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**ELEMENTS OF A STRATEGIC PLAN**

A strategic plan is a working document that establishes the direction for your organization. It can be a single page Excel spreadsheet or fill up a binder, depending on the size and complexity of the business and work. Below are 7 elements you should have in your Strategic Plan.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

A mission statement describes what you do currently. It often describes what you do, for who, and how. Focusing on your mission each day should enable you to reach your vision.

**VISION STATEMENT**

A vision statement describes the way you envision your organization. As such, it should communicate that dream to your members in an inspirational manner.

A vision statement should be reviewed continuously to ensure it is still aligned with the way you see your organization.

**CORE VALUES**

Core values describe your organization’s beliefs and behaviors. They are the beliefs you have that will enable you to achieve your vision and mission.

**SWOT ANALYSIS**

SWOT is an acronym for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. A SWOT analysis provides your organization a situational investigation into your position in the market. It allows you to spot and name the important aspects, happenings, and adversaries of your organization.

**LONG-TERM GOALS**

Long-term goals are statements that drill down a level below the vision and describe how you plan to achieve it. This set of goals usually starts three years out and extends to around five years into the future, directly aligning with the mission and vision statements.

Long-term goals are the milestones an organization sets to guide operations toward their far-reaching objectives.

**YEARLY OBJECTIVES**

Each long-term goal should have a few one-year objectives that advance your goals. Each objective should be as SMART as possible: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-based.

After you make your yearly objectives, you might break each one down further into short-term goals, which define the actions and objectives for the next three months to get you to your yearly goals. The plans for achieving your short-term goals are your action plans. Every objective should have a timeline and a person responsible for getting it done.

**ACTION PLANS**

Each objective should have a plan that details how it will be achieved. The amount of detail depends on the amount of flexibility you want your team to have. The more detail there is, the less flexibility those that follow it have. Again, dates, person responsible and status updates are imperative for a successful strategic plan.