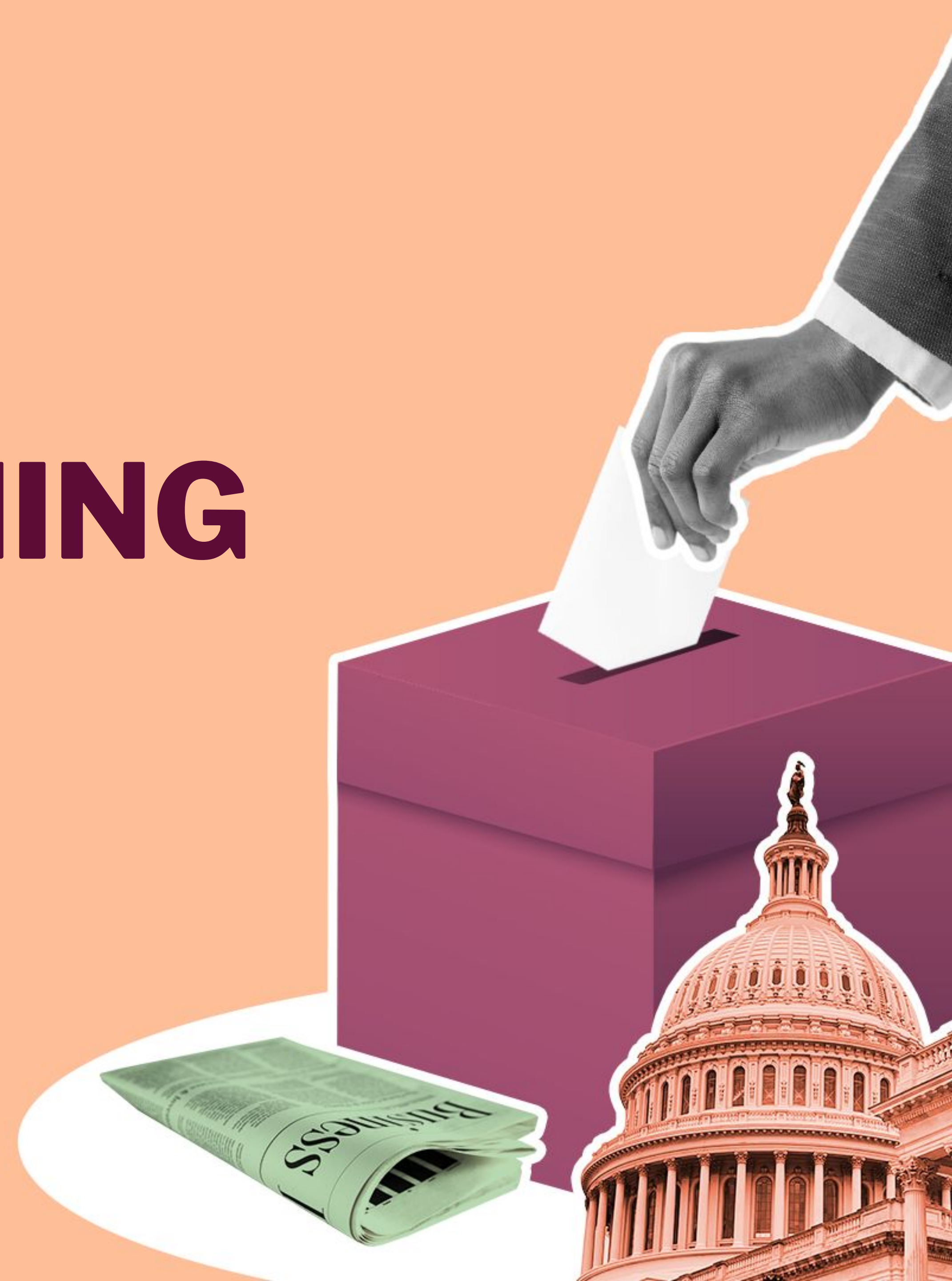


NATION
SWELL

2024 ELECTION SCENARIO PLANNING TOOLKIT

Instructions and tools to support business
leaders in building preparedness

September 2024



About this resource

Overview

In an era marked by heightened political uncertainty, businesses and their leaders have a responsibility to their employees, customers, investors, and communities to prepare for a range of plausible impacts that could emerge following a U.S. general election. Regardless of a company's size, sector, or prior engagement in political and social issues, the likelihood is high that electoral outcomes and subsequent societal effects will call upon leaders to make tough calls, negotiate trade offs, and act in response to a range of stakeholder interests. Those leaders will be well-served by the foresight and preparation that scenario planning affords.

Suggested audience

While businesses can and do conduct scenario planning on a large number of topics relevant to their interests, this particular resource focuses on the potential near and mid-term impacts of a U.S. general election on business, free enterprise, and our constitutional republic.

The recommended audiences for this resource are senior leaders and managers with responsibility over relevant functional areas, including public affairs, communications, social impact, human resources, and legal.

Guidance for use

This resource contains instructions and tools to support election scenario planning exercises. Because there is no one-size-fits-all approach to scenario planning, we advise leaders to review this information and adapt it to the existing practices of their organization. The intent is to make scenario planning as accessible as possible, not to divert organizations away from methods that are already working well.

Before you start scenario planning

Approach scenario planning as one element of a larger portfolio of civic engagement activities – Important as it is, election scenario planning is not a sufficient way for businesses to engage meaningfully in the democratic process. When it occurs as part of a comprehensive approach to civic engagement, scenario planning produces more credible and accountable outcomes.

