STRATEGIC PLANNING GUIDE

FOR ORGANIZATIONS

2019

TC Consulting

PLANNING OVERVIEW

WHAT IS PLANNING?

Definition of "Planning" – the act or process towards achieving or doing something (Merriam Webster)

Planning is an organizations process of defining a strategy, or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy. A plan is like a road map, as you follow it, your organization can always see the progress towards the desired outcomes and goals.

WHY IS PLANNING IMPORTANT?

- Operating without a plan, in most cases, leads to doing things "just because that is how it has always been done". Maintaining the status quo from the past is not prudent, or efficient

- A plan will also assist organizations in identifying potential problems or pitfalls. When this occurs it is much easier and efficient to adjust your plan to smother a coming crisis, than to try and deal with it in an unexpected fashion

- Organizations who take the time to plan are viewed as successful, thoughtful, efficient, and in many cases a winner (because of planning). When it comes to attracting volunteers or staff to your group, it is no secret that people desire to be part of or associated with a "Winner". Good solid plans equal success and winning

- The majority of financial grant applications request a copy of the organizations plan, including Vision and Mission and Outcomes/Goals. Having a plan in place can mean success in securing financial resources

- To get everyone on the same page & consistent direction
    - If you find that you have people working to achieve different aims, or going in different directions, you need a written agreed upon plan
    - Once you define your strategic plan direction, all aspects of operations for your programs/service delivery can proceed together towards your outcomes and vision

- To guide & simplify decision-making
    - If your organization's leaders have trouble saying no to new ideas or potential initiatives, that *pop up* you need a Plan… Priorities help to say no to distracting; fly by the seat of your pants initiatives

- To communicate the same message
    - Many organization leaders walk around with a strategy plan locked in their heads— However without a plan down on paper; that has been communicated to others ; no one but the leaders know what direction to go?
    - When everyone involved knows where you're going **(the plan),** you increase the chances for people to help you maximize your success in getting there
    - Once Organization Leaders recognize the need to plan, you now have the role of becoming the catalyst: for facilitating the buy-in and commitment from others in your group ; LEADERS set the Planning Example for the rest of the organization
- Planning is the key to ALL we do
    - Financial Budget Priorities
    - Financial Grant Apps/Sponsorship
    - Staff and Volunteer Management
    - Facility Management
    - Co-operation/Partnerships with others

WHAT DOES PLANNING INCLUDE

Planning does not have to be a complicated process but it has long been realized that getting the planning cycle started can be an overwhelming task for organizations. A good idea is to secure the services of a facilitator or an experienced person who can provide leadership to your group during the planning sessions.

Of great importance throughout all components of the planning process is comparing your organizations foundations/beliefs/philosophy against any planning statements adopted during the process. At all times the organizations plans should be aligned with and remain true to the groups basic beliefs. This will ensure that not only are you doing things right but you are actually doing the right things

The planning cycle does not end once initially established. To be effective the plan must be utilized and referred to at all times as the organization's program guide, or map, towards achieving the outcomes and ultimately realizing the group's Vision. Most organizations will set aside time on an annual basis to update planning documents.

TYPES OF PLANNING

Strategic Planning-every 3-5 years

*Operational Planning*s-Annually

STRATEGIC VS. OPERATIONAL PLANNING-KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

Strategic Plans are made to formulate the vision, mission, values, and desired outcomes,(the impact or difference) of the organization to assist in developing an operational plan towards achievement…

Strategic planning involves stepping back from day to day operations and activities of your group and asking where you are headed and what your priorities will be…

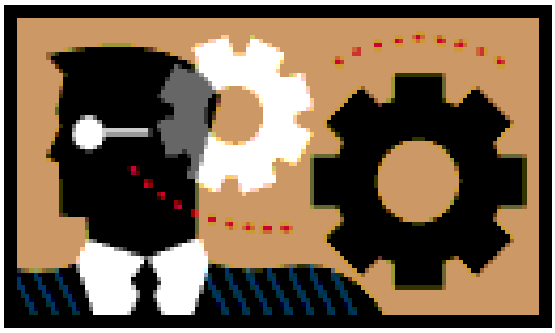
A **Strategic Plan** is NOT about WHAT we are going to do- but WHY we do what we do and the positive impact we will have in the community…

SPECIFICALLY; Strategic Planning is:

A tool that:

