New Charter TECHNOLOGIES

Taylor BUSINESS GROUP

FRONTRUNNER™ MATURITY MODEL ASSESSMENT

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See how you stack up against your peers! Scan for instant access to our assessment tool.

Welcome to the FrontRunner™ Maturity Model assessment test, proudly powered by New Charter Technologies.

In the ever-evolving landscape of business, success extends far beyond financial figures. It's about understanding the ins and outs of your operations, gauging your maturity, and setting a course toward sustained excellence.

This assessment isn't just about numbers—it's a journey of self-discovery for your business. Through thought-provoking questions, we delve into the heart of your operations, exploring what sets exceptional companies apart. Discover the benchmarks of best-in-class performance, and gain valuable insights into what it takes to be successful in the current marketplace through the lens of our FrontRunner methodologies (Growth, Business Efficiency, People and Client Experience).

The Maturity Model assessment equips you with the knowledge and insight to position yourself at the forefront of your industry. See how you stack up against your peers, and uncover areas for improvement that you might never have considered.

This assessment is relevant for all channel partners—pure-play MSPs, VARs, IT consultants, communications partners, technology advisors, cloud service providers, etc. Regardless of your specialization, the FrontRunner Maturity Model assessment is meant to help you realize your business's full potential.

Join us on a path of exploration, self-improvement, and growth!

Regards,

Mitchell T Morgan

Mitch Morgan

New Charter Technologies
CEO

FrontRunner processes at New Charter represent an industry relevant consulting toolkit designed to support our businesses in being better tomorrow than yesterday; meeting Partner Companies where they are, promulgating best practices, and increasing efficiency by building on established frameworks rather than starting from scratch.

NEW CHARTER TECHNOLOGIES

FRONTRUNNER

METHODOLOGIES — ELEVATING BEST-IN-CLASS

GROWTH | BUSINESS EFFICIENCY | PEOPLE | CLIENT EXPERIENCE

GROWTH

Most IT solutions providers know that they must implement an intentional growth strategy if they want to stay competitive. It can be easy to be tricked into thinking that there is one right way to achieve this. Fortunately, there is no one blueprint to follow here—growth is a concept that requires a multifaceted approach.

Even if your company is experiencing growth, a smart channel leader is always focused on continuous improvement. Most leadership teams aspire to operate according to industry best practices, but learning from those who have achieved uninterrupted growth and demonstrated a focus on constant improvement is one of the best ways to become a front-runner in your own market.

BUSINESS EFFICIENCY

There are many facets to business efficiency. It means working together, developing technical competency and having a sense of accountability, mutual support, collaboration, and sharing of best practices. It also means supporting leadership development through curiosity, decision data, organizational learning, problem solving, teamwork, and talent development.

Understanding your financial and operational metrics are two parts of a balanced approach to building an MSP, but understanding what “Best in Class” attributes—and the discreet measures needed to build them—are another.

PEOPLE

People matter. Starting with the hiring processing and continuing throughout one’s career, it is now more important than ever to let your people know they are more than a piece of paper, or a number on a spreadsheet. Investing in and cultivating a culture that provides true opportunities for growth through formalized learning, development and career pathing is just one step.

Technology service businesses are fundamentally centered around people, making a people-oriented approach absolutely critical for achieving success. A people-focused culture creates a positive environment, driving engagement, satisfaction, and organizational success. By valuing your people, companies boost retention and performance, ultimately fueling sustainable growth.

CLIENT EXPERIENCE

How do you drive a positive and successful client experience? The business impact has unmatched potential, including but not limited to higher technology stack adoption, better service results, higher-level, deeper relationships, client retention, better discussions and enhanced client profitability.

It doesn’t stop there, but it is ultimately important to be involved throughout all aspects of the client journey.

GROWTH

WHAT WAS YOUR ANNUAL, ORGANIC REVENUE GROWTH RATE IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS?

- [ ] 5% or Less
- [ ] 5% to 10%
- [ ] 10% to 15%
- [ ] Over 15%

HOW WELL DO YOU TRACK LEADS AND SALES DEALS?