Audit what your company has done before in response to electoral outcomes and related social activity – Scenario planning does not necessarily need to yield new organizational behaviors. In fact, it may be more likely – even preferential – that it serves to codify actions that the company has taken in response to similar situations in the past. Knowing if and how the company has responded to post-election scenarios in the past, as a matter of policy or otherwise, is invaluable pre-work for forward-looking scenario planning.

Ground scenario planning in the historical behaviors and preferences of those who will be involved in the process – Just as scenario planning should be grounded in the past actions of the organization, it should also be grounded in the workflows and preferences of relevant parties. Some organizations may prefer a regular cadence of scenario planning meetings – perhaps monthly for six months prior to an election – while others will prefer fewer more concentrated discussions. The best approach depends in part on the existing deliberative and collaborative tendencies of those who will be involved. Seek to align with those norms rather than diverge from them.

Identify and articulate clear goals for what scenario planning is meant to accomplish – There are a range of valid use cases for election scenario planning, from those that focus on very specific near term impacts (e.g., post-election social unrest) to those that focus on much longer term structural or policy impacts (e.g., significant changes to the regulatory environment). Leaders should not expect to effectively plan for multiple scenarios that differ dramatically in scope in the same exercise. Session planners should have a prior understanding of the scope and nature of scenarios to focus on prior to setting wheels in motion.

What's in the toolkit?

This resource contains three parts. **Click the icons** below to jump ahead to a specific section.



Section 1:

Election scenario planning overview



Section 2:

Election scenario planning preparation and facilitation guide



Section 3:

Election scenarios to consider

SECTION
1

Election scenario planning overview

FOUR BASIC STEPS OF ELECTION SCENARIO PLANNING



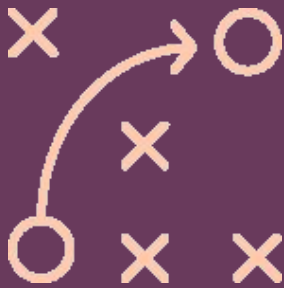
Step 1

Identify and invite participants



Step 2

Solicit input on and develop scenarios



Step 3

Execute scenario planning exercise



Step 4

Create action plan(s)

Election scenario planning overview

STEP 1: IDENTIFY AND INVITE PARTICIPANTS

For scenario planning that looks at broad, political risks related to the 2024 election cycle and its aftermath, there are a few best practices for identifying participants:

- Aim to include groups of between 6-8 people; you can invite more people, so long as you can break them up into small groups.
- Identify and bring people together who share a common set of concerns, but have different perspectives and experiences. You want the pain points of the scenario to resonate with all participants while at the same time including people who will see the scenario from different angles and propose different solutions.
- When you invite participants, make sure you clearly articulate the objective of the exercise and lay out the basics of who, what, where, and when.

STEP 2: SOLICIT INPUT ON AND DEVELOP SCENARIOS

Scenario planning works best when the scenarios speak to challenges and issues that the participants actively feel in their work or life. Ask your participants about the kinds of issues they are concerned about—the challenges they foresee in the next three, six, or twelve months. As the host or convener, you should have in mind an initial set of such risks as you then reach out to your participants for ideas.

Scenario descriptions should include three sections:

1. Key indicators or fact pattern—what recent trends suggest the scenario is plausible, and/or what indicators will signal that the scenario is imminent?
2. The scenario narrative—what is the hypothetical situation businesses must react to?
3. The discussion prompts—what questions should the participants respond to?

Election scenario planning overview

STEP 3: EXECUTE SCENARIO PLANNING EXERCISE

Once you have received input from your participants, finalize the agenda and the scenario or scenarios you will use. Build in time to go over exercise instructions at the beginning and include time for a discussion on action steps at the end.

To run the exercise, you will need a facilitator(s) who is familiar with the basics in conflict resolution and at guiding discussions to prevent polarization. Dedicate time up front to re-emphasize the purpose of the experience (i.e., set the “why”) and to walk through the process.

STEP 4: CREATE ACTION PLAN(S)

Scenario planning is a tool to identify and mitigate risks (and conversely, to identify and seize opportunities). There always needs to be clear action steps participants take based upon what they learn and reflect on with the exercise. Action steps can be things people will do as individual business leaders, as a group, or in collaboration with external partners.

The goal is for participants to identify things will they do differently as a result of the exercise and to reinforce those action items through accountability measures.

Elections scenario planning preparation and facilitation guide

OVERVIEW OF THIS GUIDE

The purpose of this guide is to help business leaders conduct scenario planning to identify and mitigate risks related to the 2024 election and its aftermath. Specifically, the focus is on narrative-based scenario planning, wherein participants read a future scenario and respond to a set of discussion prompts. This is not a guide meant to support more complex scenario-based activities such as war gaming or red teaming.

This guide lays out a step by step process to plan and execute a scenario planning process. It also includes sample tools you can use or modify for your exercise as you see fit.



Step 1:
Identify and invite participants



Step 2:
Solicit input on and develop scenarios



Step 3:
Execute scenario planning exercise



Step 4:
Create action plan(s)

Step 1: Identify and invite participants

STRONG SCENARIO PLANNING PARTICIPANTS

Scenario planning is a highly-accessible process; there is no expertise required to take part other than one's own experience and perspective. With that said, for scenario planning focused on political risks related to the 2024 election cycle and its aftermaths, we recommend that:

1. Everyone needs to be committed to addressing common concerns—this is not an exercise to game out risks to a specific individual or team, but rather to the broader organization and its interests.
2. Participants need to be willing to have their assumptions challenged and still actively participate. Scenario planning involves introducing hypothetical situations and if participants try to “fight the scenario” too much, it subtracts from the experience.
3. Participants should come from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives—the more ideas and solutions put forward, the better the experience will prove.

