

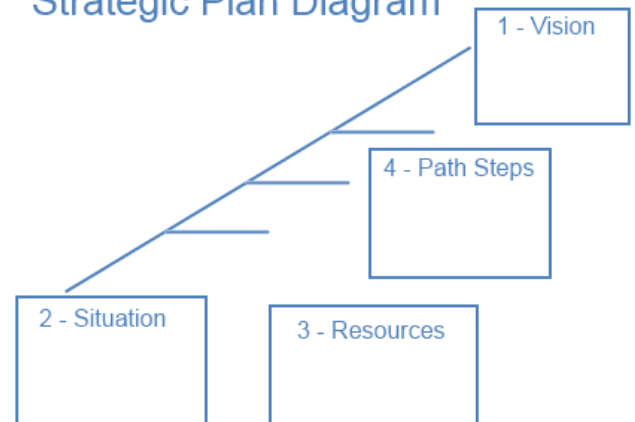
PLAN



MAPPING IT OUT

Strategic planning can be done quickly and helps everyone focus on what will have a real, effective impact on the mission. This process helps the team to visualize the key issues and to allow them to focus on those factors that are critical to accomplishing the mission. This is a fluid, ongoing process that is continually being refined to take us closer to the fulfillment of our mission. You can find more details online.

Strategic Plan Diagram



1. **VISION—WHERE WE ARE GOING?** The first step is to clearly articulate our direction. It's part Monet (vague) and part Rockwell (clear and specific)." For this reason, it is often beneficial to "quantify the vision" through specific time-bound goals.
2. **SITUATION—FACING REALITY.** List all the facts we can about our present situation. Here we consider the strengths and weaknesses of our external environment and internal situation. You cannot align people to a vision of the future unless they agree with your perception of the present.
3. **RESOURCES—LEADERS AND TOOLS.** The third step is to define with clarity and precision the components critical to get started--to get you launched in your mission. How much of what it will take to get you started (continue and eventually fulfill your mission). One successful entrepreneur defined critical mass as simply "a vision and people to share it with." He understood that if the vision was powerful and compelling enough and he had the right audience to share it with, the vision would act as a powerful magnet and attract the right leaders and resources to achieve it. Is your vision compelling?
4. **CRITICAL PATH—ACTION STEPS.** In short, your critical path serves as the most effective way to take you from where you are to where you want to be. What stands in the way of getting from the way things are to the way you want them to be? Your vision may go beyond what you are able to control, but these steps should be easy to measure and reasonably lead to that vision (God willing). If the vision is not reached, it is these steps that will need to be adjusted.

Strategic planning must be followed by strategic action. Tactics and strategies are the small scale actions which accomplish the critical path steps. What will we start doing? What will we stop doing? To think that we will get different results from doing the same thing is insanity. We must answer, "Who will do what by when?" Then we can effectively measure the progress that we are making in achieving the mission. If we cannot identify who is responsible for achieving a given goal or accomplishing a given task, then no one can be held accountable, and it will be impossible for us to assess whether we are making significant progress. We will never be able to learn from our successes and mistakes.