- Places the desired "end" result at the beginning , which allows for buy in and engagement of people in the community(it is not about the what but the why)
- Address changes in our community and current needs of the day and assist in setting priorities for allocations of resources(budgets)
- Promote partnerships with like minded organizations (shared visions can mean shared resources)

…….putting our heads together and thinking



Operational Plans are made to effectively perform the activities towards achieving the Strategic Plans; vision, and outcomes (the impact) of the organization. Usually included are:

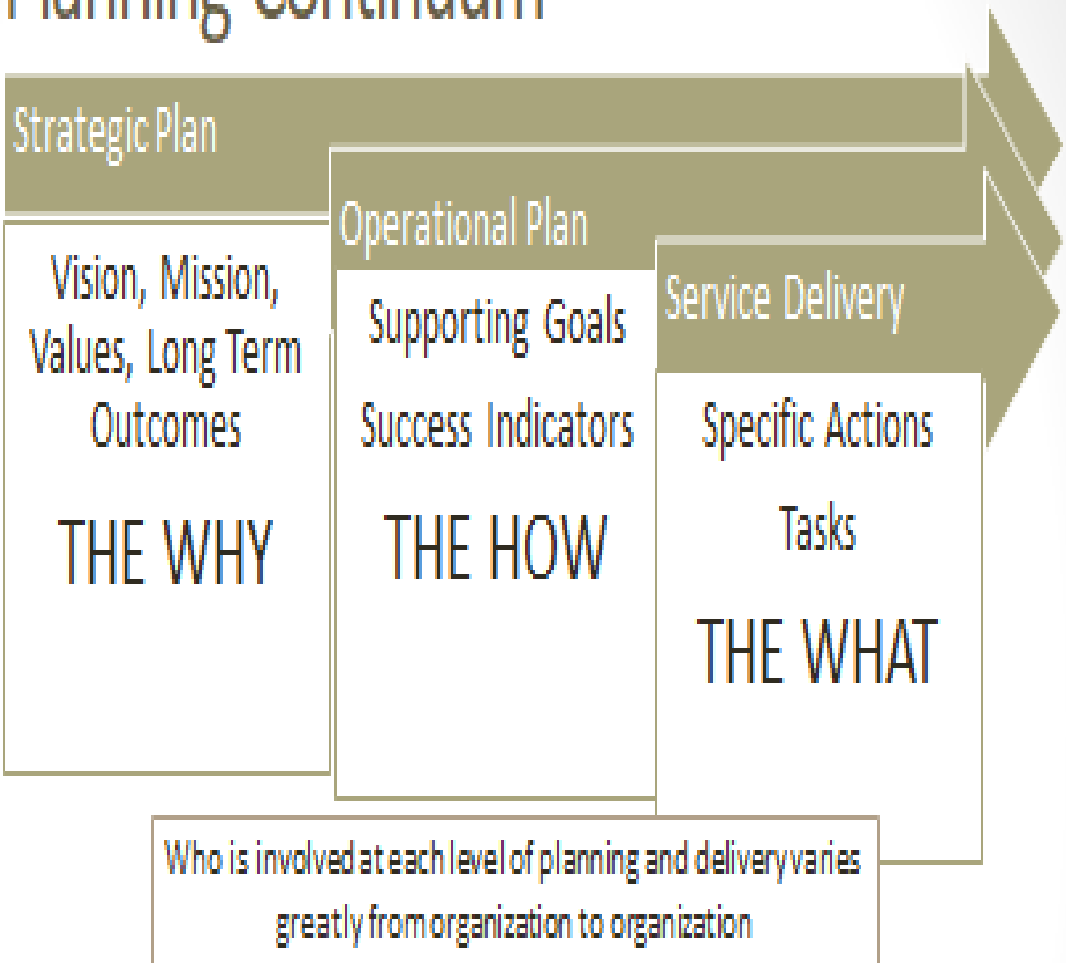
- Supporting Goals

  Program Activities/Details

- Community Engagement
- Evaluation Plan
- Resources Required
- Promotions/Advertising
- Financial Budget
- Potential Risks Safety Issues / ID Plan B? Plan C?
- Volunteer Management

…..getting our hands dirty and doing

Planning Continuum



Lead By	Planning Item	Time Frame
Council, Board, & Staff	Vision/Mission/Values/Long-Term Outcomes	3-5 years
Board, & Staff	Supporting Goals	1-3 years
Staff/Volunteers	Specific Actions	1 year(annual)