POTENTIAL ROLES TO INCLUDES IN SCENARIO PLANNING

- Communications (internal and external)
- Employee engagement
- Government Relations
- Legal
- Talent and HR
- Philanthropy
- Public affairs
- Safety and security
- Social impact / sustainability

Step 1: Identify and invite participants

HOW MANY PEOPLE SHOULD PARTICIPATE

Six to eight people form a good size for a scenario planning cluster; enough to have diverse perspectives and not too many for active engagement. You can of course have more people participate, but try to size the group such that you can break participants up into clusters of six or so to review and engage in the scenarios.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW AS A FACILITATOR

Scenario planning requires a facilitator who can explain the process, oversee the process, and guide the discussion. Ideally, a facilitator should have experience with conflict resolution and feel comfortable engaging with a variety of perspectives. The role of the facilitator is NOT to explain the answer to participants—there is no single answer—but rather to help participants identify for themselves ideas and plans for how they can better mitigate political risks.

Step 1: Identify and invite participants

SAMPLE INVITATION LETTER

Subject: Invitation to Join a Strategic Scenario Planning Exercise on Election-Related Risks

Dear [Business leader's name],

I hope this message finds you well and thriving in these uncertain times. At [INSERT COMPANY/ORG NAME] we are deeply committed to safeguarding the pillars of free enterprise and our constitutional republic against increasing political risks. In light of the upcoming election and, regardless of who wins, the unprecedented challenges it poses to the business community, we are spearheading a scenario planning exercise designed to assess the potential risks that businesses like ours face related to the 2024 election and its aftermath.

We believe that your unique insights and leadership experience would be invaluable to this endeavor. Your participation would not only contribute to a more robust and comprehensive understanding of the risks, but also to the development of strategic responses that can safeguard our collective interests and values.

The scenario planning exercise is scheduled to take place on [date], [virtually or in-person location], from [time] to [time]. Please let us know your availability for this important event by [RSVP date]. We are eager to have you join us in this vital initiative and look forward to your positive response.

Warm regards,

[Your name and position]

SECTION 2

Step 2: Solicit input on and develop scenarios

HOW TO SOLICIT INPUT ON SCENARIOS

Scenario planning works best when the scenarios speak to challenges and issues that are of urgent concern to participants, AND for which clear contingencies or plans do not yet exist. We recommend asking your participants directly about the kinds of issues they are concerned about—the challenges they foresee in the next three, six, or twelve months.

It may be helpful to share an initial set of potential scenarios with participants for feedback ahead of the event, in addition to inviting their own new suggestions.

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

- What specific issues for the business are you most worried about relating to the upcoming election and its aftermath?
- Which of these issues do you feel are most urgent and potentially impactful for the business to address?
- Which of these issues do you feel the business is currently least prepared to address?
- What do you see as the worst case scenario for our business in the aftermath of the coming election?
- What do you see as the best case scenario for our business in the aftermath of the coming election?

Step 2: Solicit input on and develop scenarios

HOW TO DESIGN AND DEVELOP SCENARIOS

Once you have received feedback and identified the specific scenarios you intend to use, develop high level overview documents that can be quickly read and digested ahead of or during the exercise.

Scenario overviews should contain three key elements: the key indicators or fact pattern, the scenario narrative, and discussion prompts. You can include additional elements, such as guidance on the conditions under which the scenario is most likely to unfold, but try not to overcomplicate the discussion with too much information.

SCENARIO DESIGN ELEMENTS

1. Key indicators or fact pattern

A scenario needs to have a connection to a trend, development, or pattern in real life. Include observable indicators that leaders can look for to determine if the scenario is likely, and/or factual information about recent developments that helps establish the context for the scenario narrative.

2. Scenario narrative

The scenario narrative is where you describe the future hypothetical you want participants to consider. Here you lay out the who, what, where, when, and why about the scenario.

3. Discussion prompts

These are the questions you want participants to react to, both individually and as a group, during the exercise.

Step 3: Execute scenario planning exercise

HOW TO EXECUTE A SCENARIO PLANNING EXERCISE

Like any group event, there are many ways to successfully execute the scenario planning experience. A few best practices to consider include:

Establish the “why?”: Identify beforehand and get buy-in from participants on the core goals. Why are you doing this scenario exercise? What are you hoping will happen as a result?

Measure twice, cut once: Ensure the host team is prepared. Run a rehearsal to pressure test any issues. Who is taking notes? What materials do participants need?

Good fences make good neighbors: Set boundaries on the types of questions participants can ask and how much additional information the facilitator will provide if asked. Scenario planning carries the possibility of participants pushing back against the scenario narrative because it does not match their personal view of the future. To a degree, this is helpful, but if too many participants fight the scenario by rejecting its plausibility, the exercise will not yield as much value. Be up front whether participants can ask questions about the scenario—in many cases, you can set the rule that what participants read in the scenario is all the information they have.

Step 3: Execute scenario planning exercise

CREATING A SUCCESSFUL ENVIRONMENT

To structure a compelling scenario planning experience, especially when participants come from diverse backgrounds but are united by common concerns and interests, it's crucial to foster an environment of open dialogue from the outset. You will want to curate groups of people who can engage in disagreement and debate without acrimony. You want an environment where people will respect the facilitators and rules while also still feeling comfortable introducing new ideas or disagreeing in a respectful fashion. Finally, you want to create an environment that is clearly action-oriented; this is not an intellectual exercise, it is a risk mitigation effort that should translate into concrete action steps.

