A franchise is no different to any other business in the sense that you have two choices when it comes to how you run your business. The first approach is the easy one; let’s call it the hope-for method. In the hope-for method you would invest in your franchise, follow the franchise plan provided and then sit back and hope for the returns you desire. Essentially, you trust that someone else has plotted the path to business success for you. This method involves having an idea of where you want to go, but not quite knowing how you will get there.

It’s like the time you typed in a destination on the maps app on your smartphone and then followed the step-by-step guides until you heard the instruction ‘in 500 meters turn right’ followed by ‘turn-right now’ and when you missed the turn, in her crisp American accent the app announced to ‘turn around when possible’. Only problem is, there was no right turn to start with; just a dry, deserted field dotted with shopping bags and litter. Since you have no idea how to get to where you are going, you keep driving in the hope that the re-route instructions will come to your rescue. You may be at the mercy of technology but lucky for you, apart from being the last to arrive, your vehicle almost running out of fuel, you have, eventually, arrived at your destination.

In the hope-for approach, even if it takes longer than you hoped and cost more than you anticipated, there is a chance you will arrive at your destination. And you know something? If you are that trusting and relaxed, or don’t mind the financial risk along the way, that’s okay and the hope-for method may just work for you. However, if you like to plan for the best outcome, want to take the quickest route to your destination, need to understand the risks, and want to implement strategies to outsmart your competitors, then the second approach to running a business is more aligned to who you are. We will refer to this approach as the strategic method.

The strategic method involves being intentional about the success you desire and the path you will follow in order to achieve it. By plotting your route in advance, you are more likely to choose the most effective path and avoid potential wrong turns and re-routes.

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are dependent on SMME growth, we should be deliberate about planning for success. However, entrepreneurs are people too and people are all different. So, if you’re thinking, ‘but I am a positive person’, ‘I know I will succeed’, ‘I am not much of a planner’, or ‘I prefer to go with the flow’, then know that you are not alone. Following the strategic method comes naturally to some while hoping for the best outcome is more natural for others. As a business owner, your strength lies first in understanding who you are, then identifying the gaps in your natural strengths and finally taking steps to fill those gaps. When you take this approach, you will enable a model where you have the right talents completing the right tasks in your business, from strategic planning all the way to implementation.

PLANNING & GOAL-SETTING
If you are an avid planner, go ahead and ensure that you have thought through your goals for the year ahead, as well as the next three to five years. Thereafter, take the time to develop a concise plan that details all the steps needed to achieve each goal; be sure to consider all the core areas of your business, from finances and customers to people and operations.

A cascading approach to setting and achieving goals may be useful. Start with each core area and set one long-term objective (three to five years). For every long-term objective, set three to five short-term (12 month) goals. Next, cascade these goals down to the next level by specifying five to ten strategies to achieve them. Finally, cascade each strategy by setting detailed actions/tasks and allocating timeframes, measures and personal accountability to every action. Following this process will ensure that you focus your attention on the areas that will deliver the most strategic value to your business and set the foundation for you to be a part of the elite ten to 20 percent of businesses that succeed.

Once your plan is developed, take massive, consistent action and frequently measure your progress against your plan. This intentional or strategic method will multiply your chances of success and keep you focused on the end results.

ASK FOR HELP
If planning does not come naturally to you, consider finding someone to help you. In this era of consultants, freelancers and facilitators, hiring the right assistance is always possible. Consider the value of the outsourced assistance (time is money, after all), the cost of hiring a venue, travel and accommodation for your team and, most importantly, the opportunity cost of not following the plan you have invested in developing. If the cost does not warrant this approach, then at least google strategic planning, watch some videos or read a book to equip yourself with the skills and knowledge to do it for yourself.

Whatever you do or don’t do could mean the difference between a good year and a great one. Following a strategic approach to business success will get you from where you are today to where you want to be more efficiently and a lot more pleasantly. The only question now is, ‘will you hope or plan for success this year?’

12 REASONS to consider a FICS Franchise

COSTING
A FICS Franchise costs 40% less than the average RSA franchise

STAFF SIZE
A FICS Franchise does not have a large staff contingent

EQUIPMENT
A FICS Franchise does not work with sophisticated equipment

TRANSPORT COSTS
The cost of trips for clients are built into the quotation

PAPERLESS
A FICS Franchise has the minimum paper work to handle

SERVICES
A FICS Franchise serves as safety net to ensure the work gets done

STOCK
A FICS Franchise does not have any stock - no stock management

OFFICE
A FICS Franchise needs a small office - functional location

CASH HANDLING
A FICS Franchise does not have to handle any cash which limits risk

FICS IT SYSTEM
A one-stop 24/7 live internet-based system was developed

INCOME STREAMS
A FICS Franchise has diverse income streams generated from various clients

PRESENTATION
FICS HQ continuously present the business model to various stakeholders