

Introduction to IT Strategy and Governance

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Prepared as concise, easy-to-read study notes

1. What Is IT Strategy?

Aspect	Description
Definition	A plan that aligns information technology (IT) assets, initiatives, and capabilities with the organization's overall business goals.
Purpose	• Deliver value from technology investments • Enable competitive advantage • Manage risk and cost
Key Components	1. Vision & Mission – Long-term direction for IT. 2. Objectives & Goals – Measurable outcomes (e.g., improve uptime by 99.9%). 3. Roadmap – Sequenced projects, timelines, and milestones. 4. Resource Allocation – Budget, talent, and infrastructure planning.
Typical Time Horizon	3-5 years (strategic) with annual operational plans.

2. Why Governance Matters

Governance Element	Why It's Critical
Alignment	Ensures IT projects support business priorities.
Accountability	Clarifies who decides, who executes, and who is responsible for outcomes.
Risk Management	Identifies, assesses, and mitigates technology-related risks (security, compliance, continuity).
Value Delivery	Tracks ROI, benefits realization, and cost control.
Transparency	Provides stakeholders with clear reporting and decision-making processes.

3. Core Frameworks & Standards

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Framework	Focus	Typical Use
COBIT (Control Objectives for Information & Related Technologies)	Governance & management of enterprise IT	Board-level oversight, audit, compliance
ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library)	Service management and delivery	Service desk, incident/problem/change management
TOGAF (The Open Group Architecture Framework)	Enterprise architecture	Aligning business, data, application, and technology layers
ISO/IEC 27001	Information security management	Risk-based security controls
PMBOK / PRINCE2	Project management	Planning and executing IT projects

Most organizations blend elements from several frameworks to suit their culture and regulatory environment.

4. The IT Governance Structure

1. Board of Directors / Executive Committee

- Sets strategic direction, approves major IT investments, monitors performance.*

2. Steering Committee (or IT Governance Council)

- Cross-functional group (CIO, CFO, business unit leaders).
* Prioritizes projects, resolves conflicts, reviews benefits.*

3. IT Leadership (CIO, CTO, VP of IT)

- Translates strategy into operational plans, manages day-to-day execution.*

4. Enterprise Architecture (EA) Team

- Designs the target architecture, ensures technology choices fit the roadmap.*

5. Project Management Office (PMO)

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- Enforces project governance standards, tracks schedules, budgets, and risks.*

6. Operational Teams (Ops, Security, Development, Support)

- Deliver services, maintain infrastructure, implement controls.*
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5. Building an IT Strategy – Step?by?Step

Step	Activity	Deliverable
1. Business Context Analysis	Review mission, market trends, competitive landscape, regulatory pressures.	Business drivers document
2. Current State Assessment	Inventory of applications, infrastructure, skills, processes; SWOT analysis.	IT baseline report
3. Gap Analysis	Compare current state to desired future state; identify deficiencies	