EXAMPLE RUN OF SHOW

Welcome and introductions/ ice-breaker

Objective: get everyone warmed up and comfortable with having an open discussion with each other

Walk through instructions and rules

Objective: set clear expectations about what is and what is not going to happen during the exercise

Ask for clarifying questions

Objective: ensure participants are bought in and ready to proceed

Participants read scenario individually

Objective: establish the same baseline information for the full group

Participants respond to discussion prompts as a group

Objective: generate a range of ideas for how to address the scenario

Discuss and identify potential action items as a group

Objective: converge on specific next steps and plans

Close out

Objective: recap key decisions and explain next steps for codifying and transmitting those decisions to other relevant parties

Step 4: Create action plan(s)

IDENTIFY ACTION STEPS

Scenario planning is a tool to identify and mitigate risks (and conversely, to identify and seize opportunities). The goal is to identify clear action steps participants will take based upon what they learn and reflect on with the exercise. Best practice is to have participants identify and write out specific action items they will take as individuals and, if appropriate, as a group.

EXAMPLE ACTION STEPS

- Develop a communications toolkit, including approved copy, for a given scenario
- Audit and potentially update relevant employee and workplace policies
- Create a rapid response team to make quick decisions if and when needed
- Inform employees about company policies on issues like political discourse, civic time off, remote work options if/when personal security is threatened
- Create a secure and accessible channel for employees to surface information about threats, acts of violence, and other illegal or unethical behavior in the workplace
- Provide access to mental health resources, counseling services, and support groups to help employees cope with stress and trauma resulting from the election

SECTION
3

Election scenarios to consider

APPROACH A: PLANNING FOR MACRO POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Recommended if: Your organization is committed to taking an active role in the protection of our democracy if/when conditions merit.

About the approach: This scenario planning approach focuses on four mutually exclusive large-scale outcomes of the 2024 U.S. general election, each based on two variables: 1) Is the election result contested? 2) Are democratic processes and institutions under direct threat?

The assumption underpinning this approach is that one of these four scenarios will inevitably occur after the election, so it pays to be prepared for all four ahead of time.

APPROACH B: PLANNING FOR SPECIFIC BUSINESS IMPACTS

Recommended if: Your organization is keen to develop plans around specific impacts to your business and its immediate interests, like employee wellbeing, operations, brand value, and customer relations.

About the approach: This scenario planning approach focuses on more narrowly defined and not mutually exclusive impacts that could result from a range of electoral outcomes. The most relevant scenarios should be selected based on what key internal stakeholders identify as the areas of greatest urgency and lack of current preparedness. There are significantly more potential scenarios to consider in Approach B compared with Approach A.

SECTION
3A

Election scenarios to consider

		ELECTION RESULT IS CONTESTED	
		No	Yes
DEMOCRACY IS AT RISK	No	A Low Impact / Low Urgency	B Moderate Impact / High Urgency
	Yes	C High Impact / Moderate Urgency	D High Impact / High Urgency

Election scenarios to consider

SCENARIO A: Election is not contested and democracy is not at risk

Key indicators

- A presidential winner is projected by all major news networks within a day or two of the election
- The losing candidate concedes directly to their opponent and in a public address
- The losing candidate publicly and privately encourages their supporters to respect the result as the legitimate outcome
- A peaceful transition of power is underway

Discussion prompts

1. What specific risks and / or opportunities does this scenario create for our business and its interests?
2. What existing precedents, policies, guidelines, and behavioral norms do we have in place that we should consider when planning for this potential scenario?
3. What is our business's ideal outcome if this scenario occurs? What is our worst case outcome?
4. What decisions or actions should we take in a scenario like this one? What steps do we need to take in advance to ensure optimal preparedness for this scenario?

Scenario narrative

The 2024 U.S. general election proceeds smoothly, with a clear winner projected within a day or two of election day. The losing candidate concedes publicly and encourages their supporters to respect the result and witness the peaceful transition of power. Voter turnout is high, and the public expresses confidence in the integrity of the electoral process. There are few if any calls for the business community to take action in defense of democratic processes or institutions.

SECTION
3A

Election scenarios to consider

SCENARIO B: Election is contested and democracy is not at risk

Key indicators

- Both major party candidates claim victory following the election, regardless of published vote counts and/or network projections
- The losing candidate refuses to concede, citing baseless claims of widespread fraud
- Despite public unrest, few if any state elections officials and congressional leaders align behind the losing candidates claims of a fraudulent result
- Few if any legal challenges proceed through the judicial system

Discussion prompts

1. What specific risks and / or opportunities does this scenario create for our business and its interests?
2. What existing precedents, policies, guidelines, and behavioral norms do we have in place that we should consider when planning for this potential scenario?
3. What is our business's ideal outcome if this scenario occurs? What is our worst case outcome?
4. What decisions or actions should we take in a scenario like this one? What steps do we need to take in advance to ensure optimal preparedness for this scenario?

Scenario narrative

The 2024 U.S. presidential election results are contested, with both major candidates claiming victory. The losing party refuses to concede, alleging massive voter fraud and requesting recounts and audits in key battleground states. Despite a lack of official or legal traction with contesting the election, supporters from both political parties enact large-scale protests, some leading to violence. The media reinforces polarization through its coverage, and mis/disinformation about the election results spreads rapidly.

