

YOUR PHARMACY DOESN'T NEED ANOTHER BUSY YEAR

It Needs A Plan

A Strategic Planning Workbook for Community Pharmacy Leaders

THE CHEMIST

The Community Pharmacy Growth Kit

STEP 1: THE PAIN – BUSY, TIRED, AND STILL STUCK

Most community pharmacy owners don't lack effort. You open early. You close late. You handle suppliers, staff issues, patients, paperwork, and emergencies—all in one day.

Yet at the end of the year, you ask yourself: *"Why does it feel like we worked so hard, but didn't really move forward?"*

A busy year is not the same as a successful year. Busyness keeps the lights on. A plan builds the future.

Leadership is not about doing more. It's about deciding what matters most and guiding your team towards it.

■ WORKBOOK EXERCISE

Reflect on your past year:

What made you feel busy?

What progress did you actually make?

What's the difference between the two?

STEP 2: THE WAKE-UP CALL – ACTIVITY IS NOT DIRECTION

Many pharmacies run on momentum:

- Reorder stock because you always have
- Run promotions because competitors are doing it
- Hire when pressure becomes unbearable

This creates motion, not progress.

Strategic leadership starts when you pause and ask: *"Where exactly are we trying to go?"*

That question deserves more than a quick answer in your head. It deserves a planning meeting with a purpose.

■ WORKBOOK EXERCISE

List three things your pharmacy does regularly that might be "activity without direction":

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

STEP 3: THE FOUNDATION – START WITH ONE CLEAR GOAL

An effective strategic planning meeting begins with a single main goal, not multiple goals.

That goal must be **SMART**:

- **Specific** – Clear and focused
- **Measurable** – You can track it
- **Achievable** – Realistic for your pharmacy
- **Relevant** – Tied to growth, not noise
- **Time-bound** – Has a deadline

Example: "Increase monthly prescription revenue by 15% within 6 months."

This goal gives leadership clarity. Without it, meetings turn into complaints, stories, and good intentions.

■ WORKBOOK EXERCISE

Write your ONE clear SMART goal for the next 6 months:

Specific: _____

Measurable: _____

Achievable: _____

Relevant: _____

Time-bound: _____

Your SMART Goal:

STEP 4: THE BRIDGE – TURN THE GOAL INTO ACTION ITEMS

Once the goal is clear, the next leadership question is: *"How will we realistically achieve this?"*

This is where action items come in. Action items are not tasks yet. They are strategies.

For the example above, action items could be:

- Improve patient refill follow-ups
- Train staff on prescription counselling
- Strengthen relationships with nearby clinics

As a leader, your role is to limit these to three to five strong actions. Too many actions weaken focus.

■ WORKBOOK EXERCISE

Based on your SMART goal, list 3-5 action items (strategies, not tasks yet):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

STEP 5: THE CLIMB – BREAK ACTION ITEMS INTO CLEAR TASKS

Now we move from leadership thinking to execution.

Each action item must be broken into small, clear tasks that can actually be done.

For example:

Action item: Improve patient refill follow-ups

- Create a simple refill reminder list
- Assign one staff member per shift
- Test WhatsApp reminders for 30 days

Tasks should answer:

- Who is responsible?
- By when?
- How will we know it's working?

This is where many plans fail—not because the idea was bad, but because tasks were never clear.

■ WORKBOOK EXERCISE

Choose ONE action item and break it into 3-5 specific tasks:

Action Item: _____

Tasks:

1. Task: _____

Who: _____ By when: _____ Success metric: _____

2. Task: _____

Who: _____ By when: _____ Success metric: _____

3. Task: _____

Who: _____ By when: _____ Success metric: _____

STEP 6: THE HUMAN SIDE – INVOLVE YOUR TEAM

A plan written alone feels heavy. A plan built together feels motivating.

Invite your team to the planning meeting. Ask them:

- "What is slowing us down?"
- "What do customers complain about most?"
- "What do you think we can improve quickly?"

When staff see their ideas reflected in the plan, they stop feeling like workers and start acting like owners.

That is leadership.

■ WORKBOOK EXERCISE

Plan your team meeting:

Meeting date: _____

Team members to invite: _____

Three questions I'll ask the team:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

STEP 7: THE SHIFT – FROM FIREFIGHTING TO FOCUS

When you lead with a clear plan:

- Decisions become easier
- Staff know what matters
- Progress becomes visible

You may still be busy, but now every ounce of effort drives toward a single, clear goal.

Your pharmacy doesn't need another exhausting year. It needs a leader with a plan.

■ WORKBOOK EXERCISE

Vision check:

If this plan succeeds, what will be different in 6 months?

How will your team know we're making progress?

What will you celebrate?

YOUR ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

Use this template to organize your strategic planning meeting:

YOUR SMART GOAL	
ACTION ITEMS	TASKS
1.	• Who: _____ By when: _____ Metric: _____
	• Who: _____ By when: _____ Metric: _____
	• Who: _____ By when: _____ Metric: _____
2.	• Who: _____ By when: _____ Metric: _____
	• Who: _____ By when: _____ Metric: _____
	• Who: _____ By when: _____ Metric: _____
3.	• Who: _____ By when: _____ Metric: _____
	• Who: _____ By when: _____ Metric: _____
	• Who: _____ By when: _____ Metric: _____

YOUR NEXT STEP

Schedule a strategic planning meeting before the end of the month. Not to talk about everything—but to agree on one clear goal, a few action items, and simple tasks.

That one meeting can set the tone for your entire year.

Start Your Plan

Visit: thechemist.co.ke/growth

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