

THE BUSINESS TURNAROUND TOOLKIT

1. SWOT (FAST INTERNAL/EXTERNAL REALITY CHECK)

Use when: first 60 minutes of discovery; you need the "what's really going on?" view.

Do:

- List 3-5 Strengths and Weaknesses (internal).
- List 3-5 Opportunities and Threats (external).
- Turn into actions:
 - S→O: use strengths to win opportunities
 - W→O: fix gaps blocking growth
 - S→T: use strengths to defend threats
 - W→T: reduce exposure
- Pick top 3 priorities + owners + deadlines.



2. TOWS MATRIX (TURN SWOT INTO STRATEGY CHOICES)

Use when: you've got a SWOT and need decisions, not a poster.

Do:

- Build four strategy buckets: SO, WO, ST, WT.
- Generate 2-3 options per bucket.
- Score options by impact × effort × risk.
- Select 3-5 moves to execute first.



3. PESTEL (WHAT'S SHIFTING OUTSIDE THE BUSINESS)

Use when: demand is changing, regulation hits, entering a new country/industry.

Do:

- Scan: Political, Economic, Social, Tech, Environmental, Legal
- Note impact and likelihood for each factor.
- Build 2-3 scenarios (best/base/worst).
- Define "watch-list" indicators (what would prove you wrong?).



4. PORTER'S FIVE FORCES (WHY PROFITS ARE HARD)

Use when: margins are squeezed, pricing power is weak, competition feels brutal.

Do:

- Rate each force High/Med/Low:
- Rivalry, New Entrants, Substitutes, Supplier Power, Buyer Power
- Identify where profits leak (which force is strongest?).
- Choose response: differentiation, niche focus, switching costs, partnerships, etc.



5. PERCEPTUAL MAP

(What customers really compare)

Use when: your positioning is fuzzy or "we're like everyone else."

Do:

- Pick 2 axes customers care about (e.g., price vs reliability).
- Plot you + top competitors (real perception, not internal opinion).
- Identify whitespace (underserved segment/need).
- Adjust message, offer, and proof points to own a spot.



6. BOWMAN'S STRATEGY CLOCK (PRICE VS VALUE POSITIONING)

Use when: pricing, margins, and perceived value don't match.

Do:

- Identify your current clock position (price + perceived value).
- Choose your intended position (low-cost / hybrid / differentiation / niche).
- Define required moves (cost down, value up, segment change, packaging).
- Avoid "high price + low value" traps.



7. VRIO (WHAT YOU CAN ACTUALLY WIN WITH)

Use when: deciding what to double down on vs stop doing.

Do:

- List your key resources/capabilities.
- Test each: Valuable? Rare? Hard to Imitate? Organized to exploit?
- If V+R+I+O → protect and invest.
- If not → improve, partner, or stop.



8. VALUE CHAIN (WHERE CASH, TIME, AND QUALITY ARE LEAKING)

Use when: operations are messy, delivery is late, costs are high, margin is weak.

Do:

- Map: inbound → operations → outbound → sales → service (+ support).
- Mark where time/money/quality is lost.
- Improve 1-2 choke points (automation, simplification, supplier change, standard work).
- Track: cost per unit, lead time, defect rate, customer satisfaction.



9. SIPOC (MAKE PROCESS SCOPE AND OWNERSHIP CLEAR)

Use when: teams argue, "that's not my job," and processes break at handoffs.

Do:

- Define the process: Suppliers → Inputs → Process → Outputs → Customers.
- Agree boundaries (start/end) and owners.
- Identify critical inputs and quality requirements.
- Use it as the baseline for improvement work.



10. Pareto Analysis (80/20 focus)

Use when: there are too many problems and you need the few that matter most.

Do:

- List issues with frequency/cost/time impact.
- Rank and chart the top contributors.
- Attack the top 20% causing 80% of damage.
- Repeat monthly to prevent drift.



11. FISHBONE (ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS)

Use when: problems keep coming back and "quick fixes" aren't working.

Do:

- Define the problem clearly (what/where/when/how big).
- Brainstorm causes by category (People/Process/Tools/Materials/Environment/Measurement).
- Validate causes with data (not opinions).
- Fix causes upstream and standardise the change.



12. MCKINSEY 7S (WHY EXECUTION FAILS)

Use when: strategy is fine but the organisation can't deliver it.

Do:

- Review Strategy, Structure, Systems, Skills, Staff, Style, Shared Values.
- Identify misalignments (e.g., goals vs incentives).
- Fix 2-3 high-leverage blockers first.
- Reassess after major change (growth restructuring, new leader).



13. BALANCED SCORECARD (TURN THE FIX INTO EXECUTION)

Use when: you need operating rhythm + accountability (not a slide deck).

Do:

- Set goals + KPIs in 4 buckets: Financial | Customer | Internal Process | People/Learning
- Define targets and cadence (weekly/monthly).
- Link KPIs to initiatives and owners.
- Review, learn, adjust (don't set-and-forget).



14. ANSOFF MATRIX (CHOOSE THE GROWTH PATH ONCE STABLE)

Use when: the business is steadier and you want growth with a clear risk ladder.

Do:

- Choose: Market Penetration | Market Development | Product Development | Diversification
- For each: define one experiment + success metrics.
- Estimate risk + required capabilities.
- Start with the simplest option that can move the needle.



15. BLUE OCEAN STRATEGY (IF THE MARKET IS UNWINNABLE, CHANGE THE GAME)

Use when: everyone competes on the same factors and price wars never end.

Do:

- Map the "Red Ocean": what factors does everyone compete on?
- Use ERRC (Eliminate, Reduce, Raise, Create) to redesign the offer.
- Value innovation: different + simpler/cheaper to deliver.
- Find non-customers: people who avoid the category today.
- Test fast: pilot offer + clear metrics (conversion, retention, margin, referrals).
- Stay adaptive: blue oceans turn red—keep iterating.

