

## Strategic Plan Document: Definition of Contents

**Mission Statement:** A brief, clear and concise statement of an organization's *purpose and work*, in language that is inspiring.

It expresses *why* an organization exists. It serves as a "compass" for policy directions, day to day operations and decision making. It keeps the organization focused and on course in all its endeavors and circumstances. It is the touchstone for tough decisions. A good mission statement has the following characteristics:

1. Bold, clear, memorable language, with verbs that are active not passive
2. Conveys the organizations values implicitly and explicitly
3. Motivates
4. Summarizes succinctly *why* the organization exists and *what* it does.

**Vision Statement:** A short statement about *where the organization envisions itself to be at a future date* regarding any or all of the following: its services, operations, fiscal stability and position in the field of its endeavor. It articulates what you want (what you "dream") your organization to look like, feel like, and be like at some targeted time in the future.

**Statement of the values** underlying the organization's mission and vision: The values of an organization are what drive, frame, permeate and imbue the mission and vision statements with life. In analogous terms, they are the soul that gives life to the organization.

**Goals:** Concise (often one sentence) statements about *what the organization plans to* achieve within a given timeframe. The goals flow directly from the mission, vision and values of the organization. The goals reflect what the organization thinks it must accomplish to fulfill its mission, achieve its vision, and express its values.

**Objectives ("Action Steps" or "Action Strategies"):** Specific and strategic *actions* to be undertaken and completed within certain timeframes to achieve the goals. It's the *how* to achieve the *what* (the goal).

**Assignment of responsibilities:** to people, committees, departments to implement the action steps.

## The Process

1. Survey of the "market" (what is out there, what others have done, and where the organization is positioned in the field and in the larger world)
2. Assessment of the organizations strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats ("SWOT Analysis"): Getting internal and external input; listening carefully to everyone.
3. Identification of and reflection upon the values underlying the organization
4. Definition (or redefinition) of the mission statement
5. Definition (or redefinition) of the vision statement
6. Development of Goals
7. Development of action steps to reach the goals
8. Work assignments
9. Definition of lines of accountability
10. Periodic review: evaluation of implementation, and adjustments to plan as necessary

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- Throughout the process careful attention is paid to what is doable and what resources are necessary to be successful

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- Conflict can sometimes arise. It is natural. It is important that everyone be heard and concerns addressed.
  - Can make the board and staff cohesive
  - Ownership is important
  - It is meant to be a tool and to promote creativity