



Paula Manley
Consulting

About Strategic Planning

What is Strategic Planning?

Strategic planning involves developing a vision for the future and determining how you will move toward that desired future. It is the process of clarifying what your organization intends to be and how you will get there in light of your core strengths and the trends in your operating environment. Strategic planning means making fundamental choices about your mission and goals, the programs and services you provide, and how you attract resources to support your work (e.g., collaborators, money, expertise, etc.).

Benefits of Strategic Planning

- A systems perspective in which your organization's work is viewed in relation to its changing environment.
- A unified vision that is shared among board, staff and other stakeholders; a framework that sets the direction, and guides governance and management.
- A foundation for partnership development, fundraising and board development.
- A shared basis for communicating about organizational change, establishing the context for change, and reducing resistance to change.
- An increased level of commitment to the organization and its goals among board, staff and other stakeholders.
- An improved ability to match resources to opportunities based on clear priorities.
- A strengthened sense of team and an improved ability to deal with challenges.
- Greater clarity in determining how your organization measures success.

Prerequisites for Planning

- A commitment by the organization's leadership to engage actively throughout the planning process and commit sufficient resources (time and money).
- A resolution of any major crisis that may interfere with the organization's ability to focus on planning.
- A board and staff that are not embroiled in extreme or destructive conflict.
- A commitment to adequately assess current programs and services.
- A commitment and ability to meet constituent needs.
- A willingness to question the status quo and explore new approaches to performing and evaluating your organization's work.

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