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THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS:

- The process is as important to an organization as the results as it affirms WHY we do what we do and encourages involvement and engagement of people
- Strategic Planning Session should be organized setting aside more time than you would for a regular organization meeting (at least 3 to 4 hours or more depending on how many people are involved)
- Including people from all levels of the organization and at all levels of responsibility is valuable….their involvement allows them to think about how their activities and responsibilities fit into the larger picture, and about their potential contributions
- Once the document has been drafted and circulated to the general membership for comments and suggestions it can adopted as your group's strategic plan and operational plans developed
- It can also be valuable to engage the public or other like minded organizations in the process
- May be facilitated by an outside resource person or a person from outside your organization from the community
- The Strategic Plan is usually a 3 to 5 year plan document but should be monitored annually to guage progress towards outcomes
- Communicate and share your plan with the community and other stakeholders

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN A STRATEGIC PLAN DOCUMENT

A strategic plan will generally include:

- An Organization History & Description
- Definitions and/or Interpretations
- Organization's Mission, Vision and Value Statements
- Outcome Statements (Impact Statements)
    - Long Term
    - Intermediate
    - Short Term
- A section on HOW the plan will be monitored for progress
- A summary, which is usually written at the end of the report and outlines the process and the hilites

STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION AGENDA

WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

EXPLANANTION OF STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW

- SCOT: Establish & Analyze strengths , challenges, opportunities, and threats(An internal and external environmental scan to maximize on your strengths, protect against weaknesses)
- Review Organizational Structure and Membership
    - Present organizational structure (members,executive,bylaws)
    - Members Levels of Comittment to the group
    - Positive Organization Culture

ORGANIZATIONAL FOUNDATION

- Mission statement development
- Vision statement development
- Values development
- Desired outcomes established (what impact you wish to have)

MONITORING THE PLAN FOR PROGRESS

ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW

Organizaitonal reviews or “self inspection” is something that organizaitons very seldom do. It seems most of our groups simply carry on as we always have; and only take an in depth look at our administrative sturcuture as an organization if we are faced with adversity or some type of crisis that forces us to. As organizations embarrk on a planning cycle; there is no better opportunity to include an organizational review and self inpsection as part of the strategic planning process.

Included in this self inpsection is:

- SCOT Exercise: Identify & Analyze strengths , challenges, opportunities, and threats(An internal and external environmental scan to maximize on your strengths, protect against weaknesses)
- Review Organizational Structure and Membership
    - Present organizational structure (members,executive,bylaws)
    - Members Levels of Comittment to the group
    - Positive Organization Culture

Evaluating ourselves and our systems; as well as ensuring our members are alued a included; as an organizaiton is a very positive ,forward thinking initiative, and reflects well on your group as positive forward thinkers!

SCOT is an abbreviation for Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats. It is an important tool for auditing the overall strategic position of a community and its environment, a community organization, or a planning strategy.

Strengths and Challenges(weakness) are focused on internal issues(things within the group you are volunteering for that affect the group)

whereas

Opportunities and Threats are examined from an external perspective(things outside of the group you volunteer for that affect your group).

It should be noted that a SCOT analysis can be very subjective; two people rarely come up with the same version of a SCOT analysis even when given the same information about a community and its environment; SCOT analysis, therefore is best considered a guide and not a prescription

S. C. O. T. Worksheet

STRENGTHS (Internal) What is being done well? What unique resources can be drawn upon? What do others see as our strengths?	**CHALLENGESS** (Internal) What are others likely to see as our weaknesses? What could be improved? Where do we have fewer resources than others do?
OPPORTUNITIES (External) What good opportunities are available? What trends could we take advantage of? How can we turn our strengths into opportunities?	**THREATS** (External) What trends could lead to harm? What is our competition doing? What threats do our weaknesses expose us to?

SCOT Analysis-Your Organization

This internal review of your organization will assist you in realizing and addressing any potential limitations and opportunities that may affect how you operate

Strengths(within group)	**Challenges(weakness within group)**
Opportunities(outside group)	**Threats(outside group)**

SCOT Analysis-Your Organization

Within your Group; review your STRENGTHS

How may the STRENGTHS affect why &what you do as an organization?

Are you able to control or change to improve? If so-What /How?

