

The Important Role of Planning in a Successful Organization

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“All organizations are perfectly aligned to get the results they get.”

—Arthur W. Jones, as quoted by Stephen Covey

Working Definition of Strategy: *An organized set of actions toward defined results*

Fundamental Questions of Existence

- Why are we here? (Organizational Mission)
- Where do we want to go? (Vision)
- How will we get there? (Strategies)
- Who and When? (Implementation)

A Strategic Plan is About:

- Assessing where you are now
- Imagining choices the organization can make
- Stating *Intention* and *Hope* about the future
- Rare opportunity to step back
- What strategies (implicit or explicit) are being employed now? Why did we choose those strategies?
- What alternative choices are available?
- What decisions do we need and want to make?

Common Parts of Strategic Planning Processes

- Development or review of organizational building blocks
- Assessment of the current situation (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats)
- Surveys, interviews, or other information gathering
- Description of desired future for the organization (Vision)
- Sorting/selecting strategies/Strategic Directions
- Stating desired results (Goals, Objectives)
- Implementation: Planning action steps
- Evaluation: Measurement and tracking
- Revisiting the plan, planning for the next year
- Updating of the longer-term vision, assessment of new strategies and desired results