- [ ] We do not effectively track leads & sales deals
- [ ] We track sales deals inconsistently
- [ ] We consistently track leads and sales data in a consistent system and have clear accountability for updating data
- [ ] We track leads and sales deals in a centralized system and review reports and dashboards regularly

HOW MANY REFERRAL LEADS HAVE YOU GENERATED IN THE LAST YEAR? (AS A % OF TOTAL CLIENTS IN YOUR CLIENT BASE)

- [ ] 0 - 2%
- [ ] 1 - 5%
- [ ] 5 - 10%
- [ ] 10% and greater

BESIDES REFERRAL LEADS, HOW MANY OTHER LEAD SOURCES BROUGHT IN AT LEAST 2 LEADS IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR? (WE HAVE A LIST)

- [ ] 0
- [ ] 1 - 2
- [ ] 3 - 4
- [ ] >4

WHO LEADS SALES IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

- [ ] Owner only sales
- [ ] Sales led by a non-dedicated resource (possibly in conjunction with the owner)
- [ ] Sales is led by a dedicated resource, but the owner really leads sales
- [ ] Sales is led by a dedicated team member with experience and expertise to be accountable for outcomes

GROWTH

HOW CONSISTENT ARE YOUR MARKETING EFFORTS?

- [ ] Marketing ??
- [ ] We dabble as we see fit, but do not have a marketing strategy
- [ ] We have a partial marketing strategy that encompasses several key categories
- [ ] We have complete marekting strategy that covers all key marketing categories

HOW DO YOU GENERATE REFERRALS?

- [ ] We are flattered when we get them, but we do not ask
- [ ] We ask when we're sure the customer is happy, but there is no defined time or cadence to asking
- [ ] We ask just after we close the sale, and regularly thereafter

WHAT SYSTEM DO YOU DO USE TO TRACK SALES DATA?

- [ ] We don't use a system
- [ ] We use a legacy system
- [ ] We use a legacy system but also work to keep key data updated in Hubspot
- [ ] We use Hubspot

HOW MUCH HAVE YOU GROWN EXISTING CLIENT MRR IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

- [ ] It has decreased (or "I don't know")
- [ ] 0% - 3%
- [ ] 3% - 5%
- [ ] > 5%

DO YOU HAVE A CONSISTENT SALES PROCESS?

- [ ] It is pretty informal. Each situation is different
- [ ] Each person that is involved in sales does it their own way a bit
- [ ] We have a documented sales process that is consistently applied. We track and measure steps along the way
- [ ] The above, and we include all parts of the organization in the sales process. Everyone knows their role. There is a high degree of visibility to prospects and opportunities

BUSINESS EFFICIENCY

WHAT IS YOUR EFFORT TOWARDS STANDARDIZATION IN ALL AREAS OF SERVICE?

- [ ] It seems at least counter-intuitive and possibly counter-productive from a revenue growth standpoint
- [ ] It would be a good thing, but there's no way our customers would accept it
- [ ] If we don't get standards in place, we're never going to be able to develop robust, scalable processes or curtail customer attrition
- [ ] We are starting to enforce standardization and we are seeing early signs of positive results in service level, retention and Gross Margin
- [ ] We've forgotten why we ever thought we couldn't be fully standardized across our entire customer base

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES YOUR CURRENT INSTALLED BASE OF CUSTOMERS ADHERE TO YOUR TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS?

- [ ] It's not a relevant question, since we don't require standards.
- [ ] Few customers are fully standard, and most are only partially standard
- [ ] About half of our customers adhere strictly to our standards.
- [ ] Virtually all of our customers adhere strictly to our standards

TO WHAT EXTENT CAN AND DO YOU REPORT ON THE OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS IN SALES AND SERVICE?

- [ ] We report on basic metrics (Gross Margin production for Salesperson and utilization for Service personnel), but we are not able to or do not publish stack ranking reports of that performance for everyone to see
- [ ] We report on basic metrics and publish stack ranking reports of performance for everyone to see
- [ ] We report on a more complete or sophisticated set of individual performance criteria in Sales and Service, but we are not able to or do not publish stack ranking reports of that performance for everyone to see
- [ ] We can and do report on basic or more sophisticated aspects of individual performance, and we do publish stack ranking reports of that performance for everyone to see

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU UTILIZE FINANCIAL FORECASTING IN YOUR MANAGEMENT METHODOLOGY?

- [ ] We don't formally forecast . We pretty much know what our run-rate business is, and beyond that whatever revenue comes in, is what comes in.
- [ ] We forecast in detail at least 1 month ahead
- [ ] We forecast in detail at least a quarter ahead
- [ ] We have a rolling 12-month forecast

WHAT IS THE RELATIVE FIRST CONTACT RESOLUTION RATIO OF THE FRONT LINE HELP DESK?