Within your Group; review your CHALLENGES

How may the CHALLENGES affect why &what you do as an organization?

Are you able to control or change to improve? If so-What /How?

Outside your Group; review your OPPORTUNITIES

How may the OPPORTUNITIES affect why & what you do as an organization?

Are you able to control or change to improve? If so-What/How?

Outside your Group; review your Threats

How may the THREATS affect why & what you do as an organization?

Are you able to control or change to improve? If so-What/How?

Your responses and reactions to this SCOT exercise should be taken into consideration as you plan your future initiatives

Review Organizational Structure and Membership

Take a look ; is your group in need of updating aspects of your operations?

How long has it been since our organization made any administrative changes or updates?

Bylaws, Constitution, Lines of Authority-review…changes?

Membership…rules of membership still relevant? Need Change?

Other Comments?

Members Levels of Comittment

One of the biggest challenges that organizations face, is the varied levels of commitment of the members. Even though members were appointed because of their interest and passion for the community or the cause, not all people share the same level of commitment at the same time. The inner struggles of individuals who may have high expectations placed upon them by the group or other individuals in the group can be a negative force on group dynamics of the organization.

As members, the first step is recognizing the fact that all members will not contribute to the same level.

There are four basic levels of organization commitment:

- Base Level:
  - This is a new member who will attend meetings and participate in a minimal capacity

- Familiar Level:
  - This is a member who has served on the Board for a couple of years and has agreed to sit on additional committees for the Board

- Comfort Level:
  - This is a member who has completed one term and now seeks a second term and will likely take on an executive officer position (Recording Secretary or Vice-Chairperson)
- Leadership Level:
  - This person is a veteran of the Board and is totally committed. He/She may hold the Chairperson office and will represent the Board and speak at functions on behalf of the Board. The Number 1 cheerleader and promoter of the Board.

As members, where you fit in, and at what level of commitment you are at, is for only you to decide. All members need to accept and respect other members for what they are able to give to the group, and not judge for what they cannot contribute.

Taking the time to perform a “Commitment Check” with all members will help to avoid false expectations and provide everyone with understanding of why members do what they do.

The “Commitment Check” for members could be done at the first meeting of the year or in conjunction with your planning sessions, and involves members answering some question privately, and then sharing with each other at the board table. Taking the time for listening to, and understanding all the members, will lead to a more productive and fun organization.

Organizations Member "Commitment Check In"

a. Am I willing to continue to sit as a member?

b. How many meetings am I willing to attend?
What days and times work best for me?

c. Am I willing to sit on additional committees of the organization?

d. Am I willing to assume an executive office position?

e. Am I willing to represent the organization at community, district or provincial events/functions?

f. Am I willing to speak on behalf of the organization in the community?

g. Are there certain times of the year when I am not able to participate and/or contribute as much to the organization? If so when?

h. Do I have certain interests or skills that I would like to utilize for the organization? If so what?

i. In honest, open terms, list what you feel you can give or contribute to the organization this year.

j. Am I willing to contribute to the group's planning sessions?

k. Other Comments:

There are no wrong answers; all responses are about individual feelings. Learning and accepting where everyone stands is the desired outcome of this "Check In" exercise.

Positive Organization Culture

Organization culture is a broad set of traditions and habits developed over time that guide behaviour. As former Southwest Airlines CEO Herb Kelleher said, "**Culture** is what people do when no one is looking."

Whether you know it or not, your organization has an internal culture. How your board members communicate with each other, work as a team, and make decisions all define the culture of your board. And the nature of that board culture has a significant influence on the way your board carries out its work and shapes your board's performance.

Some characteristics of a strong organizational culture include:

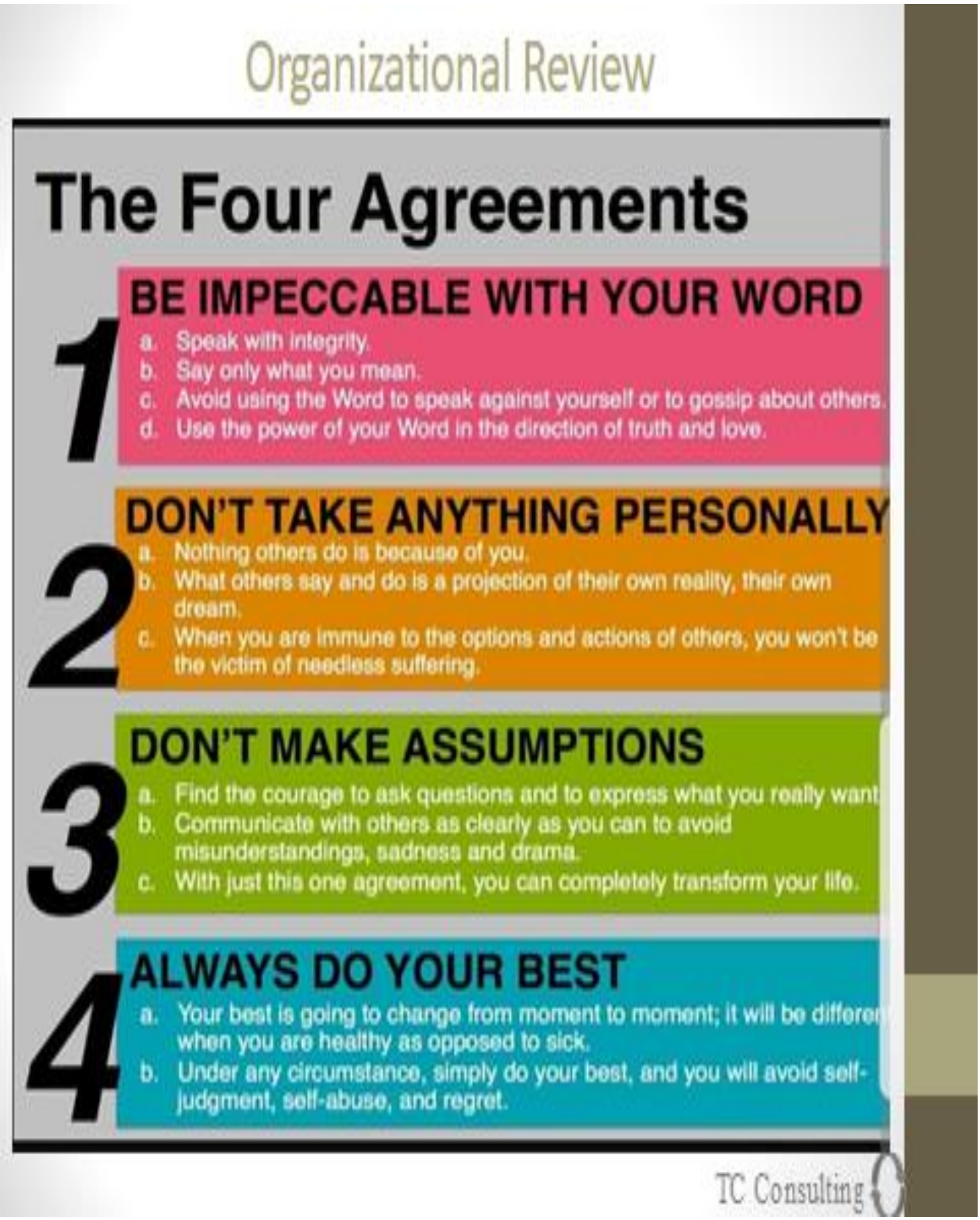
- a healthy and respectful partnership between the board and the executive and all members
- trust and candor between members
- thoughtful and productive resolution of issues or disagreements
- a willingness to address poor behaviour that is negatively impacting the organization
- a respectful attitude towards and with other organizations

Ask yourself: DO I SEE OUR ORGANIZATION POSSESING THESE CHRACTERISTICS?

IF NOT- WHAT ACTIONS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO BE STRONGER AND BETTER?

A strong and positive board culture doesn't happen on its own. It is cultivated and managed over time; all organizations need to take the time to talk about what they may do in this regard for positive results.

AN EXAMPLE OF A DOCUMENT THAT CAN BE ADOTED AND FOLLOWED TO PROMOTE POSITIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE…….



