

Tech Debt: The Business Case for Action

Executive Briefing Template

Prepared by Engineering for [Leadership Team]

[Date]

TechDebt.fail

<https://techdebt.fail/>

Technical Debt Is Costing Us Money

- > Developer time spent on maintenance vs features: 33% vs 67% (industry avg)
- > Our estimated annual debt cost: \$[X]M (use ROI Calculator)
- > Each quarter of inaction compounds cost by 15-25%
- > Current velocity declining at ~[X]% per quarter

[Customize with your organization's actual numbers]

What Happens If We Do Nothing

- > Feature delivery slows by 23% year-over-year (DORA 2025)
- > Security vulnerability surface grows with unmaintained dependencies
- > Hiring/retention suffers - top engineers leave legacy codebases
- > One critical incident away from forced emergency rewrite
- > Competitor advantage gap widens each quarter

ROI of Proactive Remediation

- > Teams that address debt see 40% velocity improvement within 6 months
- > Incident frequency drops 60% after dependency modernization
- > Developer satisfaction scores improve 35% (retention impact)
- > Every \$1 invested in debt reduction saves \$4-10 in future costs

Phased Remediation Plan

Phase 1 (Month 1-2): Assessment & Quick Wins

10% sprint capacity

Phase 2 (Month 3-6): Strategic Remediation

20% sprint capacity

Phase 3 (Month 7-12): Sustained Investment

15% ongoing capacity

Phase 4 (Month 13+): Continuous Improvement

10% ongoing capacity

Resource Allocation

Engineering time:	[X] FTE-months over 12 months
Tooling:	[\$X]K for analysis/monitoring tools
Training:	[\$X]K for team upskilling
Total:	[\$X]K (customize with your numbers)

Expected ROI: 3-5x within 18 months based on industry benchmarks

How We'll Measure Progress

- > Deployment frequency (DORA metric) - target: weekly to daily
- > Lead time for changes - target: reduce by 40%
- > Change failure rate - target: below 15%
- > Mean time to recovery - target: under 1 hour
- > Developer satisfaction score - target: 4.0+/5.0
- > Debt ratio (SonarQube) - target: below 5%

Recommended Actions

- > Approve 10% sprint capacity for assessment phase
- > Designate tech debt champion with executive reporting
- > Schedule monthly debt review with engineering leadership
- > Set Q1 targets and review at end of assessment phase

Questions? Contact: [Engineering Lead Name]

Full resources at <https://techdebt.fail/>