- [ ] Low < 70%
- [ ] Moderate 70% to 75%
- [ ] Higher 76% to 80%
- [ ] Highest > 80%

BUSINESS EFFICIENCY

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR PROJECT DELIVERY METHODOLOGY?

- ☐ The individual craftsmanship of our engineers is the primary determiner of project delivery quality
- ☐ We mostly borrow our project delivery methodology from one of our best practices libraries (such as from vendor best practices libraries). Use is not mandatory and is intermittent
- ☐ We've built our own project delivery methodology, and it's mandatory to use. It actually gets used on over 75% of projects
- ☐ We've built our own project delivery methodology, we have every process documented and updated regularly so that we can consistently follow them, and it's used on over 95% of all projects

HOW IS SERVICE GROSS MARGIN PERCENTAGE DETERMINED (FOR SALES COMMISSION PURPOSES)?

- ☐ Whatever the Service is sold at, the Sales person gets a "guaranteed" or fixed Gross Margin percentage (or top-line). Commission COGS is therefore not related
- ☐ Whatever COGS the Service team proposes (bids), a fixed Gross Margin is placed above it. The Sales person can sell below this price if they choose, with no need for management approval. The Service team is solely responsible for delivering to this bidded COGS; Sales is guaranteed the "as bid" Gross Margin percentage
- ☐ Whatever COGS the Service team proposes (bids), a fixed Gross Margin is placed above it, but the Sales person cannot sell below this price without management approval. The Service team is solely responsible for delivering to this bidded COGS; Sales is guaranteed the "as bid" Gross Margin percentage
- ☐ Gross Margin is the selling price minus actual ("as delivered") COGS. Both Sales and Service are therefore fully aligned in finding and qualifying higher value customers, in positioning value and setting expectations during the sales cycle and negotiating the deal, and in managing expectations throughout the service delivery and account management

WHAT FORMS OF SERVICE TIME DO YOU REQUIRE TO BE TRACKED IN YOUR TIME ENTRY SYSTEM?

- ☐ Only time billed to customers and MS/SS accounts. Non-billable and non-MS/SS time doesn't need to be tracked
- ☐ All time is tracked, in essentially three categories: billable to customer, billable to the MS/SS account, and all other (non-billable) more or less lumped together
- ☐ All time is tracked, and there are some half-dozen or more separate categories: billable to customer, non-billable to the same customer, billable to the MS/SS account, internal projects, internal and external training, vacation, medical leave, etc.

WHICH ANSWER BEST CHARACTERIZES THE TRACKING OF SERVICE REQUESTS IN YOUR COMPANY?

- ☐ Service request logging is ad hoc. It's up to the person first receiving the request to decide whether it merits logging or not. Usually, if they can fulfill or resolve the request, and it doesn't need to be transferred or escalated, it isn't entered.
- ☐ It is required to log all service requests, and most are, but still less than 90%
- ☐ More than 90% of all service requests are logged.

TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE YOU DEFINED THE TYPES OF SERVICE REQUESTS THAT YOU RECEIVE?

- ☐ We have not defined service request types
- ☐ We have defined service request types but they are often not properly applied
- ☐ We have defined service request types and they are applied accurately

HOW DOES THE COMPANY CELEBRATE SUCCESS?

- [ ] We don’t share informwation about company performance with the team
- [ ] We share company successes and failures within the leadership team
- [ ] We talk about company goals with the leadership team and they share in our financial success
- [ ] We share company goals with everyone and publicly celebrate success at all levels of the organization

HOW DOES THE COMPANY SUPPORT THE PROFESSIONAL GROWTH OF THE TEAM?

- [ ] We don’t have a formal program and are worried about training our people because we’re afraid they’ll leave
- [ ] We don’t have a formal program but we try to work with someone if they raise their hand
- [ ] We have some career paths defined and we’ve told people about them
- [ ] Our career paths are integral to our culture and everyone knows what their next step is

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN SOMEONE ISN’T PERFORMING THEIR JOB WELL?

- [ ] We talk to them about it as long as we can afford to lose that person
- [ ] We address it in a scheduled performance review
- [ ] Ongoing feedback and honest dialog is a part of our culture so we call out performance issues immediately so people aren’t surprised if things escalate when an issue isn’t corrected

TO WHAT DEGREE DO YOU ARTICULATE AND COMMUNICATE YOUR COMPANY’S VISION AND SPECIFIC GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR TO ALL EMPLOYEES?

