

Annual Planning Cheat Sheet

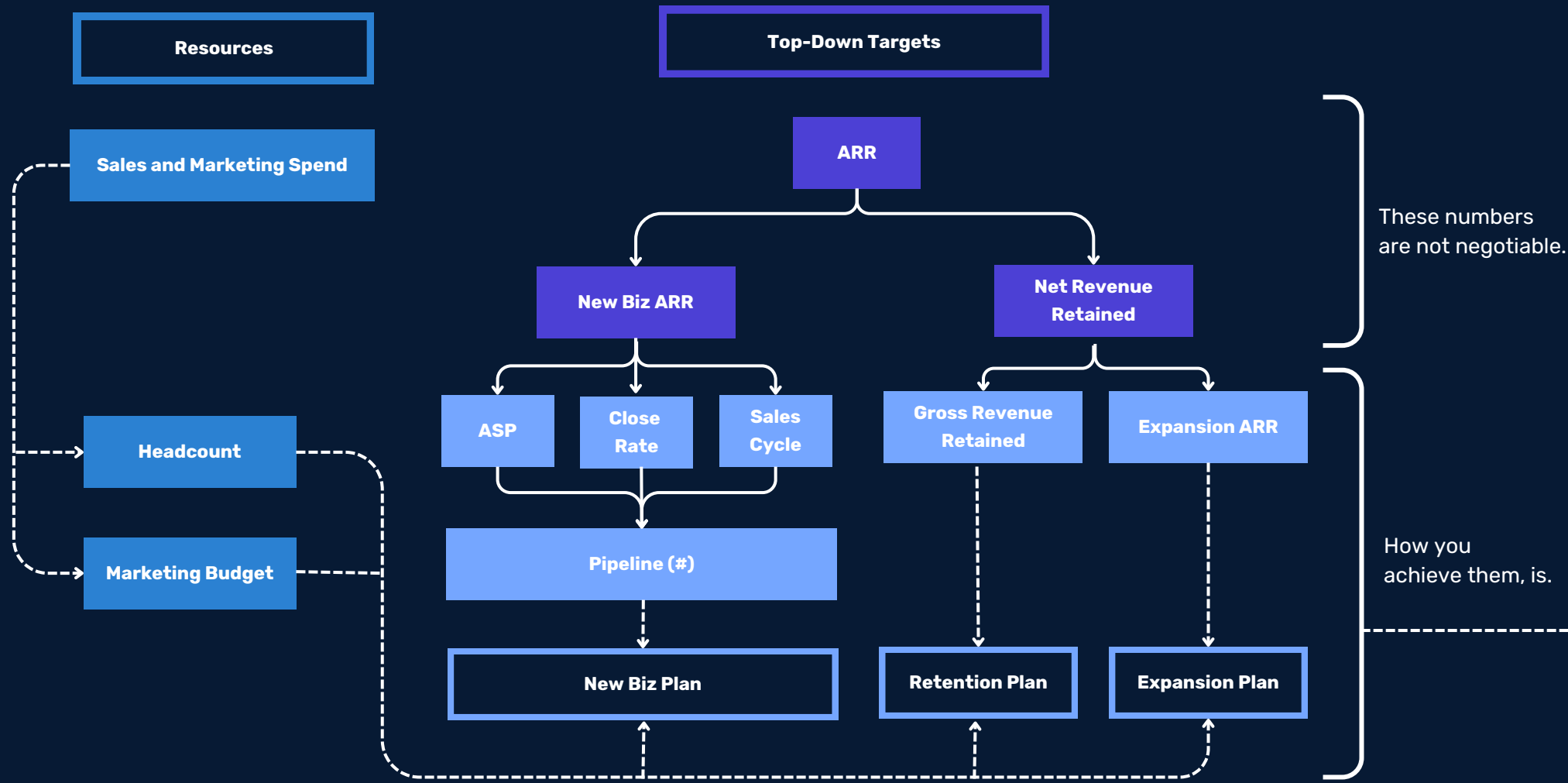
Set yourself up for success on day one of Q1.

