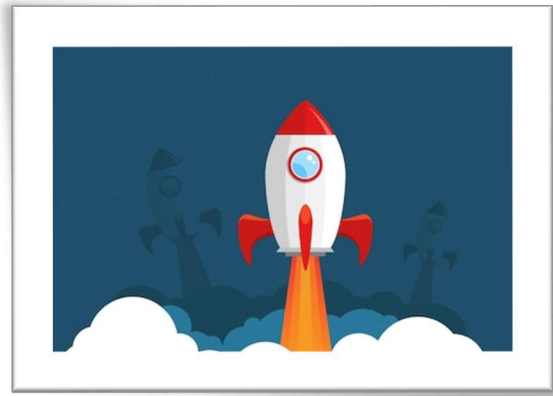


# 2026 Small Business Mid-Year Review Guide



The midpoint of the year is an ideal time to pause, reflect, and assess the health of your business. A mid-year review allows you to evaluate your progress, celebrate achievements, identify challenges, and make strategic adjustments before the end of the year.

By setting aside dedicated time for assessment and planning, you can gain valuable insights, improve decision-making, and position your business for continued success. Remember that successful businesses are built through consistent progress, thoughtful planning, and the willingness to adapt when circumstances change.

Not sure where to start? Use this guide for an intentional approach to your midyear planning.

## 3 Common Review Types

### Goal Review:

Covers milestone goals, organize, and prioritize action items, and create new business initiatives.

### Sales and Cash Flow Review:

Covers financial status, customer accounts, and analyzes your overall economic progress.

### Comprehensive Review:

Covers strategic plans for every area of your business.

### Get it on the calendar.

Conducting a meaningful business assessment takes time and focused attention. Schedule dedicated time on your calendar and treat the review with the same priority as an important meeting with a customer.

Plan the review at least a few weeks in advance so you have enough time to gather key documents and data, such as sales reports, marketing plans, and financial records.

[If you're current with CFO Services, your mid-year financial review will be ready between 6/15-7/15.](#)

Choose a quiet environment where you can reflect without interruptions. Many business owners find it helpful to work offsite, away from daily distractions, to think more clearly and objectively.

### Define your mid-year agenda.

Use this time to evaluate both your business performance and your personal experience as a business owner.

Take time to acknowledge your successes. Recognizing wins can help you appreciate your progress and identify strategies that are producing positive results.

At the same time, be honest about challenges and areas that need improvement. You may discover that you are not meeting certain goals, working longer hours than expected, generating less revenue than planned, serving clients who are not the right fit, growing more slowly than you would like, or you have an unhealthy company culture.

Rather than striving for perfection, focus on making steady progress. Choose a direction and commit to taking the next practical step forward. Identify the barriers currently standing in your way and determine what actions you can take to overcome them and move closer to your goals.

### Mid-year review **MUST HAVES**.

No matter what parts of your business you decide to focus your mid-year planning around, a review of your **finances and marketing** should be included.

#### **Must have #1: Finances**

Cash flow and timely fiscal management are essential for all small businesses.

The good news is that with CFO on the Go, many of the tasks that are recommended at mid-year are already completed!

With your accounts reconciled, financial transactions all appropriately accounted for, and your tax compliance intact – you can focus on budget and cash flow matters such as;

- **Financial comparison.** How does your income and spending compare to the first half of last year? And how does that affect your taxes or business operations?
- **Expense analysis.** Do you have unnecessary spending habits, subscriptions & memberships you don't need, or direct costs that don't support healthy profit?
- **Accounts Receivable.** Are you being paid timely? Or do you find yourself serving as the bank for certain income?

### Mid-year Review Topic Ideas

- ✓ **Mission, Vision, Values.** Are you staying true to your mission?
- ✓ **Compliance & Risk Management.** Review insurance, agreements, banking, or workforce regulations.
- ✓ **Pricing.** How are your prices and margins standing in this economy?
- ✓ **Team Performance.** How is your team performing? Do they have company buy in?
- ✓ **Data Compliance & Privacy.** Is your data protected? Could you withstand a breach?
- ✓ **Customer Retention.** How often do you see repeat buyers? Or how often do you lose long term contracts?

## Must have #2: Marketing

Much like your finances, marketing strategy is without a doubt one of the key areas small businesses need to review and reflect on.

- **Take a deep dive** into the channels, methods and strategies that make up your small businesses' marketing.

Are you using the most effective avenues to reach your target? Are your media items (print, web, email) out of date or could you use a fresh coat of paint? Are you using Google or Facebook ads? Are you taking advantage of an SEO or social media agency? Are they working? How are you tracking your results? What's your ROI?

If you don't see clear and measurable results from your marketing efforts, it might be time to reallocate your resources into new approaches or different services. .

- **Take time to research** strategies that you haven't implemented. See what competitors are doing and what innovative methods others use. Although it can be overwhelming trying to sift through what seems like a never-ending ocean of marketing strategies, choose one thing you can do and take a small step every day.

## Mid-Year Planning

Now that you know the when, where, and what of your mid-year review – you can reflect, set goals, define strategies, and implement metrics for measuring progress.

## Business Goals & Analysis

Setting goals is crucial. Business goals are more than just items on a checklist—they reflect your priorities, circumstances, and vision at a specific point in time. As your business grows and evolves, those goals may need to be adjusted to remain relevant and achievable. A mid-year review provides the ideal opportunity to evaluate your progress and determine whether your goals still align with your current business needs and long-term objectives.

