“An organization needs a road map to reach its destinations. A strategic plan guides volunteer leaders, committees and staff to fulfill the mission, vision and goals.”

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Strategic Planning

Description
Successful organizations plan strategically for the future. By following a few basic principles, your organization can develop a strategic plan to give direction to your operations.

- Processes for strategic planning.
- Strategic planning tools and techniques.
- Ways to translate the plan into action.

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Hierarchy Governing Documents

Guide to the hierarchy, origin, purpose and application of the seven governing documents for exempt organizations in the USA. Listed in order of hierarchy. Be sure to rely on authorities for counsel, including the IRS, the state Division of Corporations, legal, accounting and insurance professionals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Linkage</th>
<th>Source and Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mission Statement</td>
<td>Federal Government</td>
<td>A brief statement of the purpose of an organization. The mission statement guides the actions of the organization, spells out its overall purpose, provides a sense of direction and guides decision making. Mission statements often answer three questions. (1) Who are we, (2) whom do we serve, (3) what do we offer? The IRS requires submission of the <strong>statement of purpose</strong> for all <strong>exempt organizations</strong> on <strong>Form 1023</strong> or <strong>1024</strong>. Thereafter, it is submitted annually on IRS <strong>Form 990</strong>. If the mission is vague or lost, review Form 990 to determine what was submitted or find the original application for exemption. The preamble to the bylaws and articles of incorporation may identify the mission. Enhancements to the mission may occur at the strategic planning retreat. [Activities outside the mission statement may cause <strong>unrelated business income tax</strong> (UBIT.)]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Articles of Incorp.</td>
<td>State Government</td>
<td>A legal document filed with state government setting forth the purposes and regulations of the organization. At the time of founding, most exempt organizations register as a <strong>not-for-profit corporation</strong>. States have varied regulations. Many states post the articles or supporting information on their official government website. Annual filing is usually required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bylaws</td>
<td>Board and Members</td>
<td>The rules adopted to govern and regulate internal affairs. Bylaws generally include, for instance, procedures for meetings, committees, elections, amendments, board duties and member categories. Most organizations require amendments to be ratified by the membership. The bylaws should remain broad in scope with more detailed information adopted as <strong>policies</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. **Policies**
   **Board and Staff**
   Policies express the wisdom of the board of directors for current and future leaders to follow the preferred methods for achieving the mission and decision making. They must be consistent with the bylaws and articles. All policies are adopted or amended as motions and recorded in board minutes. At least annually, policies should be transcribed from the board minutes into a policy manual. Policies should distinct from the staff’s day-to-day operating procedures.

5. **Strategic Plan**
   **Board, Committees, Staff and Members**
   A document developed to identify long-term (often 3 to 5 years) goals, strategies and tactics. The plan should align objectives with resources and organizational capacity. A strategic plan generally includes an affirmation of the mission (and supporting statements such as vision and values), a description of long-term goals, fresh strategies or means to achieve the goals, and may include tactics and performance indicators. It is the guide for successive leaders. It should be reviewed for progress at least annually.

6. **Annual Budget**
   **Board, Committees and Staff**
   The statement of estimated income and expenses for the year. It is drafted annual by a budget committee, elected treasurer and staff; and approved and monitored by the board of directors. A **chart of accounts** is a supporting document explaining the purpose and source of budget line items.

7. **Business or Action Plan**
   **Board, Committees and Staff**
   The break down of the strategic plan to identify current year tactics, assignments, deadlines and interim performance measures. Often aligned with the organization’s committees and staff members or departments. Development of a business or action plan is a staff responsibility, often taking the form of a template or spreadsheet to monitor progress.

_Staff should be conversant with all terms in bold._ bob@rchcae.com  850/570-6000  www.nonprofitcenter.com  © 2009 Bob Harris, CAE - OK to save, copy, share and post.
Purposes of Strategic Planning

1. Create a framework, identify priorities, and recognize philosophies.
2. Review the achievements and direction of the organization.
3. Consistent transition from board chair to board chair. (*Succession and sustainability.*)
4. Discussion and buy-in by volunteers, leaders and staff.
5. Goal development to set the course for several years.
6. Allocation and best-use of resources.
7. Consideration of members, constituents, stakeholder needs.
9. Translation into a business or action plan.
10. Public relations initiative resulting from the plan.
11. Integration and alignment with the committees and annual budget.
Board Responsibilities

1. Determine the organization's **mission and vision**.

2. Select the **chief paid executive** *(not the staff).*

3. **Support the chief executive** and **assess performance**
   periodically – usually measured against the strategic plan.