- [ ] We look to do better in the coming year than we did last year. We don’t hold any company meetings to communicate that, though all employees generally know that we want to do better
- [ ] We establish a budget as a general guideline of what we want to achieve for the year. We communicate the budgeted objectives for each functional area to the respective department leaders
- [ ] The management team goes through an iterative process to establish aggressive yet attainable goals for the upcoming year. The goals are shared with all the company via an email from the CEO to all employees
- [ ] The management team goes through an iterative process to establish aggressive yet attainable goals for the upcoming year. The goals are shared with all via a company annual kickoff meeting
- [ ] We establish very specific and measurable goals for the year for the company in terms of financial performance, customer, and employee satisfaction. We hold an annual kickoff meeting for all employees, review the past years accomplishments and challenges, outline our vision for the coming year along with our newly minted goals, all of which creates a sense of urgency and energizes the team

WHAT IS YOUR COMPANY’S OVERALL COMPENSATION STRATEGY?

- [ ] We do what we need to do to get the talent we need, when we need it
- [ ] Our company’s compensation strategy is to lag the market (i.e. pay below mid-market pay) for the role, responsibility and skill
- [ ] Our company’s compensation strategy is to lag the market (i.e. pay below mid-market pay) for the role, responsibility and skill, and we have other clearly defined value proposition factors that allow us to be successful doing this
- [ ] Our company’s compensation strategy is to match the market (i.e. pay mid-market pay) for the role, responsibility and skill
- [ ] Our company’s compensation strategy is to match the market (i.e. pay mid-market pay) for the role, responsibility and skill, and we have other clearly defined value proposition factors that allow us to be successful doing this
- [ ] Our company’s compensation strategy is to lead the market (i.e. pay above mid-market pay) for the role, responsibility and skill - this is how we attract and retain talent

PEOPLE

DESCRIBE THE LEVEL OF VISIBILITY THAT MID LEVEL MANAGERS HAVE INTO THE BUSINESS OVERALL

- ☐ We don't share business financial performance information with them, and they don't have access to salary information
- ☐ We share financial performance information with them, but they don't know how much their team makes or influence salary decisions
- ☐ We share financial performance information with them, and they know how much their team makes but they don't influence salary decisions
- ☐ We share financial performance information with them, and they make pay decisions for their team according to their understanding of company, team, and individual performance and business factors

DOES EVERYONE CLEARLY UNDERSTAND HOW THEY'RE PERFORMING IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

- ☐ Probably, but I'm not sure because we don't have a documented process or cultural values that drive this
- ☐ Probably, but our managers don't use our feedback processes consistently and we don't have consistent cultural values around this
- ☐ Yes, we believe so, because we have a process that is followed most of the time and our culture reinforces these values
- ☐ Yes, our culture and consistently followed processes ensure that this is the case. We're good at having hard conversations when necessary

WHAT IS YOUR ORGANIZATION'S APPROACH TO INTERNAL COMMUNICATION?

- ☐ We have meetings when there is big news to share
- ☐ We have a regular cadence of meetings that we follow most of the time
- ☐ We have a consistent cadence of meetings that reaches all levels of employees. We cascade communication from execurive leadership very successfully.

DOES THE ORGANIZATION HAVE A CLEAR PATH FOR NEW HIRE TRAINING, ONBOARDING, & ENGAGEMENT?

- ☐ We have no defined onboarding processes and need help developing one
- ☐ We have some defined processes, however feel the new hire onboarding process is still choatic and not clearly defined
- ☐ We have defined onboarding SOPs, introduction to org structure and mission/values, training plans, and set clear 30-60-90-180 day objectives for our new hires

HOW DOES THE COMPANY ALIGN LEARNING STRATEGIES WITH TALENT AND BUSINESS STRATEGIES?

- ☐ We don't have a formal way of doing this
- ☐ We have formal learning that aligns to our business needs and is updated as needed
- ☐ We have built our learning strategy to align with our talent needs and update the learning strategy when needed
- ☐ We have built our learning strategy to align with our talent and business strategies, and review and update those learning strategies annually

CLIENT EXPERIENCE

ACROSS ALL YOUR RECURRING REVENUE CUSTOMERS, HOW MANY OF THEM RECEIVE PERIODIC BUSINESS REVIEWS (PBRS)?

