

Life and Business Self-Assessment

An essential element of strategic planning is knowing your current position across a range of life and business areas, and identifying and prioritising areas that you need to work on.

Work through the following 'self-assessment' form to identify your highest priority areas to work on. Tick each question - green for yes or going well, red for no or needs attention and orange for ok or sort of. Beside the 'reds' make a brief note to describe why you have marked it as a red and what a green would look like for you.

The objective here is to really focus on a small number of areas to move you forward significantly, not 65 areas. The list below looks large but think about the very high priority areas. Try scanning through the list before you start ticking so you have an idea of what is in here. This first page shows an example to give you an idea how many red ticks this particular person ticked.

Focus Areas	YES ✓	OK ✓	NO ✓	Make your own notes: For the red ticks, what is the issue and what needs to change to make it a green tick
Strategic Planning				
Succession plan in place and communicated			✓	One of our three children is interested in coming back to the farm. We need some good advice on how to approach this from a succession / inheritance perspective
Financial KPIs on track?				
Operating profit			✓	Our profit is average but we think it could be top 20%. We want to find a top 20% farm and go and see them.
Networks and Advisors				
High quality advice and support provided by consultant, accountant, lawyer			✓	We don't feel our accountant and consultant are that interested in our goals and working with us. We want to look for alternative options.
Family and spouse				
Happy with balance in your life i.e. farm, family, spouse, leisure			✓	Spend too much time working which is putting too much pressure on the family- need to book in more breaks away
Personal strengths and weaknesses				
Know your weaknesses and minimise these			✓	We are extremely conservative and too nervous to take up new opportunities. We think we need to mix with a more positive group of progressive people to give us confidence to get on with things.
Health, fitness and leisure				
You are healthy, fit and have low stress			✓	Poor quality diet. We are also overweight. We know a full health check is required and a change in eating habits.

Example

Focus areas	YES ✓	OK ✓	NO ✓	Make your own notes: For the red ticks, what is the issue and what needs to change to make it a green tick
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Strategic Planning

You love what you do				
Your Strategic Plan is in place and being used				
You are achieving your goals				
Succession plan in place and communicated				
Plans/insurance in place if injury or death				
Legally compliant: safety, people, environmental, dairy				
Effective Governance Plan in place				
Risk management plan in place				

Financial skills

Budgeting and cashflow management skills				
You are a good 'saver'				
Regularly evaluate new opportunities				
Efficient office systems in place				

Focus areas	YES ✓	OK ✓	NO ✓	Make your own notes: For the red ticks, what is the issue and what needs to change to make it a green tick
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Financial KPIs on track?	YES	OK	NO	
Current equity or net worth (\$)				
Growth of equity last 5 to 10 years (%)				
Return on Assets (%)				
Discretionary cash – cash available to pay off debt and grow the business				
Operating profit				
Debt level or Debt to asset ratio (%)				
Can maintain a profit even if costs increase or milk price drops				

Staff Management	YES	OK	NO	
Employment compliance				
Staff turnover low				
Positive staff attitude				
Formal recruitment and people management systems in place				
Understand how to work with people with different personalities				

Focus areas	YES ✓	OK ✓	NO ✓	Make your own notes: For the red ticks, what is the issue and what needs to change to make it a green tick
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Farm production KPIs on track?	YES	OK	NO	Make your own notes:
Milksolids/ha /cow and as a % of cow liveweight				
Pasture production - amount grown or eaten/ha				
Empty rate (%) or 6 week in calf rate				
Heifer weights entering the herd				
Pasture covers at calving & 1 st June				
Cow condition at calving				
Overall herd health including cell count				
Clear supplement policy including breakeven supplement price				
Farm management policies and procedures documented				
Suitable infrastructure, water, effluent, sheds, houses				
Overall good farm management skills				

<i>Focus areas</i>	YES ✓	OK ✓	NO ✓	Make your own notes: For the red ticks, what is the issue and what needs to change to make it a green tick
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Environmental sustainability				
Farm is fully compliant				
Knowledge of local environmental / effluent rules				
Nutrient and effluent management plans in place				

Networks and Advisors				
High quality advice and support provided by consultant, accountant, lawyer				
Appropriate farmer mentors				
Peers and discussion group members that provide motivation, advice etc.				
Membership of industry groups				
Spend time with positive progressive people				

Family & spouse				
Family environment is content/happy				
Happy with balance in your life i.e. farm, family, spouse, leisure				
Enough time 'off farm' with family/friends – day trips, holidays				

<i>Focus areas</i>	YES ✓	OK ✓	NO ✓	Make your own notes: For the red ticks, what is the issue and what needs to change to make it a green tick
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Personal strengths and weaknesses

Know your strengths and build on these				
Know your weaknesses and minimise these				
Spend enough time learning, reading, personal development				

Health, fitness and leisure

Acceptable average hours worked per week				
Adequate hours of sleep				
Good diet				
You are healthy, fit and low stress				
Recent GP health check				
Time spent on favourite leisure or sporting activities				

<i>Focus areas</i>	YES ✓	OK ✓	NO ✓	Make your own notes: For the red ticks, what is the issue and what needs to change to make it a green tick
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Community and spiritual

Enough time for charitable or voluntary work				
Are you content, and have inner peace				
Connection with church/God/spiritual				

Other
