



Podcast Episode Takeaway Guide

Strategic Planning Tips From PCBB's CEO: AI, Change & Growth

For in-depth guidance and practical tips, listen to the full [Banking Out Loud](#) episode!

Key Strategic Planning Steps

1. **Set Mission, Vision, and Core Values**
 - Clarify the bank's purpose, long-term goals, and guiding principles
2. **Conduct a SWOT/Situation Analysis**
 - Evaluate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
3. **Align Management & Board Collaboration**
 - Ensure the plan is built with shared input and organizational alignment
4. **Define Strategic Goals & Objectives**
 - Develop clear, measurable, market-driven objectives linked to the mission
5. **Develop Strategies & Action Plans**
 - Create specific initiatives at company & department levels with timelines and accountability
6. **Resource Allocation**
 - Assess and allocate financial, technological, and talent resources, prioritize as needed
7. **Set Performance Metrics/KPIs**
 - Establish measurable indicators, monitor progress, and schedule periodic reviews
8. **Board Review & Approval**
 - Boards ensure alignment with risk appetite, capital, liquidity, and communicate the plan
9. **Implementation & Continuous Review**
 - Put the plan into action, adjust as needed, and update regularly in response to market shifts

Current Industry Trends to Consider

- **Digital Transformation**
 - Modernize technology, embrace embedded finance and real-time digital banking
 - Adopt automation and AI for efficiency, fraud prevention, and compliance
- **Tech Stack Modernization**
 - Upgrade legacy core systems selectively to enable innovation and scalability

- **Competition & Market Shifts**
 - Compete with fintechs and digital-first banks; focus on deepening digital engagement and wallet share
- **Niche Lending & Product Differentiation**
 - Pursue local lending gaps, diversify offerings (e.g., wealth management, treasury), personalize the customer experience
- **Compliance & Regulation**
 - Prepare for major changes, including sweeping CRA updates in 2026 and rising compliance costs
 - Simplify processes and maintain a robust risk management approach
- **Data Privacy & Cybersecurity**
 - Prioritize customer data protection, invest in real-time fraud prevention and cybersecurity education
- **Talent & Culture**
 - Attract digital-savvy talent, foster sustainable partnerships, and optimize processes
- **Financial Performance**
 - Focus on margin expansion, creative deposit gathering, liquidity stress testing
- **Leadership & Succession**
 - Emphasize leadership stability and robust succession planning

Lessons Learned: Critical Success Factors & Pitfalls from Curt Hecker's Experience

- **Project Management**
 - Treat every strategic initiative as a project with clear leadership and ongoing alignment
- **Communication**
 - Maintain constant, intentional communication throughout the organization
- **Focus & Flexibility**
 - Avoid losing sight of strategy amid innovation; balance risk and agility
- **Partnerships**
 - Approach fintech collaborations thoughtfully—with rigorous processes and risk oversight



Words of Wisdom

- Use technology and AI strategically to optimize efficiency and drive transformation
- Ensure tech investments align with business goals and overall strategy—not just routine maintenance
- Build an AI roadmap focusing on scalable, value-driving use cases (e.g., personalization, compliance, marketing)
- Treat data as a strategic asset: focus on quality, ownership, and integration
- Innovate customer experience while embedding enterprise risk management
- Continue learning. Look to professional associations such as ICBA, ABA, Bank Director, and other banking groups that offer training, conferences, and written materials to stay current on these trends and their intended impact. Also, look to consultants and subject-matter experts who might share their visions of the future and the impact on banking.

Want the full story and expert strategies? [Listen to the podcast episode.](#)

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