

# Implementation Quotient

If you or any of your team members are good at making plans, but can't seem to follow through, you might be suffering from a low IQ. NO – not a low intelligence quotient, but a low *IMPLEMENTATION QUOTIENT!* If you'd like to get better at implementation and execution, this is the CCO course for you!

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Understand the role your team's implementation quotient has on success.
2. Create an implementation plan.
3. Increase your team's IQ.

## Overview:

Most advisors are great idea people. However, many advisors seriously limit their success because they aren't great implementers. There is a disconnect between ideas and action. It's not that they don't *do a lot of stuff*. It's that the stuff they do isn't focused on achieving specific goals.

**Getting better at implementation can be accomplished in the following steps:**

- **Step 1:** Learn the effects of becoming a great implementer.
- **Step 2:** Create implementation plans that keep you focused.
- **Step 3:** Use the outcome of your implementation plan to increase the IQ of your entire team.

## Step 1: Understand the role your team's implementation quotient has on success

When Ron Carson is asked about his success and the success of the whole Carson Group, he often attributes it to his and the firm's ability to execute. One of his maxims is, "Strategy is easy – Execution is hard!" Execution and implementation are so central to the Carson Way that one of our six core values is GSD, or *GET STUFF DONE!* Even when hiring new people to Carson, one of the primary factors in the selection is whether the candidates have a track record of getting stuff done.

Here's a section from Ron's book, *Proven in the Trenches*, that reinforces his belief that implementation is a true differentiator:

*"When all is said and done, a lot more gets said than gets done. Which is why your ability to execute plays such a critical role. Even with awe-inspiring, life-altering ideas, most never make it to fruition simply because so few of us actually do what we say we will. It's crazy to think that the simple act of doing can be seen as a competitive advantage but, trust me, in a world where everything moves too fast for us, the commitment to doing what you say you will goes a long way." Ron Carson*

Successful CEO, GE's Jack Welch (when GE was a dominating business force) openly shared the GE strategy of being number one or two in every business they were in, or they would get out of that business. When asked why he would publicly share the strategy, he said that it didn't matter, because most companies didn't have the ability or discipline to actually execute the GE strategy.

Taking a step back from Carson and GE, most change and strategic plans fail to meet their objectives. The reason isn't poor planning; it is poor execution!! You can plan all day long, but if you don't execute/implement, much of the planning was a waste of time and energy.

Being able to implement is clearly important to optimize your success. Then, why do so few people do it well? Move on to Step 2 to learn how you can increase the overall Implementation Quotient of your firm.

## Step 2: Create an implementation plan

It's clear that a high IQ is important for the success of your firm. The question now becomes, "How do I drive a high IQ in my firm?" At Carson, we use a tool called the ***IQ Grower*** to systematize implementation.

The IQ GROWER includes quarterly and daily components.

If this is your first time using the ***IQ Grower***, start by referencing your most recent Blueprint. If you haven't completed your Blueprint, talk to your coach or review the CCO course on ***Blueprinting*** to gain clarity on your values, mission, vision, and goals. The outcome of the ***IQ Grower*** should be in alignment with your Blueprint.

Start by completing the Quarterly Plan in the ***IQ GROWER***, which has three steps.

- Step 1: What do I value most & what is most meaningful to me?
  - List up to six things you value most, in priority order
- Step 2: BHAG ("Big, Hairy, Audacious Goals" – from Jim Collins)
  - List your six most important goals for 10-25 years from now.
- Step 3: What are my goals for this quarter that will move me in the direction of my BHAG?
  - List up to six most important goals that will move your BHAG needle. List them in priority/impact order and actively work on no more than 3 at a time. See our CCO course on ***Maximizing Advisor Productivity*** for more information on optimizing goal attainment.

**Coach Tip:** One of Ron Carson's favorite comments is, "If you have multiple priorities, then you have no priorities at all." It is critical to focus on implementing only what you have capacity to implement well! Make sure your list of goals for any specific time period are truly goals that have impact if executed well and that you have capacity to do well. Executing and implementing a smaller group of goals well is much better than having too many goals/initiatives that don't get implemented!

Once you have a solid quarterly plan, complete the daily plan every workday. The daily planning tool should be completed at the END of the workday or before you go to bed. There are two reasons for this:

**Reason 1:** If you wait to plan in the morning, there is a good chance that you will be derailed by a voice mail message or email before you even start the daily plan.

**Reason 2:** If you work on your daily plan at the end of the day, your subconscious will work on it while you sleep, sometimes solving for problems or creating efficiencies.

**The Daily Plan contains two steps:**

**Step 1:** What is my Attitude of Gratitude for today and tomorrow? List 3 things you are grateful for today and 3 things you hope to be grateful for tomorrow.

According to *Psychology Today*, there are 7 psychologically proven benefits of a gratitude mindset. Gratitude:

1. Opens the door to more relationships
2. Improves physical health
3. Improves psychological health
4. Enhances empathy and reduces aggression
5. Improves sleep quality
6. Improves self-esteem
7. Increases mental strength

There aren't many tools that are as easy to employ as Gratitude that have this many proven benefits! The benefits work together to result in people being more able to work through challenges and see opportunities. In other words, grateful people have higher IQs!