4. **Ensure effective organizational planning.**

5. Ensure **adequate resources** (funds, time, volunteers, staff, technology, etc.)

6. **Manage resources** effectively.

7. Determine, monitor, and strengthen the organization's
   **programs and services**.

8. Promote the organization's **image**.

9. Ensure **legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability**.

10. **Recruit and orient new board members** and **assess board performance**.

   *(Adapted from Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards

   [www.BoardSource.org](http://www.BoardSource.org).)*
The planning process can be as important at the resulting plan; it is an opportunity for generating input by and momentum among the leadership and staff.  

Keep it practical -- too much brainstorming and too many goals lead to resource depletion and frustration.  

The plan is dynamic, not static -- undergoing continuous review and change as issues and opportunities arise.  

Quality, not quantity or length, should guide the plan.  

Everyone should commit to advancing the mission, vision, values, goals and strategies on behalf of stakeholders and members.
Ground Rules for Planning

Reduce volunteer anxiety and improve results by setting ground rules at the planning retreat. Discuss this with your planning committee so that everyone comes prepared and understands the process and protocols.

- **Digital Distractions** - Limit text messaging, return calls and Googling.

- **Respect People and Ideas** - Encourage new ideas and diverse opinions.

- **Go for Altitude** - Strategic thinking improves at 50,000-feet. Soar like an eagle, avoiding the tree branches and getting in the weeds.

- **Sacred Cows Make the Best Hamburgers** - There is little benefit to protecting an organization's sacred cows. Discussions should be open and honest. A sacred cow is a committee or person immune from criticism for some reason.

- **The Elephant in the Room** - To encourage frank discussions it may be necessary to include topics often ignored because of embarrassment or culture. Nobody should feel uncomfortable discussing the tougher subjects.

- **History Has a Time and Place** - Recalling the good-old-days wastes times and distracts from future oriented perspectives. History does not facilitate future thinking.

- **Games Belong on the Playground** - Retreats have a bad rap from games and group hugs. Avoid the games and base planning on reality, capacity and inspiration.

- **Smarter than a 5th Grader?** – Ask a 5th grader to read the mission statement to see if they know what it means.

- **Caffeine** – Provide chocolate and coffee for a more energetic afternoon.

- **Terminology** - Planning terms are unique; define and agree on terminology at the start.

- **Lock-Down** – Walk-ins and dropouts are distracting. Participants should be involved from start to finish. “Lock-down” ensures the team works until completion.

- **Annual Review** – Review the plan at least annually to gauge progress. Anticipate a full update every three years or so.
• **Alignment** - The plan impacts every aspect of the organization. Post-retreat, make time to adjust committees and budget.

• **Dust Collector** - The intent is creation of a dynamic strategic to serve as a roadmap for several years. Don’t let it be shelved and forgotten.

# # #

Bob Harris can be contacted at [bob@rchcae.com](mailto:bob@rchcae.com) and [www.nonprofitcenter.com](http://www.nonprofitcenter.com)

Well, that's a wrap on this year's strategic planning. Might as well put it with the other ones.
Reading the Organization – Capacity Analysis

1. Budget - Annual
   - Dues to Non-Dues Income Ratio
   - Largest Income Line Items – Can they be improved upon?
   - Reserve Balance, Goal or Policy

2. Organizational Structure
   - Subsidiaries
   - Complexity, Purposes

3. Committee Structure
   - Effectiveness, Standing, Task Forces (ad hoc)
   - Committee Goal Setting-Charges

4. Board of Directors
   - Board Size
   - Meeting Minutes, Agendas
   - Accountability, Governance Style
   - Leadership Development

5. Member to Prospect Ratio – Potential
   - Diversity - Inclusivity

6. Technology, Website Usage and Communications

7. Benefits and Services Portfolio
   - ROI – Perceive Value of Benefits
   - Members’ Top 3 Challenges – Solved by Assoc?
   - Tangible vs. Intangibles
   - Golden Handcuff Benefit
   - Competitive Position – Different from other Organizations

8. Member Input, Survey Frequency

9. Risk Management
   - Insurance
   - Expulsion, Due Diligence, Endorsements, Finance Audit, Antitrust, Apparent Authority, Restraint of Trade

10. Workforce, Respect, Micromanagement, Professional Development $, Relationships
SWOT

Strengths
Weaknesses
Opportunities
Threats

Organizations have found that the SWOT method encourages input and facilitates early discussions vital for planning. It is separated into two sections:

The Organization

The strengths and weaknesses of the organization *internally*. For example, there may be a shortage of staff or computers. A strength may be a good leadership team or established communications’ system.