Clear, realistic, and time-bound goals provide focus and accountability. They serve as a roadmap for decision-making, help measure progress, and keep your team aligned as the business grows. By reassessing your goals periodically, you can adapt to change, stay focused on what matters most, and position your business for continued success.



## Using the SMART Method to Set Business Goals

Setting effective goals is essential for growth and success. One of the most widely used goal-setting methods is the SMART model, which helps ensure goals are clear, realistic, and actionable.

- **Specific:** Clearly define what you want to accomplish. A specific goal answers questions such as who is involved, what needs to be achieved, and why it is important.
- **Measurable:** Establish criteria for tracking progress and determining success. Measurable goals allow you to evaluate performance and stay accountable.
- **Attainable:** Set goals that are realistic based on your available resources, time, and capabilities. Challenging goals can be motivating, but they should remain attainable.
- **Realistic:** Ensure that the goal aligns with your overall business objectives and contributes to your long-term vision.
- **Timely:** Set timelines for goals that you are able to attain in a reasonable amount of time.

## 2026 Leading Indicators

### Trends for Success

- ✓ Highly personalized customer experiences
- ✓ Disciplined AI automation
- ✓ Robust cybersecurity measures
- ✓ Staying informed about economic and regulatory shifts
- ✓ Hybrid labor force opportunities
- ✓ Defining (or redefining) Vision, Mission & Values for the next gen of consumers

### External Factors (PESTLE)

- ✓ Political: Geopolitical dynamics, Trade policies, Tax regulations
- ✓ Economic: Inflation, K shaped consumer spending, Interest rates
- ✓ Social: Cultural preferences, Misinformation fatigue, Hybrid work environments
- ✓ Technological: AI, Automation, Cybersecurity,
- ✓ Legal: Strict compliance, Evolving labor laws, Online privacy
- ✓ Environmental: Supply chain sustainability, Climate resilience, Regulatory compliance.

## Using SWOT Analysis to Measure Your Business's Health

To set business goals, you must know where your business stands. One way to evaluate your business status is to conduct a SWOT ( Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats) analysis. This enables you to assess where you need to improve and how you need to grow.

- **Strengths:** The things about your business that are working.
- **Weaknesses:** The things about your business that need fixing.
- **Opportunities:** The markets, processes, products, and other factors where your business has the potential to grow.
- **Threats:** Challenges to your business from competitors, shifting demand, etc.

## Strategies and Methods

Business strategies are long-term plans designed to achieve specific goals, gain a competitive edge, and create value. Methods are the distinct operational tactics used to execute those strategies. A successful approach unites both.

Use this review as an opportunity to assess the strategies, systems, and methods you use to run your business. Take an honest look at what is producing results and what may no longer be serving your goals.

Consider your marketing efforts, operating processes, administrative systems, partnerships, and customer relationships. Are your marketing channels generating quality leads and conversions? Are your processes and systems efficiently providing data and communication that your business needs? Are your collaborations creating meaningful value, or are they consuming time and energy with little return? What new avenues are available that you have not considered? Identifying these areas can help you focus your resources where they will have the greatest impact.

Although six months of the year have already passed, there is still plenty of time to make meaningful adjustments. Refining your marketing strategy, strengthening valuable partnerships, and nurturing existing customer relationships can significantly improve your results in the months ahead.

### **Everyday strategies to help expand your business.**

**Get organized!** You only have so many hours in a day, so use them wisely. Start each day with a list of tasks you need to get done and prioritize the most critical projects based on when you're the most productive. It also helps to:

- Consider time blocking and plan the tasks you will do each week, prior to the weeks start.
- Create a consistent schedule that works for you and your business.
- Find your most productive hours and schedule essential tasks for those times.

**Narrow your focus.** Find your niche and become hyper-focused in your area of expertise.

**Make it easy to buy from you.** Consumers are insanely busy people, so you must do everything in your power to simplify your buying process. Reduce form fields, eliminate unnecessary steps, and offer various payment options.

**Start networking.** Networking is crucial for building a successful business. Besides making connections that lead to sales, networking provides fresh perspective, mentoring opportunities, and access to resources such as talent, suppliers and other solutions.

**Build a team.** Even if you are a one-person business, building a team of people that can fill in skillset gaps, assist with things you dislike, provide high end support or remove low-cost tasks are key to being able to scale.

**Solve a burning problem.** As you develop new strategies, think of solutions to the issues people feel strongly about.

**Provide great customer service.** When it comes to small business tips for getting repeat business, there is nothing more effective than delivering great customer service. Excellent customer service creates satisfied customers who are likely to remain loyal to your brand and refer it to family, friends, and colleagues.

**Analyze your competitors.** No matter the nature of your business, you will have competitors. To be successful, you need to research their practices and find out as much as possible what consumers like about their products. To create a winning strategy, see which companies offer similar products or services in your market. Then evaluate your strengths and weaknesses in comparison to theirs.

**Automate repetitive tasks.** Are you constantly doing things on repeat? Do you find that you have limited time to work on the things you're passionate about? Automation can help you break the monotony and regain freedom in your business.

**Take care of yourself.** As tempting as it might be to focus all your time on keeping your business healthy, it will mean little if you end up sacrificing your own well-being in return. Sure, there will be periods of stress, but don't let that stop you from nourishing your mind and body.