[Click here to see the full Framework](#)



Step 1: Start with Top-Down Targets

Take the revenue number set by the board, along with any other strategic priorities. The place where our top-down numbers and resources meet is where the annual plan lives.

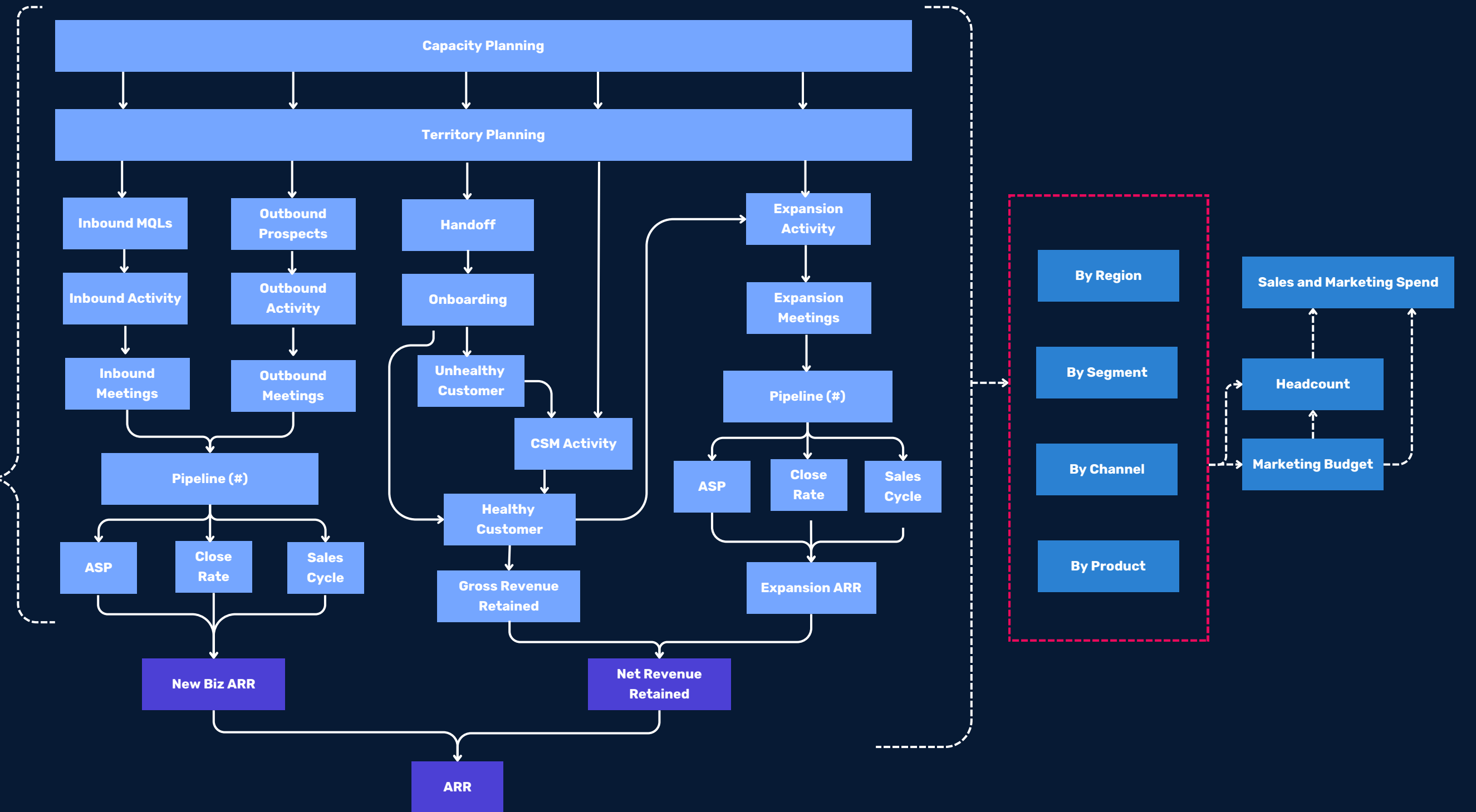


Step 2: Build a Bottoms-Up Plan

This is where you define what your current team, resources, and model can actually deliver. It rarely matches board targets, and that gap is where the real planning begins.

