

5 IT Strategy Mistakes to Avoid



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If you've found your way to this document, you likely feel that you could be getting more from your IT dollars. As a senior IT executive with more than 25 years of experience and a successful entrepreneur, I specialize in helping clients bridge the disconnect that often exists between senior executives and IT managers, fix ongoing issues, and navigate challenges as they arise. Based on my experience, here are five common IT strategy mistakes—and suggestions on how you can resolve them.

Mistake

#1 Seeing IT as a Cost Not an Investment

Every business incurs expenses—rent, utilities, insurance. Some of those costs don't require much consideration. You're going to be spending about the same for your internet service regardless of which provider you choose. IT is different because how you spend that budget can affect the return on one of your largest investments—your team. Spending more thoughtfully on your IT can spur productivity and culture benefits that will ultimately help offset labour costs.

The Fix: Consider your objectives, then work with a partner you trust to establish an IT plan designed to achieve your goals.

Mistake

#2 Confusing IS Strategy with IT Strategy

IT stands for “information technology” while IS stands for “information systems.” What's the difference? Information *technology* refers to infrastructure and related processes — the laptops and desktops, networking, cloud services, backups, security and peripherals. Information *systems* are the applications and automations that run on your IT devices. This is an important distinction because information *systems* should dictate your IT strategy and purchases.

The Fix: Don't ask IT specialists to lead your IS innovation or you'll be disappointed. Work with a skilled business technology consultant to clarify your overall business technology strategy, then the systems strategy, and finally your IT strategy.

Mistake

#3 Using the Three-Quote Methodology for IT

It happens in procurement processes around the world—corporations seeking project bids request three proposals and then mindlessly select the middle one. This strategy might work in some rare cases, but in general, it's not a solid plan. Just like you wouldn't ask your lawyer for three legal solutions, you shouldn't use this methodology when it comes to IT, a sector where various solutions and strategic partners feature important differences.

The Fix: Find an IT advisor you respect and listen to their recommendations. The resulting productivity benefits could end up saving you money for years to come.

Mistake

#4 Not Understanding Your IT Partners

Would you do business with a company whose executives you couldn't understand? So why do so many of us tolerate a similar disconnect with our own IT staff? Fast-growing businesses and operations need to be certain that their IT infrastructure is being designed in a manner that conforms to their business objectives. How can you be certain of that if you can't understand what your IT provider is saying?

The Fix: In the short term, consider an IT advisor who can step in and translate. Longer-term, consider finding different partners.

Mistake

#5 Allowing a Gap Between Your IT Strategy and Business Strategy

We're entering a time when technology is more important than ever for the successful operation of a business. In the last few years, we've seen changes and trends that will only accelerate. This includes greater collaboration, automation, cybercrime, and workforce versatility. Employees are demanding technology solutions that enable them to work seamlessly together from any location. These important trends make technology infrastructure decisions even more important.

The Fix: Let the team at F12 help guide your decision process to identify and bridge the gap between your Business and IT strategies. Let's uncover how your business opportunities and challenges relate to your technology needs, and then outline the key IT decisions to help advance your business.



At F12, we're a company of entrepreneurs who specialize in delivering simplicity to our clients. Information technology can seem like a complex world full of bewildering jargon. We navigate that complexity with a simple, subscription-based pricing model that is based on a fixed cost per user per month. We eliminate surprises so our clients can focus on doing what they do best.

Looking for help with your IT strategy? Set up a complimentary 30-minute business innovation consultation session by emailing me at mcontento@F12.net