- ☐ 0% - 25%
- ☐ 26% - 60%
- ☐ 61% - 89%
- ☐ 90% - 100%

ARE YOU EFFICIENT AND CONSISTENT IN THE TOOLS, TEMPLATES AND INFORMATION SOURCES/PRESENTATION FORMAT FOR PBRS?

- ☐ Each client is different based on their requirements
- ☐ We produce standard reports related to service activity and uptime/performance
- ☐ Our processes are standardized and include historical reviews and future plans, but are not automated or efficient. It takes an investment of time
- ☐ All of above, and we have a highly automated system which allows for efficiency. The format is very interactive and professions

DO YOU MEASURE CSAT/NPS ON A REGULAR BASIS?

- ☐ We do not gather feedback in a structured process. Only verbally.
- ☐ We randomly solicit feedback after a ticket is closed or project is complete
- ☐ We offer the client an opportunity for feedback after every support ticket or project completion
- ☐ We engage a third party service or software to solicit feedback on proactive and scheduled basis. The results are immediately reviewed and responded to, and we report on them consistently. We ask for and frequently get client referrals

DO YOU MEASURE AND FORECAST CUSTOMER REFRESH?

- ☐ We point out when we run into a client that needs to upgrade or update
- ☐ We evaluate or understand what % of technology is not refreshed and have reports that can verify our findings, but they are cumbersome to produce
- ☐ We evaluate or understand what % of technology is not refreshed and have reports that can quickly verify our findings

DO YOU DEFINE YOUR CX CHARTER?

- ☐ We have not defined this
- ☐ We have defined this but not formally documented
- ☐ We have defined and documented this, but only specific roles really carry this out and live it each day
- ☐ Everyone in our organization lives/breaths our Client Ethos. It is reviewed regularly and good examples are celebrated with the team

CLIENT EXPERIENCE

DO YOU MAINTAIN A CLEAR AND SHARED VISION FOR CX EFFORTS?

- [ ] Not really, it feels like leadership is/are the only folks that truly care about client experience
- [ ] We are inconsistent. Our sales team gets it, but it is hard for service to understand how to participate
- [ ] Most or all employees live out our CX vision with some-what consistent efforts, but there is still plenty of room for improvement
- [ ] Our team almost always delivers on our CX effort and vision. They are relentless in what they do for our customers

HOW WELL DO YOU ENSURE EMPLOYEES HAVE THE TRAINING AND MOTIVATION TO ADOPT CUSTOMER-CENTRIC BEHAVIORS?

- [ ] We do little to train or motivate. Isn't this what they should have come ready to perform and do for our customers, because that is what they are paid for
- [ ] We have ad hoc training but our team is generally really good at this
- [ ] We train on this regularly, but it is still ad hoc. Our team is great, but we cannot easily repeat our training or bring others on board
- [ ] We have a well defined and documented process. We can quickly ramp up new hires to our standards and have compensation/rewards tied to customer-centric behavior

ANNUAL STRATEGY SESSIONS

- [ ] We don't do an annual strategy session
- [ ] We do this with some clients, but it is less than 25% that we engage at this level. It is often informal or inconsistent
- [ ] We have a consistent process and do this for a reasonable percentage of our clients, depending on their interests
- [ ] This is a focus for us with all recurring revenue clients. It is an important way to align our technology to business direction. It provides us and our client with a clear roadmap

IS YOUR CLIENT EXPERIENCE A DIFFERENTIATOR THAT ALLOWS YOU TO GROW REVENUE AND RETAIN CLIENTS?

- [ ] We really want to focus on being there when our clients need us and deliver mostly reactive service
- [ ] We work to build relationships. We want to offer good service and build good rapport
- [ ] We have a consistent focus on our client experience processes. We want to be alongside our client journey
- [ ] This is an identified strength. We are often successful in leading our client journey. We engage broadly, including at the executive level. We are consistently able to expand relationships, and our clients are clear on what is next with their technology

DO YOU PROACTIVELY FORECAST PROJECTS, TECHNOLOGY DEPLOYMENTS AND NEW TECHNOLOGY ENHANCEMENTS?

- [ ] We do projects and upgrades as technology wears out,when it makes sense, or when our client suggests something
- [ ] We make recommendations along the way when technology gets old or needs to be upgraded. We try so keep things current
- [ ] We have a refresh schedule that we discuss with clients in PBRs, and it is generally adhered to
- [ ] We are able to proactively communicate and plan refreshes and new technology. Our clients agree to the plan and put it into their budget. We can provide a forecast for spend for all (or nearly all) of our clients

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