

## Discipline #1: Focus on the Wildly Important Goals (WIG)

**WIG:** WIG is an acronym for “**Wildly Important Goal.**” It’s a goal so important that not achieving it makes other achievements inconsequential.

**ASK YOURSELF:** “If every other area of our operation remained the same, what is the one area where change could have the greatest impact?”

The WIG can come from within the whirlwind, such as fixing or improving something, or it can be something new outside the whirlwind. Your organization will set a WIG, and then teams within the organization will have WIGs that support the overall WIG.

### WIG Rules

No team should focus on more than 2 WIGs at the same time. The battles you choose must win the war.

**DON'T ASK:** “What are all the things I must do to win this war?”

**DO ASK:** “What are the fewest battles necessary to win this war?”

Sr. Level leaders can veto but not dictate the team WIGs.

**WATCH OUT!** The level of engagement in creating the WIG will equal the level of commitment to achieving it.

All WIGs must be in the form of X to Y by when.

### Steps to creating the WIG

1. Brainstorm: Engage the team in brainstorming a list of possible WIGs

Ask the following:

- Which area of our team’s performance do we want to improve most, assuming everything else holds, to affect the overall WIG?”
- What are the team’s greatest strengths?
- Which areas or poor performance would be most affected by achieving a WIG?

2. Rank: Rank WIG ideas from most to least impactful  
Ideas must impact the company WIG, not just improve the team’s performance.

Pressure test the top ideas:

- Is our team WIG aligned to the overall company WIG?
- Is it measurable? If we’re not keeping score, we’re just practicing.
- Who owns the results? Your team must own 80% and not be dependent on another team for more than 20% of the results.
- Who owns the WIG- the leader or the team?

**WATCH OUT!** Avoid the trap of the WIG depending too much on you the leader. The team will lose interest.

### 3. Define the WIG

- Must begin with a verb. Increase, improve, contact, etc.
- Define lag measures in terms of X to Y by when
- Keep it simple
- Focus on what, not how
- Make sure it is achievable

Watch Out for these 2 Focus Traps:

- Say no to good ideas. There will always be more good ideas than the capacity to execute.
- Don't try to make everything in the whirlwind a WIG. Look for high impact / leverage points.

### 4. Make sure you got it right

- Have you gathered input from the top down and bottom up?
- Will the team WIG have a clear predictable impact on the overall company WIG?
- Is the team WIG the most impactful thing the team can do to drive achievement of the overall WIG?
- Does the team clearly have the power to achieve the WIG without heavy dependence on other teams?
- Does the WIG require the focus of the entire team, not just of the leader or a subgroup?
- Can the WIG be simplified any further? Does it start with a simple verb and end with a clear measure? Example: Increase average daily lead count from 20 to 40 leads by end of September.

## Discipline # 2: Act on lead measures

Great teams invest their best efforts in the activities with the most impact on their WIGs. These are called the lead measures. Achieving your WIG is like trying to move a giant rock. It is not a question of effort, because effort isn't enough. Lead measures act like a lever making it possible to move the rock. Ultimately the lead measures chosen by your team will become your strategic bet that will help you achieve your WIG.

Lead Measure: The measure of an action planned and taken as a means to achieve a WIG

Deliverable: When you have successfully finished this step, you will have a team WIG & lead measure.

- Must be predictive of achieving the WIG
- Must be influenceable by the entire team
- They can be counterintuitive. Most leaders are used to looking at lead measures
- They can be hard to keep track
- They can look simple with a precise focus on a single behavior

## Types of Lead Measures

1. Small outcomes focus the team on weekly or daily results but give members of the team latitude to choose their own method.
2. Leveraged behaviors focus on specific behaviors from individual team members.

## Steps to Creating the Lead Measures: Consider the Possibilities

1. Stay focused on ideas that will drive the WIG.
2. Rank by impact.
3. Narrow the focus to a few lead measures. Too many lead measures and you may dissipate the pressure. A lever must move a lot to move the rock.
4. Pressure test the top ideas:
  - Is it predictive? Does it move the lead measure?
  - Is it influenceable? 80% or more control?
  - Is it an ongoing process or one time only?
  - Is it a leader's game or a team game? Lead measures connect the team to the WIG, but only if it's the team's game to play.
  - Is it worth measuring? Remember getting this data may not be easy.
  - Is the outcome worth the effort?
5. Define the lead measures
  - Are you tracking team or individual performance? This choice will affect how you keep score. Tracking individual results creates the greatest accountability, but it's the hardest game to win because it demands the same level of performance from everyone.
  - Alternatively, tracking team results allows for difference in individual performance while still enabling the team to achieve the outcome.
  - Are you tracking lead measures daily or weekly?
  - Define both qualitative (how well) and quantitative standards (how often).
6. Did you get it right?
  - Have you gathered input on the lead measures from the team and others?
  - Are the lead measures predictive- that is, the most impactful things the team can do to drive the team WIG?
  - Are the lead measures influenceable- that is, does the team clearly have the power to move the lead measure?
  - Are the lead measures truly measurable? Can you track performance from day one?
  - Are the lead measures worth pursuing, or will the data cost more to gather than its worth?
  - Any unintended consequences?