A strong bottoms-up plan includes:

- Funnel Math
- Capacity Modeling
- Resource Planning
- Retention and Expansion



Step 3: Align and Bridge the Gap

This is where strategic planning begins. Here, we must find opportunities throughout the organization to bridge the gap between our current capabilities and the boards' targets.

Approach	Description	Result	Example
Quantify the Gap	Make the delta between top-down and bottoms-up explicit.	We know exactly how much revenue needs to be "found".	Top-Down Target = \$120M ARR Bottoms-Up Plan = \$102M ARR Gap = \$18M ARR
Model Scenarios	Explore different paths to close the gap. Expect to repeat this stage several times.	We have several various plans to bring to the negotiating table.	Adding headcount, increasing marketing spend, improving conversion rates, expanding into new markets, or increasing retention.
Make Trade-Offs Visible	How does each decision in our scenarios affect everything else, both good and bad?	We can visualize the trade-off with each decision, opening up paths for negotiation where everyone is aligned on reality.	If marketing spend goes up by \$2M, what does that do to CAC payback? If NRR improves from 95% to 100%, how much ARR does that add?
Present and Iterate	This is the "negotiation" stage, the part that will take the most time. The end result will be a plan with trade-offs that everyone can agree on.	Everyone is aligned on what resources and assumptions are realistic.	Discuss these scenarios with leadership early. Adjust the plan based on the outcome.

Step 4: Develop Your GTM Strategy

Now that we know what needs to be adjusted, we need to map out the initiatives that will help us achieve those goals.

EXAMPLE

Adjustment	Initiatives	Key Questions to Answer
Increase Close Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review pipeline management process and stage entry/exit criteria • Revisit ICP definitions and validate • Restructure sales coaching cadences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which customer segments, geographies, or industries are you prioritizing? Which ones are you deprioritizing? • Has the ideal customer profile evolved?
Increase Pipeline Generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review lead follow-up times and cadences, reduce handraiser follow-up time to <5 minutes • Explore new inbound channels, test and iterate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there new patterns in your highest-value accounts? • Are there changes needed to drive competitiveness or expand deal size?
Improve Net Revenue Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire more CSMs to match required headcount needed to cover all accounts, according to capacity plan • Improve sales to CS handoff process • Implement customer health scorecards and automated flagging system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a way to improve focus on a narrower ICP? • What balance of growth will come from new logo acquisition vs. expansion and retention?
Increase ASP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create new Enterprise market offer • Deprioritize lowest-paying customer industries • Connect sales and product teams to review pricing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What roles will inbound, outbound, partners, and product-led growth play?

Step 5: Build Detailed Execution Plans

Strategy is useless without execution. Once direction is set, you need detailed plans for how each function will deliver.

SALES	MARKETING	CUSTOMER SUCCESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map out account coverage and capacity. • Plan headcount additions and ramp timelines. • Define quotas, territories, and compensation plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set pipeline and revenue targets by source. • Allocate budget across channels and campaigns. • Map key activities tied to revenue goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set renewal and expansion targets. • Define account coverage models and customer segmentation. • Align capacity and hiring plans with retention and upsell goals.
REVENUE OPERATIONS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build the models and reporting needed to measure success. • Design processes, SLAs, and handoffs that align GTM functions. • Ensure systems, data, and tech stack are ready to support execution. • Most importantly, prioritize which GTM motions to improve during the year. 		