The Environment

The opportunities and threats focus on *external* factors. For example an opportunity may be a new law or new technology for the industry. A threat may be a proposed regulation or intense new competition.

Often the best use of the SWOT method is to distribute the brief survey to shareholders of the organization and especially those who will be participating in the strategic planning process. This gives everyone time to independently consider the organization and its external influences. Then, at the meeting the participants can discuss their findings and a group consensus of the primary SWOT factors can be identified.

By waiting until the planning meeting to undertake the SWOT process, you may have good discussions, but little time for *individual* thought. The advance notice of SWOT gets leaders and shareholders interested in the planning process.
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats

Please give careful consideration to the influences and priorities of the organization.

- Strengths & Weaknesses refer to internal operations of association.
- Opportunities & Threats refer to external factors of association.

Your Name_________________________ Assoc. Position_______________________

List your concerns and issues relating to association.

Strengths (internal) (example: stable membership base, good leaders, solid and dues income).

1.__________________________________________
2.__________________________________________

Weaknesses (internal) (example: lack of tangible member benefits, committees, misunderstood mission).

1.__________________________________________
2.__________________________________________

List your concerns and issues outside of the association

Opportunities (external) (example: demographics, partnerships, privatization).

1.__________________________________________
2.__________________________________________

Threats (external) (example: gov’t deregulation, salaries, privatization).

1.__________________________________________
2.__________________________________________

Priority - Please identify what you feel should be the association’s highest priority in the next 12 – 24 months.

________________________________________________________________________

Please return to association staff by __________. Thank you.
Questions of the Leadership – Sample

We are preparing for our strategic planning. The facilitator has asked members of the leadership team (and senior staff) to answer three questions prior to the planning session.

Reply directly to bob@rchcae.com or by fax at 850/297-2800. Input will be reported anonymously. Indicate our organization name or acronym in the e-mail subject line or on the return fax.

1. [Please complete this sentence:] This meeting will be a success if we ...........(what outcomes do you desire for the meeting?):

2. What should be the top three goals for organization?

3. What topic/challenge/issue is most important to discuss at the meeting? Why?

Indicate your name/position (optional.)
Mission - Statement of Purpose

Vision Statement – Motivating Desired Outcome

Value Statements – Cores Purposes – Guiding Principles

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An organization’s MISSION STATEMENT communicates its reason for existence. It should complement the IRS submitted “statement of purpose,” communicating a concise, compelling image.

It is a board responsibility to determine and advance the organization’s mission. The strategic planning retreat is when a board reviews, affirms or updates the statement. Leaders and staff should be able to easily articulate the mission.

Most statements answer three questions: Who we are, whom we serve, and what we offer.

An organization that cannot find its mission statement should reference the IRS Form 990 to reference the “statement of purpose,” as well as the preamble to the bylaws and articles of incorporation.

Contemporary mission statements are 15 to 25 words — conveniently fitting on the back of a business card and the bottom of a meeting agenda. Let clarity determine length.

The primary audience – persons served by the organization – should be near the start of the statement. If a secondary audience is identified, (i.e. for the benefit of the public, enhancing the community, suppliers), identify it in the latter part.

Omit references to history or successes; those should be communicated in narratives about the organization.

Do not mistake mission with a vision statement (long-term desired outcome as a result of accomplishing the mission) nor a values statement (principles for governing and managing the organization.)

Promote the mission statement often: on the front page of a website, in the conference room, on coffee mugs and on the back of name tentcards, for instance.

Be cautious not to broaden the mission statement reviewed by the IRS; potentially endangering tax-exempt status

“The Society serves as a leading component, committed to the diverse needs of members by providing and pursuing excellence in advocacy, community service and education”

“The Association is the unrelenting advocate for physicians, ensuring health for all citizens.”

“The Chamber helps its members grow and prosper by building relationships, developing their employees, promoting best practices, and by effective political involvement.”

Anatomy of a Mission Statement
Board Roles and Goals – Bob Harris, CAE

Strategic Plan – Member Brochure
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## Alignment in the Organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>The Voice of Independent Insurance</th>
<th>The Agency Essential Resource</th>
<th>The Respected Expert</th>
<th>The Model Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy and Government Affairs</td>
<td>Membership Growth, Benefits and Services</td>
<td>Professional and Workforce Development</td>
<td>Governance and Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strategies**

- Government Affairs
- Consumer Awareness
- Benefits and Services
- Recruitment and Retention
- Member Awareness and Involvement
- Education and Information
- Recruitment and Retention
- Personnel
- Finance and Resources

**Income Alignment**

($800,000 +/-)

- 35% Dues
- 30% Programs - NASC
- 12% Conference
- 25% Education
- 0%

**Committees**

- Trusted Choice
- Legislative
- PAC
- Public Relations
- Membership Dev.
- Young Agents
- Technology
- Agency/Profession Development
- Annual Convention
- Farm/Rural Agents
- Technology
- Executive
- Nominating
- Finances/Audit
- Board Dev.
- Strategic Planning

**Staff/Departments**

- Government Affair
- Contracted Lobbyist
- Membership Staff
- Education Staff
- Executive Director
- Bookkeeping
- Office Manager

**Subsidiaries**

- Political Action Committee
- NASC Svc. Corp.
- Foundation
- Foundation
Principles of Strategic Board Governance

What form of governance does the board utilize? What elements of Strategic Governance can be applied to our leadership processes?

- Clear mission¹, vision and values statements guide leaders and staff.

- The strategic plan is the driving force for agendas, board discussions and the focus of successive leaders.

- The goals and strategies are translated into a more precise (tactical) business or action plan by staff.

- Performance measures are the basis for gauging progress.

- The chief elected officer charges committees with work from the plan. Committees have access to the board through a director or staff liaison if they are chaired by other than board members. The board of directors does not do committee work at the board table.

- When non-strategic discussions arise, a member of the board or staff is empowered to query the relevance of the discussion.

- Board members are responsible to each other – taking pride in their follow-through and achievements while serving in the leadership role.

- The strategic plan is revisited annually, and updated every three to five years.

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¹ Statement of purpose.

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We Are A Strategic Board!

- The Board of Directors will act in a strategic manner, focusing agenda items, discussion, and all efforts on the future vision and not the past.

- The strategic plan, goals, mission, vision and values will drive the Board.

- When non-strategic issues arise, they will be delegated to staff or appropriate committees – not be undertaken by the Board. Issues that arise outside of the strategic plan are not appropriate for Board work.

- The governing style of the Board of Directors will optimize diversity, teamwork, pro-activity, self-discipline, the long view, customer focus, win-win deliberation, full participation, and maximum empowerment of subordinate groups of the organization.
Implementing the Plan

Sometimes the plan collects dust on a shelf. Here are ways to use and maintain the vitality of the work you have completed.

- Mark the plan “draft” and circulate one last time for further input, understanding and correction (within 30 days after the planning retreat).

- Officially adopt the plan at the next meeting of the board (preferably within 30 days of the final report.)

- **Announce and promote the plan’s** goals by posting on website, press release, newsletter articles and presentation to constituents at an annual meeting (consider PowerPoint format.)

- Translate the strategic plan into a **business plan** for management staff to follow.

- Adapt or revise the **budget** to reflect the new strategic plan.

- Sunset unnecessary **committees**, align committees with the major goals and charge them with the strategies within the goals.

- **Outsource work** that needs to be delegated beyond the staff and or volunteer capabilities.

- Appoint a **plan champion** from leadership or staff to monitor and report progress on the plan periodically or at each board meeting. (Consider having a strategic plan-report on every board agenda.)

- Review the **progress** on the plan at an annual retreat of the leadership and staff. Update entire plan at least every 3 years.
There are common elements in every strategic plan. If an organization does not hire a facilitator, this template will guide the board to ensure the plan is complete.

The eight elements are described in the order they should be considered at the planning retreat.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1) <strong>Planning Participants</strong> - Identify who is participating in the planning process --- a combination of board, staff and select participants such as vendors and key stakeholders. By including names in the final plan you promote “signature quality” work and added buy-in. <em>Too many people can slow the process; too few limits input.</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2) <strong>Duration</strong> – Determine the duration of the plan; are you planning for two, three, four or five years? <em>Be realistic; national organizations usually plan 4 to 5 years; smaller organizations are more flexible, and may plan for 2 or 3 years.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) <strong>Mission Statement</strong> - A required statement that should align with the statement of purpose in IRS Form 990 and the bylaws; also give consideration to national, state, regional affiliate missions. It may express who we are, who we serve and what we offer; easily articulated and motivating. Usually one sentence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) <strong>Vision Statement</strong> - An optional statement but an important element in communicating strategic direction. An inspiring statement describing where the organization desires to be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) <strong>Values Statement</strong> – Another optional statement but a part of the projected public image. Values are the core principles of board and staff. Often expressed as bulleted key words or</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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2 Together, the mission, vision and values statements make up the organization’s brand platform.
6) **Goals** - The goals are broad priorities for the organization, for example “Growth and Expansion,” or “Economic and Workforce Development.” Most strategic plans include 3 to 7 carefully selected goals relevant to stakeholder needs and available resources. Goals should be **SMART**: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely.

3 When promoting the mission, vision, values with the broad goals, the stakeholders/members have an understanding of what the organization is doing for them.
Action Steps and Accountability - To accomplish the goals and strategies, the plan should include quantifiability by setting performance measures. Identify who (i.e. committee, volunteers, and staff) will be in charge of the tasks, how success will be measured and the necessary interim dates and deadlines. Be as precise as possible to ensure that progress is monitored and work is accomplished. (a.k.a. KPIs – Key Performance Indicators.)

Stay on Track – To stay on course, review the plan at least yearly and undergo/repeat a full planning session every 3 years.

I went to strategic planning, and all I got was this lousy T-shirt!
Why Plans Fail

- Lack of member input, representation.
- Out of synch with trends and external influences.
- Lack of buy-in.
- Lack of resources. ($, volunteers, staff, committees, time.)
- Too many goals.
- No measurable goals, deadlines, accountability.
- Little delegation.
- No action steps – breakdown.
- Sits on a shelf to collect dust – exercise in futility (all about the retreat instead of the results.)
- Crisis management takes over.
- Incoming president sets new goals – ignoring existing plan developed by the board.

THE SIX GOALS FOR 2000-2002

**THE MISSION STATEMENT**

"The Florida Association of Professional Employer Organizations is formed to protect, enhance, and promote the PEO industry doing business in the state of Florida."

**Build membership to represent an overwhelming majority of the industry.**
- Create a mentor program for new members and new members, so that a new member joins the association they have a contact person to guide them not only through the meetings, but to also help with on-going questions.
- Add introductory membership category to remove the financial burden of the first year's membership dues.
- Develop office protocol for handling membership recruitment to the process more smoothly for inquiries and for new license activations.
- Develop a plan to aggressively expand membership by targeting members who are headquartered within the state.
- Develop effective committee structure to bring members into the decision making process, educating them on the issues of the industry and developing leaders for the future of the association.

**Maintain a positive state legislative environment for the industry.**
- Work with the Florida Legislature to maintain the viability and wellbeing of the industry.
- Work with the Florida Department of Insurance regarding their concerns that PEO sales people are engaged in the unauthorized sale of insurance.
- Educate regulators throughout Florida on the laws regarding PEO services to reduce confusion for our members and their clients.
- To provide effective, ongoing education for members of FAPEO and to support the NAPEO University programs.
- Expand Workers' Compensation Council to include other PEO topics such as human resources and health insurance.
- Encourage PEO University courses within the state.
- Create a communication system to inform FAPEO members about important state information and to educate the public about the industry.
- Develop continuing education course on PEO issues to be mandated by government regulators, attorneys, CPAs, and insurance agents to educate them on the PEO industry laws and practices (not to compete with, but complementary to, NAPEO).
- Continue FAPEO Health cookbooks and study the financial impact of publishing a quarterly newsletter.
- Create an internet website to provide our members with a repository of current industry information and to educate the public on industry topics.
- Write and place articles in business journals and daily.
Sustaining the Strategic Plan

A strategic plan is an essential element for successful associations. The plan is like a roadmap — positioning the organization, guiding successive volunteer leaders, advising committees, influencing membership and impacting budgets.

The process of planning is invigorating. What happens after the planning retreat ends will influence your success or failure.

Many plans collect dust on a bookshelf. Some plans lose traction as the incoming president replaces long-term goals with his or her to-do list. Still other plans become 50-page essays, too long for busy volunteers to read or follow.

Use these seven ideas to ensure your strategic plan’s success:

0 Circulate a draft of the strategic plan to participants within 14 days of the retreat. Too often the plan remains on the flipchart pages, taking months to transcribe, while volunteers lose interest. To maintain momentum, get the plan on paper, mark it draft, and ask the leadership to review it one last time before it becomes official.

0 Adopt the plan as the official strategic plan. This avoids an incoming president from negating its value and creating a plan or his or her own. The elected president should work the plan, not create a personal agenda.

0 Give credit where credit is due. Promote the volunteers and planning retreat with an article and photo of the meeting.

0 Create a brochure to inform members and stakeholders about the organization’s strategic direction and exciting projects. The act of telling members about the plan further commits the leadership to its advancement.

0 Appoint a “plan champion,” a volunteer who monitors the plan’s progress. Ideally this will be the incoming president. Or appoint “goal champions” — directors to oversee and report on the strategic goals.

0 Breakdown the strategic plan into a business or action plan. Schedule a staff retreat to discuss the board’s goals. Use a table or matrix format to set performance indicators, timeframes and accountability for working the plan in the short term.

0 Don’t let the adage, “out of sight, out of mind,” doom the plan. Include a strategic report on meeting agendas (similar to having a brief financial update at every meeting.) Also, on a yearly basis review the plan and make course corrections. Finally, budget the time and money to completely update the plan every three to five years.

These seven ideas are proven tips for increasing the success and sustainability of your strategic plan.

Note: Bob Harris, CAE, offers free association/chamber management tips and tools at his website, www.nonprofitcenter.com. Contact him at bobb@nhcae.com.
Strategic Planning Process

Before (Pre-Planning)
- Determine Need for Plan
- Select Date - Timeframe
- Select Site - Retreat
- Select Facilitator
- Capacity Analysis
- Select Participants
- Conduct SWOT - Survey
- Analyze Survey Results
- Possible Task Force Appt'd

During (On-Site)
- Set the Scene - Purpose
- Report on Input Findings
- Affirm Mission
- Affirm Vision
- Affirm Core Values
- Discuss - Set Goals
- Develop Strategies
- Set Action Steps
- Possible Task Force Appt'd

After (Post-Planning)
- Circulate Draft
- Adopt Officially
- Promote Results
- Appoint Plan Champion
- Include on Agendas
- Integrate
  - Budget
  - Committees
  - Staff Business-Action Plan
  - Marketing-Membership Plans
**Strategic Plan Scorecard**

Use the scorecard to evaluate the strategic plan and its value in guiding the organization over several years. Apply a grading scale of A to F, including +/-(i.e. C). Note: Planning processes and strategic plan formats vary. Not every aspect herein will apply to every organization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>The plan should align with key elements in the organization – budget, committee work, board agendas, staff departments, chapters, etc. Some plans are developed at a retreat but never integrated — leaving the plan as a stand-alone document. Rate how well the plan is integrated and aligned within the organization.</td>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A plan has key elements: (1) mission, (2) vision, and/or (3) values statements, (4) goals, (5) strategies and (6) actions and/or performance indicators. Rate the existence of these elements and their perceived quality.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clarity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The plan should be easy to understand, apply and monitor. Some of the best plans are communicated in just a few pages. Rate the ease in reading and using the plan as a guide.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Span</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A plan generally covers 3 to 5 years. Annually it should be reviewed for progress. Rate if the plan’s usefulness has lapsed or it is still an effective roadmap with annual reviews.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prioritization (long-term)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everything cannot be achieved in the first year of the plan. If the plan covers three years, for instance, then priorities should be determined. Rate the effectiveness of prioritizing goals and strategies over the span of the plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action/Deployment (Short Term)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To delegate and trace the work, many organizations transform the strategic plan into a 12-month action or business plan for staff and committees. It may take the form of a matrix or table setting assignments, accountability and deadlines. Rate how well the strategic plan has been transformed into an action plan to guide current year efforts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic plans frequently set just 3 to 7 goals (sometimes considered “core competencies.”) Each goal should be supported by several strategies to achieve the goal. Rate the number of goals and whether or not they are supported by clear strategies. Are any major programs missing from the plan?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate stakeholders should be aware of the strategic plan. Has the plan been converted into a promotional brochure, on-line document and/or used in the newsletter? Rate how well the plan has been communicated to stakeholders (i.e. members, allied organizations, government, chapters, suppliers, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most nonprofits are organized to advance a cause or support a community. This should be evidenced in the mission, stated values (i.e. ethics, standards, and stewardship) and through effective programs of work. Rate whether or not the organization maintains a recognized role in community enhancement and societal benefit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extra Credit!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What elements make your organization’s plan exceptional?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Implementing the Strategic Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals and Strategies</th>
<th>Incoming President (Yr. 1)</th>
<th>Next President (Yr. 2)</th>
<th>Next President (Yr. 3)</th>
<th>Notes and Accountability Committee Assignments Desired Outcomes Key Performance Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXAMPLE OF GOALS AND STRATEGIES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Government Affairs and Advocacy</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Build the PAC to reach $150,000 annually in contributions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Note: interim goal of $125K by July.</td>
<td>Start mid-year (after legislative session) and build from current $80,000 a year until $150,000 is the average.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Hire an in-house lobbyist within 2 years.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Budget in 3rd yr.</td>
<td>Work with retained outside lobbyist until budget allows supplementing outside lobbyist with in-house staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Create a customized Grassroots Political Action manual for chapters and local member.</td>
<td>Start this spring, complete by next session.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Start writing this winter and have completed by mid-year and before the next legislative session; allow time for printing and distributing to members. Hire outside writer in necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Monitor and protect the regulations and practice act for the industry.</td>
<td>Ongoing priority every year.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Next legislative session and each year; appoint highly effective Government Affairs Committee and write clear charges for the committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Pass beneficial tax regulation after building coalition of supportive organizations.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2nd and 3rd year priority.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Explore coalition building to enlist support in 1st year. Seek legislative introduction in following year; pass by the third year as a new law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Pass license tag legislation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pet project of 3rd year pres.. appoint committee prior to taking office.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Planning Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Goals</th>
<th>Strategies to Advance Goals</th>
<th>Action Steps KPI</th>
<th>Accountability Deadlines, Who?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Competencies</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1.3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2.1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
About Bob Harris

There are more than a million nonprofit organizations in the USA. Bob has worked with thousands of associations and chambers of commerce to focus on operations and board governance.

His career started in Washington, DC with Presidential Classroom. Later he built an association management company in Tallahassee.

He is on the faculty for the US Chamber of Commerce. He works with the US State Dept. of develop associations in Amman, Jordan.

He has authored books on association management. To improve organizations he created the Association Self-Auditing Process, which has been used by 20,000 organizations.

He has received awards and recognition for promoted association excellence and professional development. He has worked for Hyatt Hotels of Florida since 1984.

For sharing tips and templates, he’s been labeled the Martha Stewart of association management.

His website has hundreds of pages of FREE management tips and templates at www.nonprofitcenter.com.

Bob’s career passions are demonstrated in two principles:

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- Sharing the tools to make associations successful.
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**$39**

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*You’ll predict your board’s next statement:*  
"Let’s send it to committee!"  "It’s not in the budget!"  "We tried that once before!"

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Shipping &amp; Handling</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board Excellence Workbook [$89]</td>
<td></td>
<td>+ $10 s/h</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Responsibilities Guide [$12; 2 or more $9 each]</td>
<td></td>
<td>+ $3 s/h any quantity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inventory, Assess, Improve [$20; 2 or more $17 each]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antitrust Avoidance Guide [$12; 2 or more $9 each]</td>
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<td>+ $3 s/h any quantity</td>
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<tr>
<td>How to be the CEO [$29]</td>
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<td>+ $6 s/h</td>
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<td>Policy Manual for Associations [$39]</td>
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<td>$</td>
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<tr>
<td>Association Self-Audit Program [$39]</td>
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<td>+ $6 s/h</td>
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<tr>
<td>President's Committee Planning - 30 pages [$24]</td>
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<td>+ $6 s/h</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building an Association Mgmt Co. - 178 pages [$39]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Psychic Board Pen&quot; - free with $100 order [$8]</td>
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<td>+ $3 s/h</td>
<td>$</td>
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<tr>
<td>Association Coaching - 5 hour block of time [$900]</td>
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<td>+ $0</td>
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</table>

☐ Bill Me  ☐ Mailing Check  
*(sorry, no credit cards)*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street Address</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Zip</th>
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*Offer expires* 01/31/2024