

Develop a long-term strategic plan

Futureproofing means getting your business ready to succeed in the future.

Focus on staying flexible, trying new ideas and handling challenges as they come. Plan ahead so you can spot opportunities and stay ahead of the game.

1

Set long-term innovation goals

Create clear, long-term innovation goals. Provide a roadmap for sustainable growth and continuous improvement. A practical way to define these objectives is to use the SMART goal framework.

2

Foster a culture of continuous learning

Keep you and your team curious about new things. Experiment, learn and practice.

You could do this by using new technologies, exploring new markets or learning new skills.

3

Monitor emerging trends

Use tools like Google Trends, industry reports and market research platforms to keep up with the latest developments. These tools provide great data on consumer behaviour and areas that could be opportunities.

SMART goals

Specific

Be clear on what you want to achieve. For example, 'develop and launch three new products'.

Measurable

Decide how you're going to track success. Metrics might be product development timelines, the number of prototypes or customer satisfaction scores.

Achievable

Make sure the goals are realistic with your business' current resources. For example, launching one new product per year might be more achievable than launching one every month.

Relevant

Make sure your innovation matches your business goals. For example, if you want to launch a new product, make sure it's relevant to your target market.

Time-bound

Set a timeline for each goal. Long-term innovation goals can be broken down into yearly or quarterly milestones, such as 'introduce the first product prototype by March'.



Additional resources

Make use of the right digital tools to make your processes easier and tackle the challenges of growing. Here's a list of tools and templates to help you power up. Make sure you explore other options too, to find out what works for your business.

Communication

[Zoom](#)

Host meetings online to keep your team connected.

[Slack](#)

A messaging, calling and document sharing platform for your team to stay in touch instantly.

Project management

[Asana](#)

Manage tasks, and track timelines and projects.

[Trello](#)

Manage projects using boards and cards to track progress.

[Monday.com](#)

Excellent for managing larger teams and projects as your business grows. Keep track of deadlines and documents with ease.

CRM

[Salesforce](#)

A powerful CRM tool that helps you scale customer relationships and manage complex sales pipelines.

[HubSpot](#)

Includes marketing automation, sales management and customer service features, ideal for scaling businesses.

[Zoho CRM](#)

A more affordable CRM with automation features for lead management and customer engagement.

Growth roadmap templates

[Business roadmap template](#)

Visualise your scaling goals and strategic initiatives over a 12- to 18-month period.

[Scaling strategy outline](#)

Structured templates that outline each step of your business growth, including key milestones, resources and financial projections.

Marketing automation

[Mailchimp](#)

Automates email marketing and customer engagement.

[Hootsuite](#)

Helps to manage and scale social media efforts across multiple platforms.

[ActiveCampaign](#)

Combines email marketing, automation and CRM.

Performance dashboards

[Google Data Studio](#)

Lets you visualise and track business metrics in real time, such as your sales, marketing performance and customer retention.

[Tableau](#)

Offers detailed data visualisation to help identify trends and opportunities during business growth.

HR and payroll

[BrightHR](#)

HR, health and safety and payroll solutions.

[myhrtoolkit](#)

Easy to use HR management tools.

Risk management templates

[Risk assessment templates](#)

Available through tools like [Smartsheet](#). These help you identify and plan for potential risks during scaling.

[Contingency planning tools](#)

Develop backup plans using templates available through sites like [Lucidchart](#). These can help map out alternative strategies.

Employee development

[Santander Open Academy](#)

Our e-learning and training platform for professional development.

Business insurance and energy

[AXA](#)

Offers business insurance to help protect against financial losses.

[Hiscox UK](#)

Offers business insurance to help protect against financial losses.

[Bionic](#)

Compare, switch and renew your business energy and broadband.

[Business Energy Comparison](#)

Compare business energy prices from multiple suppliers.

Extra reading, websites and resources

Books

- [The Founder's Mentality: How to Build a Lasting Business by Chris Zook and James Allen](#)
- [Good to Great by Jim Collins](#)

Websites

- [Santander Breakthrough](#)
- [UK Research and Innovation](#)

Podcasts

- [The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett](#)
- [The Next 100 Days Podcast](#)

Government resources

- [GOV.UK](#)
- [Department for Business and Trade](#)