

I acknowledge the traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. In particular, the local Gadigal people of the Eora Nation – the land on which I work. I pay respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders both past and present, and thank them for their wisdom handed down over generations.

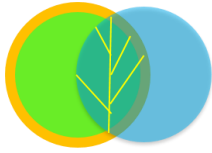
Advanced strategic planning for the NDIS

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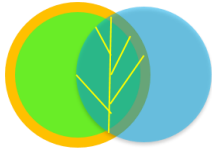
In the age of NDIS there are some things you can do to enhance your strategic planning. They account for the change to a competitive market and the increasing speed and complexity of the world we operate in. While any sort of strategic planning is a useful for setting direction, these tools and ideas are often overlooked. Yet they improve your chances of sustainability as the NDIS world moves forward.

TEN ideas to supercharge your NDIS strategy:

1. **Issues are solved by strategies, strategies require capabilities:** At the time of planning we look at what is arising in the environment, often in a SWOT analysis, and brainstorm the strategies to minimise risk and maximise opportunities. Strategies require capabilities to deliver. Does the organisation have the capabilities? If not how is it going to acquire them and what is the lead time and cost? A strong plan factors in growing the capability.
2. **Build, borrow or buy?** While on the topic of capabilities, great planning will compare the different options for acquiring them, or other parts of the business model. Build them yourself, borrow them through partnership, contract them in?
3. **Look out over three horizons:** The three horizons model asks what you have to do in the next 12 – 18 months to (a) enhance business as usual (b) create new opportunities for delivering the services you already deliver and (c) create new services and markets. This plans for getting better at what you do now, while future proofing the organisation. (Baghai, M., Coley, S., et al, 2000) . Closely related is....



4. **Know your business/service model cycle:** because all businesses, products and services eventually experience falling demand and finally cease to be needed. Yes it's that "Kodak moment". You can avoid that Kodak moment by recognising when your service is winding down, and bringing in the new (because you've planned to that third horizon).
5. **Canvass all the options.** While on the subject of business cycles, the changing market MAY mean that some organisations become obsolete. We all praise the courage of the CEO or board member that knows when it's time to leave and hand over. I think it takes more courage for an organisation to say: our time has come. It may not be the way forward, but it's something that should be thought about.
6. **Support innovation:** many an organisation talks about being innovative. Innovation is great, but it requires a distinct type of culture and space in which to thrive. Organisations planning on being innovative need to grow the capabilities and address the culture.
7. **Be clear on what you're not:** The idea of becoming a niche provider by definition means you can't be all things to all people. The capabilities for one type of service delivery can conflict with others, so be clear on what you're not doing and free your focus, resources and capabilities for what you are doing.
8. **Don't forget the time and money:** Not for Profits generally operate on a shoestring. The NDIS changes are difficult and time consuming to process and plan for. It's one thing to identify all the things that need changing, but another to ring fence the time and budget for the money. In my view the greatest predictor of strategy failure is not giving it dedicated resources.
9. **Get the client's input:** self explanatory really. In a person centred system planning services without asking clients what they want is just plain crazy.
10. **Plan short:** focus on what you're doing in the next 12 – 18 months. Have an idea of where you're going beyond that, but don't try to plan it out. If you visit your strategy regularly and plan a year out, in the long run it can take less time overall while remaining more relevant.



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These aren't the only things that can enhance planning, but in my view and in my experience they are some of the things that can turn strategic planning into a really powerful tool.

David Puls, A becoming/change blog.



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* I don't have a current practicing certificate and I do not give legal advice.