

# THE CREATIVE GORILLA #117

*Help shape your strategy with critical success factors...*

## Use Critical Success Factors...

*"I never cry about what I don't have. I'm always positive. I am happy with the team I have and I am confident that we can do well." Fabio Capello, England football coach*



*How is your strategy setting?*

I appreciate many of you are sighing with relief that the World Cup is over, however, Spain's win triggered an idea for an article, so bear with me.....

On the TV, pundits were discussing what had to be done to enable England to win the World Cup. It seems that a Critical Success Factor (CSF) for Spain, is that they have many times more qualified football coaches than any other country in Europe, so helping to produce more skilled footballers.

By chance the same day, I was designing a workshop for a client in which I am using a tool called a Strategy Canvas, which is worth sharing with fellow Gorillas.

How do you use the tool? It requires a number of steps:

1. Detail a preferred future by asking, "What does our strategic success look like to our customers and key stakeholders?" You might like to draw a picture and then

document this.

2. Identify the five to eight CSFs that you must deliver to achieve this preferred future;

Discuss if they really are critical to success and whether collectively they will enable you to achieve success

3. On a scale of 1 – 10, for each CSF, describe how you would know that you are at "10".

4. As a group, identify where you are today on each scale and plot on a chart with "Strength of fit against customer expectations" on the vertical axis and CSF "Customer Issues of Importance" on the other.

5. Discuss what has enabled you to reach this score on each CSF;

Note that people will often discuss what is stopping you move to "10". Remind them of the question

6. Discuss what score your clients would give you for each CSF.

7. Complete your chart.

8. Consider the actions to take to push the CSFs up the scale, one step at a time.

**so**

What you have now is a simple chart that you can use to:

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Discuss with staff at lower levels (and perhaps have them develop their own chart for their own objectives)

Measure your progress by reviewing the chart at team meetings

Regular readers will notice Solutions Focussed tools in these steps (Future Perfect, Scaling, Counters, Small Actions. click [here](#) for an article to explain these). In essence, this is a SF approach to strategy, focussing on what clients would sense in your future and how to achieve this. The alternative is to take a problem focussed approach that leads to a lot of internal focus on what is happening now and how to move away from it. In effect, as Shariff and Arbington say (see below for reference), it turns the strategy process on its head.

## ACTION

Try this out for yourself.

## TO CLOSE

I was working in Ghana on the Monday after the World Cup quarter final they lost controversially to Uruguay, (in the last minute a player stopped a certain goal using his hands). In the taxi en route to my course (a 75 minute drive across town), I listened to endless discussions about the match, most of which were very supportive about Ghana and the long-term future of football in Africa. I was amazed though that some people criticised the team and the manager, a team that progressed further than many top European teams and lost only on penalties.

It seems for some, the “critical” success factor in football is to be critical about the team; something we have been very good at in England too. Instead of blaming everyone

from the grounds men to the FA, plus the team, the manager and the tea maker, what if we took a Solutions Focused approach to improving the success of the England football team?

I’m available with my Strategy Canvas when you need me, Fabio!

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*John Brooker | Facilitate, Innovate, Transform.*

I first saw the Strategy Canvas in an article about a local college by Adie Shariff and Alison Arbington of Ashridge Management College, (click [here](#) for a copy. If it comes up scrambled, copy the link and paste in to your browser directly). An article also recently appeared in the SFCT Journal of Solutions Focus in Organisations <http://www.asfct.org>



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