ORGANIZATION'S FOUNDATION PLAN *(MISSION, VISION, VALUES ,OUTCOMES)*

ORGANIZATION MISSION

Mission is a simple statement which tells everyone WHAT YOU DO or -YOUR PURPOSE as an organization

(5 steps to Mission)
WHO ARE YOU:

WHAT DO YOU DO:

WHO DO YOU DO IT FOR:

WHAT DO THESE PEOPLE WANT-NEED:

HOW DO THESE PEOPLE OR THEIR SITUATIONS CHANGE:

MISSION STATEMENT
(Combine above answers into simple sentence):

_____
_____
_____
_____

ORGANIZATION VISION

The Vision of the organization can be described as "the desired end state" or the statement that provides a heartfelt/inspirational description of the long term results of your organization achieving its mission. Picture Success, what will success look like for our organization Our Dream…Our Vision

If your organization performs and achieves the stated mission perfectly, what would your world (from the point of view of the organization) look like?

Start by stating single words or phrases that describe your dream or vision and then write them into a sentence. Strive for simplicity & clarity

Vision Words-Phrases:

VISION STATEMENT (combine above phrases into simple statement)

_____

_____

_____

_____

ORGANIZATION VALUES

Values may be described as principles or beliefs that organizations identify and adopt. These principles provide the framework for how the organization collectively (board members, volunteers, employees, participants, other stakeholders) will perform or act as their duties are carried out. Value statements are simple, clear, declarations of how the people involved in the group behave, and are showcased through the words, actions, and deeds, of the organizations members, volunteers and staff on a daily basis.

Why are Organization Values Important?

As with an organizations Vision and Mission, establishing agreed upon VALUES will ensure that all levels of leadership are operating form the same ideals / principles.

Those who share common values, as they perform their work, are more likely to succeed then those who differ in values.

As board members and volunteers are challenged with decision making, a set of values can assist in guiding their decision based on common beliefs.

Negative results may be experienced when volunteers and staff do not share the same set of core values; these results being: decreased productivity, general job or organization dissatisfaction and a high turnover rate of people.

Values assist in providing direction on:

- Decision making, management and policy and procedures
- How we treat fellow volunteers / staff as well as our participants in our services
- Achieving the group's Vision and organization effectiveness
- Creation of a positive work and play environment
- Assisting the organization to succeed and be viewed in a positive light by others
- Measuring the success of the organization and the people within
- Providing stability to an organization in a fast changing society (Values tend to be a constant or a foundation of organizations)

How May Values Be Developed?

The development of values does not need to take large amounts of time; however, the most important aspect in the process is to ensure that all people involved in the organization's work are afforded the opportunity to provide their input towards the final list of Values. Engaging all people to have input, means that leadership will operate from shared ideals, which will result in the decisions of one, being a true reflection of the whole organization.

A good place to list the organization's values is during the group planning session- where it can be done in a brainstorm-group atmosphere.

Once a list of values is agreed upon;

Ask the following questions to test Your Commitment to the List of Values

- Does this list of values accurately relate to how we want our organization viewed as well as how we conduct our business?
- For each value "Would you be willing to reprimand / hire / dismiss members, staff or volunteers, based on whether they fit the organizations value over the long term?

If the answer for each value is yes- then your group will have a set of values from which the organization can operate from

Integrate Values into all Aspects of Organization

The way in which we conduct our business – our values – should now form a basis for organization policies and procedures like:

- Volunteer Recruitment
- Staff hiring / performance reviews
- Board meetings
- Communications and Public Relations
- Program and Service Delivery

Our Organization Values:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

ORGANIZATION OUTCOME(S) - THE WHY

Outcomes are Statements that address:

- WHY we do what we do, and are the Desired "end results" and the impact of your event. (I.e. increase or improved knowledge, awareness, skills, motivation, attitudes, efficiency, economic–social-health fitness conditions)

- Conditions you want to create for individuals and the community-what are the benefits/results/impact of your program/event

- Broad statements of condition that we can ONLY INFLUENCE….. (We cannot directly control an outcome)

-Once an organization develops OUTCOMES for the work or service they do- the next step is to develop an operational plan to achieve the stated outcomes

Key Characteristics of Outcomes:

-pertain to /address a community issue

-indicate an IMPACT/RESULT/CHANGE-specifies the expected direction and amount of change

-performance based (what change –in whom- by when)

Steps to Establish Your Organization's Outcome(s)

FROM YOUR ORGANIZATION'S POINT OF VIEW, KEEPING IN MIND YOUR MISSION AND VISION……

1. What are issues that need to be addressed in our community?

_____
_____
_____

2. How do you know that these are in fact community issues?(Focus Groups/Surveys/Previous Evaluations/Community Planning/Statistics/Observations)