**Step 2:** What activities will drive my quarterly goals/priorities?

- This is the same as the **Six Most and Vital One** worksheet.
  - Weekly, list your ONE most important or Vital goal.
  - Daily, list your 6 most important goals. Some of these can be focused on BHAGs and some can be shorter-term priorities.
  - After you list your goals, rate each one (from 1 to 10) on how good you feel about accomplishing each goal and how excited you are to accomplish it.

If used quarterly, weekly and daily, the IQ GROWER will help you accomplish more important goals, which naturally increases your IQ!

**Coach Tip:** Don't forget to time block your calendar for all your planning activity! When calendaring this kind of important but not urgent work, put a tag in your calendar not to overwrite or reschedule the important planning activity.

In order to maximize your IQ success, we suggest that you:

- Block out "GSD" time on your calendar
- Spend at least 5% of your time (2 hours/week) working ON the business to implement
- Have an accountability system – mastermind group (peers who hold you accountable for planned action and development) or work with your coach!

Now that you have completed your **IQ GROWER**, move onto the next lesson to learn some best practices for creating a system that promotes IQ across your entire team.

## Step 3: Increase your team's IQ

Your **IQ GROWER** exercise gives you the framework to make sure the IQ of your whole team is maximized. The best way to transfer IQ to your team is to create a matrix that keeps them focused on how their activities fit into achieving the goals listed in your **Blueprint** and **IQ GROWER**. To improve our team IQs at Carson, we use and suggest using a process outlined in the book *Traction* by Gino Wickman. The high-level view of the process in traction is built around goals called “rocks.” The *rocks* come from the idea that if you had a big jar that you needed to fill with rocks, pebbles, and sand, that you need to put them in the jar in that order. The rocks go in first, then the pebbles, which fill in the larger spaces between the rocks, then the sand fills in the rest of the space. An additional tool we suggest from *Traction* is weekly team meetings to keep everyone on track.

When using Traction tools, always have a healthy, variable size mix of initiatives. The big rocks drive meaningful enhancements to the business. The smaller pebbles (and even sand) are also important to staying efficient and constantly making incremental improvements.

Part of each weekly meeting is to do a “rock-review.” See the course on **Team Meetings** for full meeting best practices and sample agendas. At the beginning of each quarter, each person is assigned their quarterly rocks.

**Coach Tip:** We suggest using project management software to keep track of rocks. You can use an Excel spreadsheet, but project management software is designed specifically to track the *who does what by when* for all team member projects. At Carson, we use Asana, but other, similar tools are Monday.com, Trello and Smartsheet.

During the weekly *rock-review*, each person reports on the status of his or her assigned rocks. A rock can be complete, on-track, off-track, or delayed. This process works well to systematize IQ because everyone sees everyone else's progress. Transparency has two benefits:

- Benefit 1: It keeps everyone honest about their progress. Nobody wants to be “off-track” in front of the whole team!
- Benefit 2: It allows the team to work together to keep as much “on-track” as possible. For example, if one of your team members is either approaching or actually “off-track,” he or she can get support or advice from someone else on the team. Without the transparent process, a team member might be able to help, but not know help is needed.

The great thing about this process is that it allows for the team leader (ideally, not the advisor) to keep important goals in front of everyone without having to micro-manage. It is fair, professional and accomplishes the goal of increasing team IQ!

**Coach Tip:** One of the most important components of having a high team IQ is to hire people who have a track record of being implementers. See our courses on selecting the right team members and building an A+ team in CCO for more information.

## Summary

The Implementation Quotient of your entire team will be the differentiator between hitting desired goals and repeatedly experiencing the frustration of coming up short. Creating a system to increase your IQ and the IQ of your whole team isn't overly complicated, but it does require... (yes, you guessed it)....

*Implementation.* Make the implementation of your systematized IQ growth plan one of your first *Rocks*. You will be taking the first step in the right direction! Remember the steps:

- Step 1: Learn the effects of becoming a great implementer
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## FAQs:

- **I like to stay in control – sometimes too much. How can I improve my team’s IQ without micromanaging?**
  - Excellent question! The key to improving IQ for your team is to really look at the issue from their perspective. You want the team members to actually be better at implementation, not relying on you to tell them every little thing to do (which is a colossal waste of your time!). If you follow the guideline in the lesson, you are steering the ship, making sure that it is tracking towards your intended destination, but you aren’t doing all the work involved in making the ship move. See the CCO course on Delegation for more detail on the topic.
- **I hate having formal team meetings. They often seem like a waste of time. Does the rock review have to be part of a regular meeting or can I just check with each team member on a weekly basis?**
  - Team meetings are a critical part of systematizing your practice. They are one of the cornerstones of Carson Wealth’s success. They are the most efficient way to communicate repeated activities with your team and make sure everyone is in sync. See our CCO course on Team Meetings for a deep dive into the why and how of team meetings. The course will show you how to have your meetings be a valuable part of your week – without wasting anybody’s time!
- **I use the 6 most and vital 1 worksheet every week. Should I be using it daily?**
  - Many people use the worksheet weekly, but for the purposes of systematizing your (and your team’s) IQ, try using it daily and see how it can help.

## Resources:

Learn more and download the resources referenced in this document from the [Implementation Quotient](#) course in Carson Coaching Online.

- **Implementation Quotient Grower**
- **6 Most and Vital 1**
- **Book Recommendation: Proven in the Trenches**
- **Book Recommendation: Traction**