Election scenarios to consider

SCENARIO C: Election is not contested and democracy is at risk

Key indicators

- Donald Trump and the Republican party earn a trifecta and gain control of the executive and legislative branches
- The incoming administration refuses to engage collaboratively with the outgoing administration
- The new majority eliminates the Senate filibuster and begins advancing anti-democratic legislation (like voting rights restrictions)
- The new administration takes substantive steps to investigate and punish political opponents
- The new administration takes substantive steps to purge civil servants and overhaul the government bureaucracy with loyalists

Discussion prompts

1. What specific risks and / or opportunities does this scenario create for our business and its interests?
2. What existing precedents, policies, guidelines, and behavioral norms do we have in place that we should consider when planning for this potential scenario?
3. What is our business's ideal outcome if this scenario occurs? What is our worst case outcome?
4. What decisions or actions should we take in a scenario like this one? What steps do we need to take in advance to ensure optimal preparedness for this scenario?

Scenario narrative

In 2024, Donald Trump wins the presidency and Republicans secure control of both chambers of Congress. With a new Senate Majority Leader, Senate Republicans vote to eliminate the filibuster, enabling the passage of sweeping legislation without bipartisan support. The Republican majority enacts laws that expand and centralize executive power, restrict voting rights, and undermine independent oversight bodies. These actions are upheld by a series of judicial decisions which reinforce the legality of these power-consolidating measures.

SECTION
3A

Election scenarios to consider

SCENARIO D: Election is contested and democracy is at risk

Key indicators

- Both major party candidates claim victory following the election, regardless of published vote counts and/or network projections
- The losing candidate refuses to concede, citing baseless claims of widespread fraud
- Many state elections officials and congressional leaders align behind the losing candidates claims of a fraudulent result, instigating delays in the election certification process and/or invoking emergency powers in the name of national security
- Courts entertain weak or unsubstantiated claims of voter fraud or other forms of interference

Discussion prompts

1. What specific risks and / or opportunities does this scenario create for our business and its interests?
2. What existing precedents, policies, guidelines, and behavioral norms do we have in place that we should consider when planning for this potential scenario?
3. What is our business's ideal outcome if this scenario occurs? What is our worst case outcome?
4. What decisions or actions should we take in a scenario like this one? What steps do we need to take in advance to ensure optimal preparedness for this scenario?

Scenario narrative

After a close election, the losing party refuses to concede, alleging widespread voter fraud without substantial evidence and sparking public protests and demands for a recount. Key state officials in contested states are aligned with the losing party and publicly question the election's validity. Political leaders suggest delaying the inauguration or invoking emergency powers, citing national security.

As we approach Inauguration Day, democratic and constitutional stability are at risk, public trust is waning, and threats of violence among the losing party are escalating.

SECTION
3

Election scenarios to consider

APPROACH A: PLANNING FOR MACRO POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Recommended if: Your organization is committed to taking an active role in the protection of our democracy if/when conditions merit.

About the approach: This scenario planning approach focuses on four mutually exclusive large-scale outcomes of the 2024 U.S. general election, each based on two variables: 1) Is the election result contested? 2) Are democratic processes and institutions under direct threat?

The assumption underpinning this approach is that one of these four scenarios will inevitably occur after the election, so it pays to be prepared for all four ahead of time.

APPROACH B: PLANNING FOR SPECIFIC BUSINESS IMPACTS

Recommended if: Your organization is keen to develop plans around specific impacts to your business and its immediate interests, like employee wellbeing, operations, brand value, and customer relations.

About the approach: This scenario planning approach focuses on more narrowly defined and not mutually exclusive impacts that could result from a range of electoral outcomes following the general election. The most relevant scenarios should be selected based on what key internal stakeholders identify as the areas of greatest urgency and lack of current preparedness. There are significantly more potential scenarios to consider in Approach B compared with Approach A.

Election scenarios to consider

SCENARIO A: Large scale public protests and demonstrations following the election in communities with company operations and/or large employee populations

Fact pattern

- Over the past several years, a growing public distrust of elected officials and election results has been observed.
- A significant number of state election officials participated in promoting the "big lie" regarding the 2020/21 election results.
- The Trump campaign has refused to say they'll accept the results of the coming election unless it results in a Trump victory.

Scenario narrative

Following a highly divisive campaign, the election result is contested by the losing side with unsubstantiated claims of a "stolen" victory. Public unrest quickly intensifies, resulting in widespread public protests and demonstrations in key areas where the company has operations or where many employees reside. The protests reflecting deep-seated frustrations among the populace. These demonstrations have occasionally turned violent, leading to concerns about safety and the potential impact on the company's business activities and employee well-being.

It is now January 2025. The protests have been ongoing for two months, showing no signs of abating.

Impact category(ies)

- ✓ Company operations
- ✓ Employee wellbeing
- Public affairs
- Social impact and sustainability

Most relevant time horizon

- ✓ Next 3 months
- Next 1 year

Likeliest in the case of

- Narrow or contested victory by Democrats
- Narrow or contested victory by Republicans
- ✓ Narrow or contested victory by either party
- Major Democratic victory
- Major Republican victory

Discussion prompts

1. What specific risks and / or opportunities does this scenario create for our business and its interests?
2. What existing precedents, policies, guidelines, and behavioral norms do we have in place that we should consider when planning for this potential scenario?
3. What is our business's ideal outcome if this scenario occurs? What is our worst case outcome?
4. What decisions or actions should we take in a scenario like this one? What steps do we need to take in advance to ensure optimal preparedness for this scenario?

Election scenarios to consider

SCENARIO B: Widespread internal employee activism / calls for public action

Fact pattern

- Over the past several years, there has been increasing internal employee activism and calls for public action.
- Employees are demanding greater transparency, ethical practices, and action on social and political issues.
- They are organizing protests, petitioning for policy changes, and leveraging social media to amplify their voices.
- Leaders are aware from internal and external data that employee satisfaction is increasingly tied to corporate values and actions aligned with those values.