## Discipline #3: The Discipline of Engagement

Even though you have defined a clear and effective game in disciplines 1 and 2, the team won't play at their best unless they are emotionally engaged. That happens when they can tell if they are winning or losing.

### How to Keep a Compelling Scoreboard

1. People play differently when they're keeping score. If you're not keeping score you're just practicing.
2. A coach's scorecard is not a player's scorecard. A coach's scorecard is complex. A player's scorecard is simple. Think of a basketball game. The coach is keeping track of all sorts of data on things like field goal %, steals, blocks, etc. The player's scoreboard is simple. It shows a handful of measures that indicate to the players at a glance if they are winning or losing the game.
3. The purpose of the scorecard is to motivate the players to win.

**WATCH OUT!** The more the team is involved in designing the scoreboard, the more likely it will instill their ownership.

## Steps to Creating a Compelling Scoreboard

1. Choose a theme
  - Trend lines are the most useful for displaying lead measures. They can quickly communicate from x to y by when.
  - A Speedometer is useful for measuring times such as process times, time to market, etc.
  - A Bar chart is useful for comparing the performance of teams or groups within teams.
  - An Andon chart consists of colored signals or lights that show a process is on track (green), in danger of going off track (yellow), or off track (red). It's useful for showing the status of lead measures.
2. Design the scoreboard
  - Personalize. Let the team members personalize the scoreboard, such as add a team name, photographs of team members, cartoons, or other items that represent the team. Remember that engagement drives results.
  - Does it show where you're at compared to where you should be and over what time?
  - Can the team access and understand it easily?
  - Can you tell at a glance if you're winning? 5 second rule - can you tell in 5 seconds or less if you're winning or losing? If not, it's too complicated.
3. Build the scoreboard
  - Signs, poster board, whiteboard, chalkboard, etc.
4. Keep it updated
  - Who is responsible for the scoreboard?
  - When it will be posted?
  - How often it will be updated?
5. Did you get it right?
  - Has the team been closely involved in creating the scoreboard?
  - Does the scoreboard track the team WIG and lead measures?
  - Is there a full explanation of the WIG and lead measures along with the graphs?
  - Does every graph display both actual results and the target results? (Where are we now? Where should we be?)
  - For every measure, can we tell at a glance if we're winning or losing?
  - Is the scoreboard posted in a highly visible location where the team can see it easily and often?
  - Is the scoreboard easy to update?
  - Is the scoreboard personalized as a unique expression of the team?
6. Deliverable: A scoreboard that keeps the team engaged

## Discipline #4: Create a Cadence of Accountability

This is the discipline of accountability. Even though you've designed a game that's clear and effective, without consistent accountability, the team is not motivated to give their best efforts to the game. This is done with WIG sessions. A WIG session has a singular purpose: Refocus the team on the WIG despite the daily whirlwind. It takes place at least weekly and sometimes more often.

### WIG Session Agendas

Review: The leader reviews the scoreboard

Learn: Discuss and learn from successes and failures.

Report: Each team member reports on last week's commitments.

- State the commitment.
- State its outcome.

Plan: Clear the path by removing obstacles and make new commitments that will raise the lead measures to the required level of performance the coming week.

Commit: Make one or two commitments that have the highest impact using these guidelines:

- Be specific. Exactly what will you do and what is the outcome?
- Start with "I". It's a personal commitment.
- Make it timely. Must be able to be completed in the coming day/week.
- Must be directed at moving the lead measures on the scoreboard.

WATCH OUT! Common pitfalls include:

- Competing whirlwind responsibilities. Don't let the whirlwind into the WIG session.
- Only considering how your actions will affect the scoreboard. Stick to specific outcomes.
- Repeating the same commitment for more than two weeks.
- Accepting unfulfilled commitments.

Keys to Successful WIG Sessions

- Stick to a schedule at the same day and time every day/week.
- Keep sessions brief. 20-30 min at most.
- Set the standard as the leader. Report on your own commitments.
- Post the scoreboard.
- Celebrate success of kept commitments.
- Share what is and isn't working.
- Refuse to let the whirlwind enter. Limit the discussion to commitments that move forward the scoreboard. Avoid small talk.
- Clear the path for one another. Remove obstacles.
- Execute in spite of the whirlwind. Hold team members unconditionally accountable. If a commitment is missed one week/day, it must be accounted for.
- Keep an eye out for future leaders in the WIG session.

Deliverable: Regular, frequent WIG sessions that move the lead measures



### About Diane Hopkins Coaching

With decades of experience transforming lives and careers, Diane Hopkins has coached executives and corporate professionals at Fortune 500 companies, start-ups, and nonprofits. Partnering with organizations in challenging times, Diane has coached thousands of leaders about their personal “why” and guided many to achieve their mission and goals.

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