

Have a clear purpose:

Have clarity of why you are embarking on strategic planning.

Strategic goals should have relevant priorities and be aligned with the organization's values and mission. Consider short-term and long-term priorities.

Identify the various strategies that will best enable the organization to advance its mission. The context will help to determine the desired outcome.

Have a starting point:

Understand where the organization is currently, the successes and issues of the past, and why and how you may want to grow.

Consider three aspects:

- 1) introspection - strengths and gaps
- 2) retrospection - nuggets of wisdom from the past
- 3) perspective - trends and opportunities for the future

Have a "roadmap":

Identify your organization's goals. Setting clear business goals will increase your team's performance and positively impact their motivation.

Next, outline strategies that will help you reach your goals. Ask what steps you have to take in order to reach these goals and break them down into long-term, mid-term, and short-term goals.

Create action plans to implement each strategy. Action plans will keep teams motivated and your organization on target.

Aspects of Strategic Planning

Have a solid process:

A strong plan should be transparent, accountable and participatory.

It's important to include the collective wisdom of stakeholders. Listening and maintaining positive relationships are key throughout every step of the process.

Take care to engage both internal and external stakeholders as different audiences will provide diverse insight and strengthen the plan.

Focus groups and ongoing feedback are crucial in ensuring the plan stays on track.

Have an ongoing outlook:

The mistake that people often make when it comes to strategy execution, is thinking of their strategy as a linear set of steps.

In reality, strategy is a circular process of constant iteration and evolution.

Assessment of the plan should be incorporated during the planning and implementation, with ongoing evaluation and adjustment .

A good strategy should never really "end". Rather, it should morph into something more ambitious and sophisticated as goals are met.

Have a flexible attitude:

Build in flexibility, allowing you to adapt as needed due to changing situations and challenges.

As you implement the plan, measurements and target goals may need to change. It is important to closely monitor if implementation is going well and consider how you can adjust it for a better outcome.

