficiency, risk reduction, or customer outcome
- Baseline exists
- Single named owner — not a team or committee
- Stakeholder reporting cadence defined

Notes: KPI: _____ | Baseline: _____ | Owner: _____ | Reporting cadence: _____

Red flags: the owner is “the AI committee”; no baseline, so no way to know if it worked; success is defined only as “adoption.”

Decision

Must pick one: PROCEED / PAUSE / STOP

- Top 3 reasons: 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____
- Missing evidence if Pause: _____
- Next step / owner / date: _____

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2. The One-Page Board Translation

Once all four pillars are filled in, compress them into the version you'd actually say out loud — not the version sitting in a document nobody reads before the meeting.

Subject	AI Strategy Decision: _____
Audience	Board / Steering Group / Leadership Team
Date	
Decision requested	Proceed / Pause / Stop
The priority	One sentence — the business priority this serves.
The proof point	A pilot result, a projected number, or a comparable case.
The ask	The budget, headcount, or authority you need.
The risk being managed	What you're doing about the thing that could go wrong.
Recommendation	I recommend: PROCEED / PAUSE / STOP

If you can't fill in all of the above in one sitting, that's not a writing problem — it's a sign one of the four pillars isn't finished yet.

3. Reflection Prompts

- Which pillar revealed the biggest gap in your current strategy?
- How does your AI roadmap connect to enterprise-level goals?
- If you had to present this blueprint to your board tomorrow, what would you emphasize?
- What's the question a skeptical board member would ask that you don't yet have a confident answer to?

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4. 90-Day Kickoff Map

Goal: turn this blueprint into action without overextending or becoming the blocker.

Step 1: Pick your live priority. Priority: _____ Where it sits: _____ Your role: _____

Step 2A: Choose one conversation this week. Ask for the data owner, the decision gate, or the KPI and baseline.

Step 2B: Choose one metric. Baseline and target, an adoption metric, or an efficiency metric.

Step 2C: Choose one capability gap to close first. Data access, a governance owner, or a talent gap.

Step 3: Define your trigger. If we hit this threshold by [date], we scale. If we do not, we pause. If this risk shows up, we stop.

Step 4: Send the board translation within 30 days. Even if the answer is Pause.

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