Impact category(ies)

- Company operations
- Employee wellbeing
- Public affairs
- Social impact and sustainability

Most relevant time horizon

- Next 3 months
- Next 1 year

Likeliest in the case of

- Narrow or contested victory by Democrats
- Narrow or contested victory by Republicans
- Narrow or contested victory by either party
- Major Democratic victory
- Major Republican victory

Scenario narrative

It is January 2025. The 2024 election cycle saw significant attention on various policy issues, including climate change, abortion, immigration, racial justice, and income inequality. The newly elected president and congress have initiated sweeping policy changes in these areas, creating a charged political atmosphere. This political environment has emboldened employees at your company to amplify their activism, leading to widespread internal demands for action. Employees are calling for significant changes, including enhanced ethical standards, greater corporate social responsibility, public advocacy for their social values, and transparency in business practices. The leadership is under intense pressure to respond and address these demands.

Discussion prompts

1. What specific risks and / or opportunities does this scenario create for our business and its interests?
2. What existing precedents, policies, guidelines, and behavioral norms do we have in place that we should consider when planning for this potential scenario?
3. What is our business's ideal outcome if this scenario occurs? What is our worst case outcome?
4. What decisions or actions should we take in a scenario like this one? What steps do we need to take in advance to ensure optimal preparedness for this scenario?

Election scenarios to consider

SCENARIO C: Accelerated legislative and judicial dismantling of DEIB practices

Fact pattern

- Over the past several years, a wide range of legislative and judicial actions have been taken to dismantle Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) practices.
- Several high-profile Supreme Court cases have set new precedents that weaken protections for DEIB initiatives.
- Influential conservative policy experts are calling for significant rollbacks of DEIB policies and practices across various sectors.

Scenario narrative

In 2024, Republicans win the presidency and gain control of both chambers of congress. With a new Republican Majority Leader, Senate Republicans vote to eliminate the filibuster. This clears the way for the majority to pass major legislation across a range of issues, including the most significant barriers to DEIB practices in decades. Immediately, diversity programs are abolished and organizations are prohibited from collecting demographic data, leading to a stark decline in workplace diversity. These actions are supported by a series of judicial decisions that uphold the legality of these rollbacks.

By April of 2025, the dismantling of DEIB practices is in full effect.

Impact category(ies)

- ✓ Company operations
- ✓ Employee wellbeing
- ✓ Public affairs
- ✓ Social impact and sustainability

Most relevant time horizon

- Next 3 months
- ✓ Next 1 year

Likeliest in the case of

- Narrow or contested victory by Democrats
- Narrow or contested victory by Republicans
- Narrow or contested victory by either party
- Major Democratic victory
- ✓ Major Republican victory

Discussion prompts

1. What specific risks and / or opportunities does this scenario create for our business and its interests?
2. What existing precedents, policies, guidelines, and behavioral norms do we have in place that we should consider when planning for this potential scenario?
3. What is our business's ideal outcome if this scenario occurs? What is our worst case outcome?
4. What decisions or actions should we take in a scenario like this one? What steps do we need to take in advance to ensure optimal preparedness for this scenario?

Election scenarios to consider

ADDITIONAL SCENARIOS FOR CONSIDERATION

Scenario D

Escalating public / consumer calls for companies to take action on social and environmental issues

Impact category(ies)

- Company operations
- Employee wellbeing
- Public affairs
- Social impact and sustainability

Likeliest in the case of

- Narrow or contested victory by Democrats
- Narrow or contested victory by Republicans
- Narrow or contested victory by either party
- Major Democratic victory
- Major Republican victory

Most relevant time horizon

- Next 3 months
- Next 1 year
- Other:

Scenario E

Market uncertainty and volatility due to legislative gridlock and/or political turmoil

Impact category(ies)

- Company operations
- Employee wellbeing
- Public affairs
- Social impact and sustainability

Likeliest in the case of

- Narrow or contested victory by Democrats
- Narrow or contested victory by Republicans
- Narrow or contested victory by either party
- Major Democratic victory
- Major Republican victory

Most relevant time horizon

- Next 3 months
- Next 1 year
- Other:

Election scenarios to consider

ADDITIONAL SCENARIOS FOR CONSIDERATION

Scenario F

Period of intense and escalating employee mental health distress

Impact category(ies)

- Company operations
- Employee wellbeing
- Public affairs
- Social impact and sustainability

Likeliest in the case of

- Narrow or contested victory by Democrats
- Narrow or contested victory by Republicans
- Narrow or contested victory by either party
- Major Democratic victory
- Major Republican victory

Most relevant time horizon

- Next 3 months
- Next 1 year
- Other:

Scenario G

Increase in federal oversight and regulation of AI

Impact category(ies)

- Company operations
- Employee wellbeing
- Public affairs
- Social impact and sustainability

Likeliest in the case of

- Narrow or contested victory by Democrats
- Narrow or contested victory by Republicans
- Narrow or contested victory by either party
- Major Democratic victory
- Major Republican victory

Most relevant time horizon

- Next 3 months
- Next 1 year
- Other:

Election scenarios to consider

ADDITIONAL SCENARIOS FOR CONSIDERATION

Scenario H	Impact category(ies)	Likeliest in the case of	Most relevant time horizon
Period of intense and escalating internal workplace conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Company operations<input type="checkbox"/> Employee wellbeing<input type="checkbox"/> Public affairs<input type="checkbox"/> Social impact and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by Democrats<input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by Republicans<input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by either party<input type="checkbox"/> Major Democratic victory<input type="checkbox"/> Major Republican victory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Next 3 months<input type="checkbox"/> Next 1 year<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Scenario I	Impact category(ies)	Likeliest in the case of	Most relevant time horizon
Significant decrease in public investment in environmental, health, and social programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Company operations<input type="checkbox"/> Employee wellbeing<input type="checkbox"/> Public affairs<input type="checkbox"/> Social impact and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by Democrats<input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by Republicans<input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by either party<input type="checkbox"/> Major Democratic victory<input type="checkbox"/> Major Republican victory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Next 3 months<input type="checkbox"/> Next 1 year<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

