Executing a strategic plan is critical. Planning is good; executing as planned is better! Finding a clear-cut definition of “execution” is difficult. Even Bossidy and Charan, who wrote an entire book about the subject, do not provide a simple definition of execution. Think about the three points that Bossidy and Charan use to clarify the concept.

- Execution is a discipline, and integral to strategy.
- Execution is the major job of the business leader.
- Execution must be a core element of an organization’s culture.

What does each point mean to you? How does each translate within your job? Here are a few additional thoughts from the book *Execution*:

- It is not the tactical side of the business.
- It is a systematic process of rigorously discussing the hows and whats, questioning, following through, and ensuring accountability.
- It includes making assumptions about the business environment, assessing the organization’s capabilities, linking strategy to operations and the right people, and linking rewards to outcome.

If you have a chance, read at least the first chapter of *Execution* to help you clarify in your mind an understanding of execution.

What skills and knowledge are needed to make you a good executioner? Here are a few of the skills that may be required: establishing priorities, setting goals for yourself and others, organizing, delegating, working across teams and departments, planning, doing time management, persevering, measuring ROI, scanning the environment, understanding customers, assuring profitability, and making predictions.

Write down your execution skills, and once you have the list, add some definitions. How does it align to your job? Finally, circle all the things that you need to improve. When you’ve done that, add these skills to your individual development plan with tactics for learning the skills.

---