_____
_____
_____

3. What do you hope will change/improve or be different in the community/***what IMPACT will you see as a result of your organization's work/service?***

_____
_____
_____

4. Who do you wish the change to affect?

_____
_____
_____

5. How much of a change? , What direction?(increase/decrease)

_____
_____
_____

Desired Outcome(s) (combine answers from #3, #4, and #5 to develop statements)

_____
_____
_____
_____

<u>HELP DEVELOP OUTCOMES- with the 5 Why's</u>

Developing Outcome(s) - THE WHY

If you already have been operating a service and want to establish the outcomes or the impact you want to achieve, try the 5 WHY exercise to outcomes

The 5 Why's (ask why to each answer to arrive at the final desired outcome)
What Fundraiser do you organize? _____

Why: _____

Why: _____

Why:_____

Why: _____

Why:_____

The answers to your WHY's will indicate the desired outcome(s) your work

MONITORING the STRATEGIC PLAN

What gets measured –gets done; if you do not measure results, you cannot distinguish failure from success; if you cannot see success, you cannot reward the results; and if you can demonstrate results, you shall be able to win public support for your program or initiative…

-Osborne & Gabler Re-Inventing Government

The basis of any plan is a system to evaluate or monitor whether in fact the organization is making progress towards its overall vision; through the work they do.

An organization's Strategic plan should encompass a 3 to 5 year plan timeframe ; however, the plan itself should be monitored at least on an annual basis to gauge whether in fact the work your group is doing, is achieving the desired outcomes or impact you have planned on.

The next step after the strategic plan is approved is to develop the operational plan. At an organizational level- an annual session to plan operations for the year is a good idea- *and it is at the annual operations session that the group's overall strategic plan may be reviewed and monitored.*

The Strategic Plan Monitoring process is relatively simple and easy to complete. The monitoring process should include and answer the following:

- Has the organization, and all initiatives of the organization, operated within the approved Mission or purpose?
    - *(If the answer to this question for any initiative is no, the group need to discuss why, and realign with the mission of the organization)*
- Has the organization taken into consideration the group's STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (SCOT Exercise) while organizing activities?
    - *(If answer is no ,the group needs to re-address the SCOT exercise information to* review internal and external issues which may require adjustments to the organization's strategy or affect their ability to achieve the outcomes)
- List of Outcomes from the Strategic Plan
- What successes in past year towards achieving each outcomes
    - *(If no successes-the organization needs to address the issue of why none?)*
- Evidence of Success - Success Indicators-What were the indicators of success?
- Measurement Tool-How was Success Measured?

Success Indicators

Statements for monitoring the extent to which the OUTCOMES may have been achieved, as a result of your initiative/program

Examples:

People from organizations indicate increased knowledge and confidence in strategic planning process

Organizations leaders further value the importance of planning and organization in their work

Measurement Tools

Methods organizers will use to gather information to monitor and measure initiatives against the success indicators….

Examples:

Tests
Observation Checklists,
Personal Interviews
Tracking numbers
Program records (#'s, age, gender)
Questionnaires/surveys
Social media response
Storytelling/ testimonials of participants
Other

STRATEGIC PLAN ANNUAL MONITORING TOOL

Name of Organization:_____

Monitoring Timeframe: _____/_____/_____ to _____/_____/_____
day mos year day mos year

1. Has the organization, and all initiatives of the organization, operated within the approved Mission or purpose?

(If the answer to this question for any initiative is no, the group need to discuss why, and realign with the mission of the organization)

2. Has the organization taken into consideration the group's STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (SCOT Exercise) while organizing activities?

(If answer is no, the group needs to re-address the SCOT exercise information to review internal and external issues which may require adjustments to the organization's strategy or affect their ability to achieve the outcomes)

3. Other Comments

Outcomes	Successes in Past Year Towards Outcome	What Evidence of Success Success Indicator(s)	Measurement Tool Used

STRATEGIC PLAN DOCUMENT

DATE:_____

ORGANIZATION:_____

Organization History & Description

Definitions and/or Interpretations

Organization Mission Statement

Organization Vision Statement

Organization Values(Statements)

Organization Outcome Statements (Impact Statements)

Monitoring Process
(how and when the plan will be monitored for progress)

Strategic Planning Summary
(the process undertaken for Strategic Planning and the hilites)