Election scenarios to consider

ADDITIONAL SCENARIOS FOR CONSIDERATION

Scenario J

Significant increase in public investment in environmental, health, and social programs

Impact category(ies)

- Company operations
- Employee wellbeing
- Public affairs
- Social impact and sustainability

Likeliest in the case of

- Narrow or contested victory by Democrats
- Narrow or contested victory by Republicans
- Narrow or contested victory by either party
- Major Democratic victory
- Major Republican victory

Most relevant time horizon

- Next 3 months
- Next 1 year
- Other:

Scenario K

Significant policy changes affecting employee policies and benefits, such as federally mandated paid parental leave and expanded abortion access

Impact category(ies)

- Company operations
- Employee wellbeing
- Public affairs
- Social impact and sustainability

Likeliest in the case of

- Narrow or contested victory by Democrats
- Narrow or contested victory by Republicans
- Narrow or contested victory by either party
- Major Democratic victory
- Major Republican victory

Most relevant time horizon

- Next 3 months
- Next 1 year
- Other:

Election scenarios to consider

ADDITIONAL SCENARIOS FOR CONSIDERATION

Scenario L	Impact category(ies)	Likeliest in the case of	Most relevant time horizon
Significant reversal of anti-ESG and anti-DEIB narratives and efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Company operations<input type="checkbox"/> Employee wellbeing<input type="checkbox"/> Public affairs<input type="checkbox"/> Social impact and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by Democrats<input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by Republicans<input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by either party<input type="checkbox"/> Major Democratic victory<input type="checkbox"/> Major Republican victory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Next 3 months<input type="checkbox"/> Next 1 year<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Accelerated legislative and judicial dismantling of ESG investing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Company operations<input type="checkbox"/> Employee wellbeing<input type="checkbox"/> Public affairs<input type="checkbox"/> Social impact and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by Democrats<input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by Republicans<input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by either party<input type="checkbox"/> Major Democratic victory<input type="checkbox"/> Major Republican victory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Next 3 months<input type="checkbox"/> Next 1 year<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

Election scenarios to consider

ADDITIONAL SCENARIOS FOR CONSIDERATION

Scenario N	Impact category(ies)	Likeliest in the case of	Most relevant time horizon
Increase in available labor force or changes in employee demographics due to less restrictive immigration policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Company operations<input type="checkbox"/> Employee wellbeing<input type="checkbox"/> Public affairs<input type="checkbox"/> Social impact and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by Democrats<input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by Republicans<input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by either party<input type="checkbox"/> Major Democratic victory<input type="checkbox"/> Major Republican victory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Next 3 months<input type="checkbox"/> Next 1 year<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Scenario O	Impact category(ies)	Likeliest in the case of	Most relevant time horizon
Politically motivated vandalism and/or destruction of corporate property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Company operations<input type="checkbox"/> Employee wellbeing<input type="checkbox"/> Public affairs<input type="checkbox"/> Social impact and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by Democrats<input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by Republicans<input type="checkbox"/> Narrow or contested victory by either party<input type="checkbox"/> Major Democratic victory<input type="checkbox"/> Major Republican victory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Next 3 months<input type="checkbox"/> Next 1 year<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

Election scenarios to consider

ADDITIONAL SCENARIOS FOR CONSIDERATION

Scenario P

Reduction in available labor force or changes in employee demographics due to restrictive immigration policies

Impact category(ies)

- Company operations
- Employee wellbeing
- Public affairs
- Social impact and sustainability

Likeliest in the case of

- Narrow or contested victory by Democrats
- Narrow or contested victory by Republicans
- Narrow or contested victory by either party
- Major Democratic victory
- Major Republican victory

Most relevant time horizon

- Next 3 months
- Next 1 year
- Other:

Scenario Q

Significant deregulation of the private sector on issues like environmental impacts and disclosures

Impact category(ies)

- Company operations
- Employee wellbeing
- Public affairs
- Social impact and sustainability

Likeliest in the case of

- Narrow or contested victory by Democrats
- Narrow or contested victory by Republicans
- Narrow or contested victory by either party
- Major Democratic victory
- Major Republican victory

Most relevant time horizon

- Next 3 months
- Next 1 year
- Other:

Election scenarios to consider

ADDITIONAL SCENARIOS FOR CONSIDERATION

Scenario R

Significant new regulation of the private sector on issues like environmental impacts and disclosure

Impact category(ies)

- Company operations
- Employee wellbeing
- Public affairs
- Social impact and sustainability

Likeliest in the case of

- Narrow or contested victory by Democrats
- Narrow or contested victory by Republicans
- Narrow or contested victory by either party
- Major Democratic victory
- Major Republican victory

Most relevant time horizon

- Next 3 months
- Next 1 year
- Other:

Scenario S

Specific or general threats to employee safety due to association with the company and/or because they are targeted based on demographic characteristics

Impact category(ies)

- Company operations
- Employee wellbeing
- Public affairs
- Social impact and sustainability

