A Strategic Planning Overview

1.0 What is strategic planning?
Strategy is a coordinated set of actions aimed at creating and sustaining a competitive advantage in carrying out the organization’s mission.

Strategic planning is the process by which an organization envisions its future and develops the necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future. The basic steps of the strategic planning process include information gathering and analysis, identification of critical issues facing the organization, development of a strategic vision, mission review/revision and the development of strategic goals and strategies.

1.1 Strategic Plan vs. Operating Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Plan</th>
<th>Operating Plan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple years</td>
<td>Single year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directional focus</td>
<td>Tactical achievement focus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission/visions/values</td>
<td>Specific tasks and goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-year goals/strategies</td>
<td>One year tactics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-year financials</td>
<td>One year budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created every 1 – 3 years</td>
<td>Created annually</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reviewed quarterly</td>
<td>Reviewed monthly</td>
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1.2 The Basic Steps of Strategic Planning
1. Gather/analyze information.
2. Identify critical issues.
3. Develop a strategic vision.
5. Develop strategic goals and strategies.
1.3 Potential Strategic Plan Content

- History and mission
- Statement of need
- Services provided
- Core competencies
- Target customers
- Environmental assessment (SWOT)
- Vision statement
- Strategic focus
- Major objectives
- Financial projections

2.0 Values/Benefits of Strategic Planning

For the Organization as a Whole

- Clearly articulates your organization’s mission & vision.
- Clearly identifies your critical challenges, potential opportunities and possible obstacles.
- Ensures the most effective use of your organization’s resources.
- Provides clearly defined road map on where your organization would like to be in 2 – 5 years.

For Board & Staff

- Provides a structured & formalized process identifying potential future opportunities and challenges.
- Enhances board awareness of current issues.
- Provides a clear focus for the entire organization resulting in enhanced effectiveness and efficiency.
- Provides a framework for day-to-day decision making.
- Provides a base from which progress can be measured and evaluated.
- Greatly minimizes need to operate in a crisis management mode.

For Donors / Stakeholders

- The plan provides a framework for communicating the organization’s goals and objectives to stakeholders/constituents.
- The plan conveys an image of permanence and stability.

3.0 Plan Development Guideline

The scale and scope of strategic planning can vary significantly
Choose the approach which best matches your unique needs and capabilities
3.1 Assemble a Project Team
Decide how much time & resources you can afford
Potential team members
   Board Chair
   CEO/ED
   Board members (strategic planning committee)
   Selected staff

3.2 Get Input
Major Stakeholders
   Board members
   Key Staff
   Major Donors
   Service recipients
   Community Leaders

SWOT analysis
   Strengths
   Weaknesses
   Opportunities
   Threats/Challenges

3.3 Uncover Themes
What does the input data tell you?
Select a suitable planning horizon
Analysis of the external environment
Strategic Advantages

3.4 Key Issues
Consistency with Mission
Areas of Greatest Impact
Likelihood of Success
Capacity Issues
Timing
Team Commitment

3.4 Set Measurable Goals
Tasks Associated with Each Goal
Accountability Structure
Completion Timeliness
PLANNING RETREAT OUTLINE

**Project Preparation**
Form a Strategic Planning Committee
Get Input

**Analysis of Input Data**

**Purpose for Being**
Validate/Update Mission and Vision Statements

**Situation Assessment**
Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats
Current/Emerging Issues

- Tactical Issues
- Strategic Issues

**Strategy Development Phase**

**Develop & prioritize proposed strategies/activities**

**How to measure success**
Barriers to success

**Action Plan** to succeed

**Strategic Plan**
Strategic Planning Project
Step 1- Get Input

- What scope of work (time frame, hours of effort, level of detail) are we prepared to commit resources to?
  Who are the key stakeholders? Who needs to be involved?

- Assign responsibility for obtaining response data for each question

- How will we collect data?
  - Face to face
    Most effective with major players: those closest to the organization
  - Telephonic
    Can help relationship building with donors
  - Electronic survey
    Can reach a large number of respondents; Survey Monkey
  - Studies and reports
    Documented findings/ validation of benefit of services, opportunities for additional services
  - Focus Groups
    Composition dependent on information seeking, ie. Clients, Board, Donors, Volunteers, Employers, Political Leaders, Service Providers.

Obtain input data for the following areas:

- What business are we in?
  - Mission
    What is our purpose?
  - Vision
    Describe what success will look like in 2020

  - What is our main focus?
    What is the Big Question? What are the three critical issues to be addressed? What impactful future scenario might occur?
  - Who are our customers?
    How broad is our scope of service? How broad should it be?
    Who are the focus recipients of our service? Is this changing?
  - How many potential customers are served?/ are not served?
    Could or should this be different?
  - What is our service / product?
    What do we want to eliminate, reduce, raise, create?
  - What needs do we address? / do we not address
• What is our financial status?
  Diversity of fund sources
  Prospect strategy
  Fundraising capability

• How do we define success?
  o In the present?
  o In five years?

• What is going on externally that could impact us?
  o Current situations and trends regarding:
    ▪ Regulations
    ▪ Demographics
    ▪ Economy/sources of funding
    ▪ Competition/Alliances

• SWOT Analysis (both internal and external perspectives)
  o What are our strengths?
  o What are our weaknesses?
  o What are our opportunities?
  o What are our threats/challenges?

For each of the above questions, consider an internal perspective such as:
  - Key competencies
  - Assets: physical, financial, human resources
  - Other

For each of the above questions consider an external perspective such as:
  - Clients
  - Donors
  - Program competitiveness
  - Other

• Strategic Advantage
  o Who else does this or could do this?
  o What do we do better, faster, more efficiently than our existing or potential competitors?

• Other Questions: