

Strategic Planning Definitions, Anatomy & Quality Check

	Questions to Answer & Definitions	Anatomy of...	Quality Check: Did we get it right?
Strategic Issues	<p>What are we trying to fix, accomplish or avoid as a result of this process & plan?</p> <p>Strategic issues are critical unknowns that are driving you to embark on a strategic planning process now. These issues can be problems, opportunities, market shifts or anything else that is keeping you awake at night and begging for a solution or decision.</p>	<p>What or how do we + <u>(activity, process, or challenge)</u> + <u>(outcome)?</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Are your strategic issues comprehensive and critical? ✓ Are you clear about how we intend the organization to be different as a result of this process? ✓ Did you identify issues, concerns or areas of focus that are external such as customers, market or competitors? ✓ Did you include at least one issue that is internally facing such as process efficiency, profitability improvement, organizational structure or innovation?
SWOT	<p>What are our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities & threats?</p> <p>A SWOT analysis is a quick way of examining your organization by looking at the internal strengths and weaknesses in relation to the external opportunities and threats.</p>	<p><u>(Attribute, Characteristic or Trend)</u> + <u>(Impact* to the organization)</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Does your SWOT contain all the key areas relevant to the plan, including customer, employee, leadership, competitor, and industry trends? ✓ Are the items under strengths and weaknesses internal and controllable? ✓ Are the items under opportunities and threats external and not controllable? ✓ Does each item identify both the attribute and the impact?
Mission Statement	<p>What is our purpose? Why do we exist? What do we do?</p> <p>The mission statement describes an organization's purpose or reason for existing.</p>	<p>Our mission is <u>(verb in the present tense)</u> + <u>(what you do)</u> + <u>(for whom you do it) resulting in (benefit of your work)</u> + <u>(location – optional).</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Does your mission statement avoid clichés and vague words? (Let's make sure it is real and relevant!) ✓ Does it contain enough specificity to distinguish this organization from others in the same industry? ✓ Is it short and mostly memorable? Does it fit on a t-shirt and would you wear it?
Vision Statement	<p>Where are we going?</p> <p>A Vision Statement defines your desired future state and provides direction for where we are going as an organization.</p>	<p>We envision + <u>(verb in the future tense)</u> + <u>(description of the organization in the future or impact on the world)</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Does the vision represent the preferred future of the organization or the impact you want to have? ✓ Is it clear, compelling, and easy to grasp? ✓ Is it somehow connected to the core purpose? ✓ Will it be exciting to a broad base of people in the organization, not just those with executive responsibility?
Values statement	<p>How will we behave?</p> <p>Your values statement clarifies what your organization stands for, believes in and the behaviors you expect to see as a result.</p>	<p><u>(Value stated as a noun):</u> We believe <u>(value noun)</u> as demonstrated by + <u>(behavior you expect to see).</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ As a group, do they explain a replicable and consistent success formula? ✓ Are these non-negotiables in how we operate? ✓ Are you willing to stand by these values no matter what the cost – for example lost clients or lost revenue?

Competitive Advantages	<p>What are we best at?</p> <p>A characteristic(s) of an organization that allows it to meet their customer's need(s) better than their competition can. What are we best at in our market?</p>	<p><u>(Company Name or We)</u> are best at or have the best <u>(activity, asset, process, product/service)</u> because <u>(why are you the best).</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Did you identify at least three advantages that you are better than your competitors and your customers care about? ✔ Do they encompass the key strengths in your SWOT? ✔ Can you constantly improve the competitive advantages you identified?
Org-Wide, Business Level Strategies	<p>How will we succeed?</p> <p>Your strategies are the general methods you intend to use to reach your vision. No matter what the level, a strategy answers the question "how."</p>	<p>Guiding all of our strategic activities is <u>(1 of the 3 value-creating strategies)</u> which we will accomplish by <u>(method* or approach)</u> in order to <u>+(problem we are trying to accomplish, fix or avoid).</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Does your organization-wide strategy(s) clear spell out how you will succeed and be differentiated in the market? ✔ Is the strategy(s) phrased as methods to be implemented—NOT results to be achieved? ✔ Is it support or work together with your competitive advantages?
Strategic Objectives	<p>What must we focus on to achieve our vision? What are the "big rocks"?</p> <p>Long-term, broad, continuous statements that holistically address all areas of your organization.</p>	<p><u>(Objective Label):</u> <u>(Action Verb) + (broad aim or activity or mini vision for this focus area).</u> (One or two supporting sentences explain the broad approach and rationale.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ As a group, do the strategic objectives represent every one of the organization's key strategic focus areas? ✔ Are there at least three strategic priorities, but no more than six? ✔ Are the goal descriptions global in scope and start with "infinite" verbs? ✔ If the organization achieves these goals, and only these goals, will the organization most likely have achieved its vision?
Corp Goals	<p>What is most important right now to reach our long-term strategic objectives?</p> <p>Annual statements that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound. These are outcome statements expressing a result expected in the organization.</p>	<p><u>(Action verb) + (single key result – from X to Y) + (purpose – why) through (explain how if the clarity is necessary) by when (target date).</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Are all of your goals SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound? ✔ Do the measures spell out the outcome you are seeking? ✔ Do all of your goals have start and end dates? ✔ Is the measure and target for each goal clear enough to stand on its own?
Dept Goals/Action Items	<p>Who must do what by when?</p> <p>Functional goals/action items support the accomplishment of the annual objectives and align with individual performance plans.</p>	<p><u>(Verb) + (Output and/or deliverable - be specific – that is a lead measure) by (date).</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Do you have the resources to implement the goal/action? ✔ Is ownership clearly assigned? ✔ Is your measure a lead measure – predictive, influencable, and measurable monthly?
KPIs	<p>How will we measure our success?</p> <p>Key Performance Indicators (KPI) are the key goals that you want to measure that will have the most impact in moving your organization forward. We recommend you guide your organization with measures that matter.</p>	<p><u>Lag/Outcome Measure: (Percentage, Number, Currency or Percent Complete) + (result or outcome)</u></p> <p><u>Lead/Output Measure: (Percentage, Number, Currency or Percent Complete) + (deliverable, activity, process the owner can influence)</u></p> <p><u>Target Structure: (Number for achievement by the end date of the goal)</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Have you identified three to five indicators that will provide an ongoing assessment of your progress? ✔ Are the indicators you selected as KPIs truly "key" and track outcomes not just outputs? ✔ Is the measure and target for each goal clear enough to stand on its own? ✔ Is the associated measure and target something you can measure monthly and will you be able to see movement?