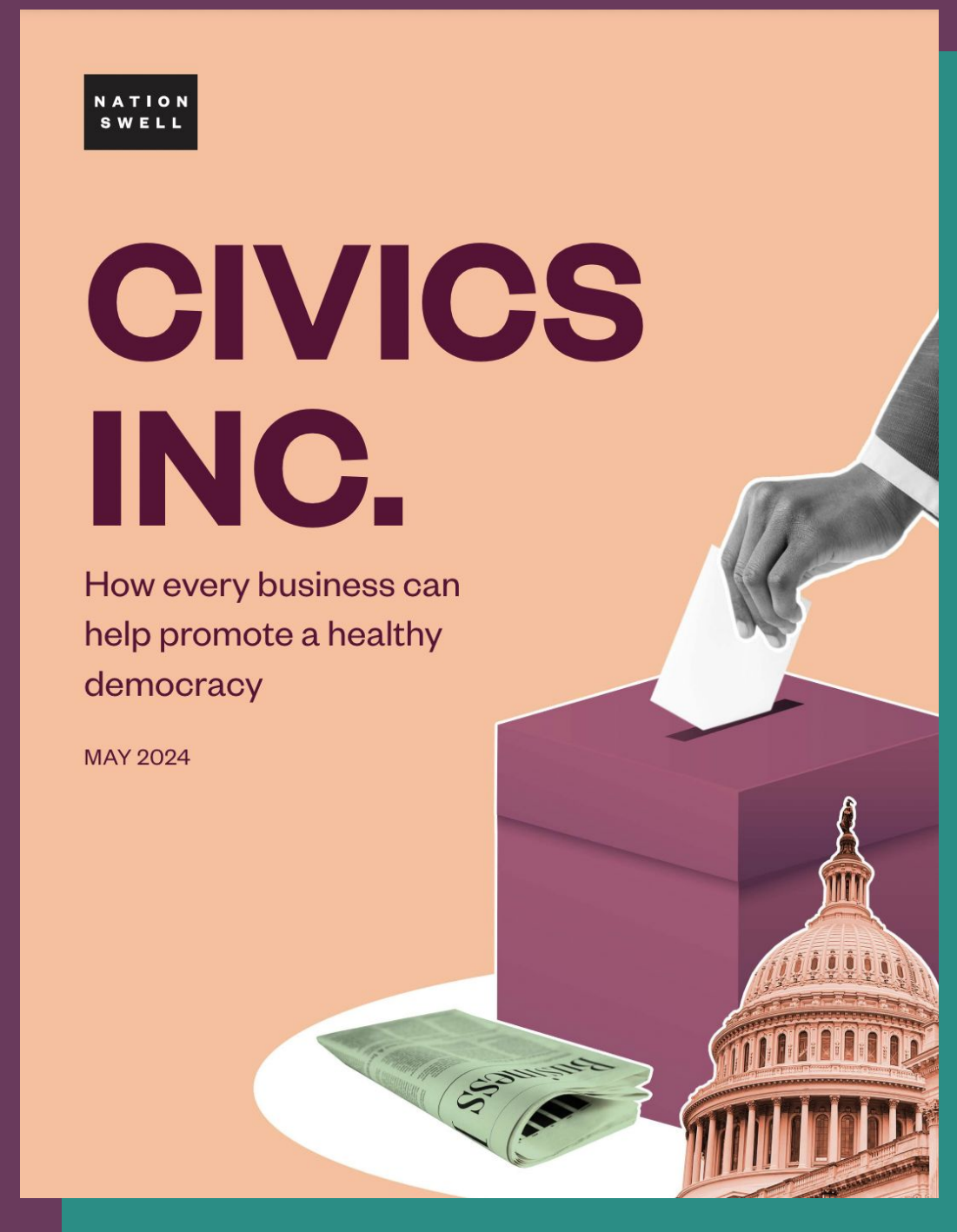
Likeliest in the case of

- Narrow or contested victory by Democrats
- Narrow or contested victory by Republicans
- Narrow or contested victory by either party
- Major Democratic victory
- Major Republican victory

Most relevant time horizon

- Next 3 months
- Next 1 year
- Other:

Additional resources from NationSwell to support your civic engagement and election preparedness



(click image to download *Civics Inc.*)



(click image to download *Pivotal moments*)

Thank you for engaging with this toolkit.

NationSwell welcomes input on this resource and invites you to reach out with questions, feedback, and suggestions for how we can further support your work.

Please feel free to email us at Insights@nationswell.com .

LEGAL NOTICE

The findings, conclusions, and recommendations presented in this report are those of NationSwell alone, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the individuals or organizations cited herein. NationSwell has made efforts to verify the accuracy of the information it provides to readers of this report. However, this report relies on data obtained from many sources and NationSwell cannot guarantee the complete accuracy of the information provided or any analysis based thereon. Content found in this report is not intended to serve as or shall be deemed individual investment, legal, tax, accounting, or other regulated advice. You should not rely on any legal commentary in this report as a basis for action, or assume that any tactics described herein would be permitted by applicable law or appropriate for a given organization's situation. You are advised to consult with appropriate professionals concerning legal, medical, tax, or accounting issues, before implementing any of these tactics. Neither NationSwell nor its officers, directors, trustees, employees, and agents shall be liable for any indirect, incidental, consequential, or punitive damages or losses for lost revenue or profits, whether or not advised of the possibility of such damages or loss and regardless of the theory of liability.

“NationSwell” is a registered trademark. You are not permitted to use this or any other trademark, product name, service name, trade name, and logo of NationSwell without prior written consent. All other trademarks, product names, service names, trade names, and logos used within these pages are the property of their respective holders. Use of other company trademarks, product names, service names, trade names, and logos or images of the same does not necessarily constitute (a) an endorsement by such company of NationSwell and its products and services, or (b) an endorsement of the company or its products or services by NationSwell.

These Terms are governed by the laws of the State of New York without reference to the principles of conflicts of laws thereof.