Step 7: Communicate, Track, and Iterate

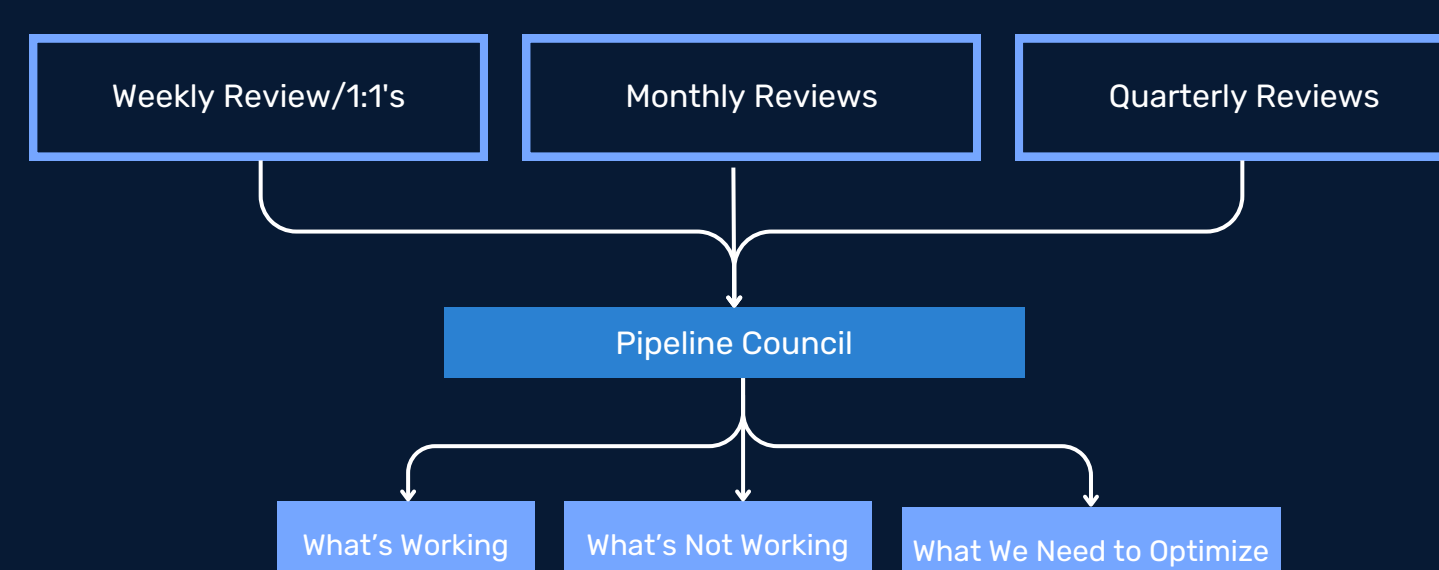
A good plan is flexible enough to evolve as you go. Regular check-ins and adjustments ensure that you're on track and can pivot when needed.

- Start by communicating the plan clearly
- Schedule weekly, monthly, and quarterly reviews
- Use dashboards to track performance continuously
- Regularly block time for analysts to slice and dice numbers
- And finally, iterate ruthlessly

Metrics and Items to Review

Revenue by Channel	New Business Pipeline	Expansion Pipeline	Renewal Pipeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leads Created • Sales Activities • Meetings Booked • Pipeline Generated • Conversion Rates • Close Rate • Sales Cycle • ASP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pipeline Generated (\$ /#) • Stage Conversion Rates • Close Rate • Sales Cycle • ASP • Follow-Ups • Deal Reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pipeline Generated (\$ /#) • Stage Conversion Rates • Close Rate • Sales Cycle • ASP • Follow-Ups • Deal Reviews • Stakeholder/Product Whitespace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewal Rate • Sales Handoff • Onboarding • Customer Health • CSM Meetings • QBRs • Red Flags • Renewal Process • Churn Insights

Review Cadences



Step 6: Turn the Plan Into Action

This step is about transforming plans into execution-ready systems, processes, and rhythms.

Forecasting Models	Build monthly and quarterly revenue forecasts that tie back to your assumptions and allow scenario modeling.
Processes and SLAs	Define how leads flow, how handoffs happen, and how opportunities progress through the funnel.
Metrics and Reporting	Establish KPIs across acquisition, retention, expansion, and efficiency — and ensure they're tracked in real time.
Tech Stack Readiness	Audit and optimize your CRM, automation tools, and analytics infrastructure so they support your plan out of the gate.

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