

# BARBARASHANNON

## How to Complete Your **Now-Next-Later** Grid

**Now-Next-Later** planning is based on the idea that while there may be an infinite number of things we should do, could do or want to do, time is real and prioritization matters. How you prioritize your focus may be the single most important thing in achieving personal happiness and business success. Keeping the process simple will greatly increase the likelihood that you will follow through on each important milestone week after week, month after month and year after year.

Here are the simple steps that will help you get crystal clear about what to focus on Now, Next and Later.

**Step 1:** Decide on your timeframes for Now, Next and Later. In the example I use quarters (3-months), but you can use weeks or a single month or two for each of the three sections. Use whatever timing makes sense to you. I use quarters in the example because most businesses do annual planning in 3-month segments.

**Step 2:** Make a list of the milestone activities, events and achievements that must occur over the next 18 months in order to achieve your business' mission and goals. A milestone event is something that will move the needle in critical areas such as: revenue generation, cost savings, margin improvement, customer experience, branding, talent attraction/retention and culture. If you've already completed your strategic planning process, start by reviewing your plan and listing any milestone activities, events and achievements.

**Step 3:** Make a list of the personal milestone activities, events and achievements that must occur over the next 18 months that will spark joy, health, wellness and progress for you and those you love.

**Step 4:** Put each milestone in a single box on the Now-Next-Later grid. You will likely have many more items in your Now and Next sections than your Later section. Add rows as needed in order to accommodate all your milestones.

***Important Note:** You may be tempted to start listing daily activities and tasks. Try to resist this and stay focused on the big, needle-mover milestones. These are the things that indicate that you and your business are moving in the right direction.*

### EXAMPLE

	<b>Business Financial</b> Revenue/Costs/Margin/Cash Flow/EBITDA	<b>Business Non-Financial</b> R&D/Production/Biz Dev/People/IT/Process	<b>Leadership</b> Me and My Team	<b>Personal Financial</b> Income/Expenses/Cash flow/Savings	<b>Personal Non-financial</b> Life-changes/Kids/Plans
<b>NOW Q1</b>	Q1 Revenue Goal: \$12.5M;	Outbound Sales Process and Tools roll-out	Use NNL and One-Pager. Organize!	Find new financial planner	Start search for Alina's pre-school
<b>NOW Q1</b>	EBITDA \$30k	Quantify trainer time-to-market": Ellis to eliminate inefficiencies	Communicate new OKR model to exec staff	Create new year fin plan	Prep house for sale
<b>NOW Q1</b>	Product scrap reduction 10%	Onboard new CGO	Master news tools and processes: Asana!	Fully fund 401K	Find SAT tutor for Vana
<b>NOW Q1</b>		Launch search for new CMO	Coach Rashida: focus, communication, ownership of her team	Prep salary increase request for board	Start workouts with Aly
<b>NEXT Q2, Q3</b>	Q2 Revenue Goal: \$8.5M Q3 Revenue Goal: \$10M	Product X prototype market test	Q3 Keynote ExpoOnline	Request salary increase	Buy a new house!
<b>NEXT Q2, Q3</b>	Q2 EBITDA \$20K Q3 EBITDA \$22K	Launch new product marketing campaign	Company Values Workshop	Invest house sale cash	Prep for move
<b>NEXT Q2, Q3</b>	Launch C round funding - target \$60M		3 VP and above diversity promotes/hires		
<b>LATER Q4</b>	Q4 Revenue Goal: \$14M	New Product X launch	Lead Board through AOP		Move in!
<b>LATER Q4</b>	EBITDA \$25K		3 VP and above diversity promotes/hires		
<b>LATER Q4</b>	Product scrap reduction 10%				

	<b>Business Financial</b> Revenue/Costs/Margin/Cash Flow/EBITDA	<b>Business Non-Financial</b> R&D/Production/Biz Dev/People/IT/Process	<b>Leadership</b> Me and My Team	<b>Personal Financial</b> Income/Expenses/Cash flow/Savings	<b>Personal Non-financial</b> Life-changes/Kids/Plans
<b>NOW Q1</b>					
<b>NOW Q1</b>					
<b>NOW Q1</b>					
<b>NOW Q1</b>					
<b>NEXT Q2, Q3</b>					
<b>NEXT Q2, Q3</b>					
<b>NEXT Q2, Q3</b>					
<b>LATER Q4</b>					
<b>LATER Q4</b>					
<b>LATER Q4</b>					