



## **A Guide to Strategic Planning**

Prepared by the National Democratic Institute  
for the “Coalition of NGO’s for Democracy and Civil Society”

### **Brief Outline of Essential Questions to be Asked and Answered in this Guide:**

1. **What** is Strategic Planning?  
-Definition
2. **Why** is Strategic Planning important for the Coalition?  
-List of Benefits
3. **When** should Strategic Planning be done?  
-Brief description of when the strategic planning scheduling should be made.
4. **Who** will be involved in the Strategic Planning process?  
-Description of the roles of the Regional Assemblies, National Assembly, and the Board of Directors in the development and implementation of the Strategic Plan.
5. **How** will the Coalition implement Strategic Planning?  
-Description of steps necessary for implementation

### **Question 1. What is Strategic Planning?**

The word ‘plan’ evolved from Latin and originally meant a plane, or level ground, a plain.<sup>i</sup> But beyond Latin, what does planning mean anyway? In simple words planning is a road to reach desired goals. Thus it includes “an honest understanding of an organization’s history, a systematic examination of an organization’s environment, the rigorous assessment of an organization’s mission, clear vision of organizational goals and a mapping process presenting ways to reach those goals.”<sup>ii</sup> Planning also requires the understanding that planning never stops.<sup>iii</sup> Strategic planning is an ongoing process that determines *what an organization will be in the future and what paths that organization will take to get there*. In other words, strategic planning involves the development of the organization’s *vision for the future* and helps establish the priorities, activities, services, and resources that are necessary to achieve that vision. Thus, “*strategic planning is a future-oriented endeavor*, rather than a problem-solving activity. Problem solving is a “now” oriented approach that merely alleviates current crises.”<sup>iv</sup> Strategic planning is not the same as short-term or short-range planning. Short-term planning is carried out by organizations to establish annual objectives, schedules, and budgets.

Strategic planning extends beyond yearly goals, instead setting the agenda for the organization 3-5 years in advance. This does not mean, of course, that the organization is obligated to follow step by step the strategic plan that has been laid out; a strategic plan should be flexible enough both to provide structure and guidelines and to allow adjustments as the organization's realities, both internal and external, change. Strategic planning -- the development, implementation, and assessment of a plan -- is not a single event; it is an ongoing and creative process.

## **Question 2. Why is Strategic Planning important?**

Strategic planning is a critical component in the eventual success of an organization. "Research has shown that organizations that plan tend to be more successful than those that don't, *even if they are wrong about the future and their plan is never implemented.*"<sup>v</sup> It is easy for an organization to get absorbed by the minutia of day-to-day demands and the urgency of events, which can lead to confusion and a lost sense of the organization's long-term goals. Strategic planning helps to redirect attention back to the over-arching mission of the organization, reminding members to think of the future. The process creates a method by which an organization's leaders can clarify and build consensus around their principles and values: the philosophical guidelines for all of the organization's activities.<sup>vi</sup> Guided by a clear mission statement and common principles, organizations can then move on to translate those into goals, the statements that specify an organization's major policy directions.

Strategic planning also creates a framework with which to reassess an organization's most acute or important strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats that may affect the way it conducts its activities. By forcing members to step back from their immediate concerns, strategic planning allows them to see how their problems may be interrelated in the broader scope of the organization. It should also help lay the groundwork for solving problems in an intentional, organized and coordinated way. Finally, by creating and implementing a strategic plan, the organization's leaders may feel more secure in their abilities to arrive successfully at their agreed upon goals and more confident in their abilities to influence and control their environment, rather than be subject to it.<sup>vii</sup>

The following lists help reveal which factors might benefit or undermine the success of strategic planning.<sup>viii</sup>

### **Success Factors**

- A commitment from the board's leaders and from the senior staff.
- A realistic preparation to planning.  
A timetable that allows for adequate information gathering, reflection and discussion, but does not drag the process out beyond the attention span of board and staff.
- A reasonable commitment of human and financial

### **Potential Obstacles**

- Board members who are jaded or cynical about planning.
- A staff leader with a very strong and personal vision.
- An organization facing a crisis.
- Lack of commitment to using the strategic plan as the basis of all future work.

resources, given other demands on people's time

- Lack of understanding of and commitment to the need for ongoing follow up.
- Lack of an organizational climate that inspires forward thinking and rewards creativity.

### **Question 3. When should strategic planning be done?**

“The scheduling for the strategic planning process depends on the nature and needs of the organization and its immediate external environment. The Coalition works in a rapidly changing environment, so it will need to plan and revise its plan frequently. The following guidelines will help to understand better when strategic planning should be scheduled.<sup>ix</sup>

1. Strategic planning should be reviewed at least once a year to prepare for the coming fiscal year (the financial management of an organization is usually based on a year-to-year, or fiscal year, basis). In this case, strategic planning should be conducted in time to identify the organizational goals to be achieved at least over the coming fiscal year, resources needed to achieve those goals, and funds needed to obtain the resources. These funds are included in budget planning for the coming fiscal year. However, not all phases of strategic planning need be fully completed each year. The full strategic planning process should be conducted at least once every three years. As noted above, these activities should be conducted every year if the organization is experiencing tremendous change.
2. Each year, action plans or work plans should be updated.
3. Note that, during implementation of the plan, the progress of the implementation should be reviewed at least on a quarterly basis by the board. Again, the frequency or review depends on the extent of the rate of change in and around the organization.

### **Question 4. Who will be involved in the Strategic Planning process?**

All of the members of the Coalition will participate in the creation of a strategic plan. Primarily, the Board of Directors will be responsible for the broad decision-making process. However, as noted above, members not sitting on the Board will have significant input through the Regional and National Assemblies, where members will consider questions concerning the direction and goals of the Coalition's strategic plan. Coalition staff will be responsible for giving input, developing the programs and objectives, and writing the plan. This process generally requires an outside facilitator knowledgeable of the development and implementation of strategic plans. An experienced non-member will be able to look more objectively at the questions that need to be resolved and thus lead the Coalition forward in a more efficient manner. The creation of a successful strategic plan entails a difficult and constant process of re-evaluation—everyone must be willing to cooperate and share in these responsibilities.

#### **Question 4.1 Why is planning a Board responsibility?<sup>x</sup>**

- **Stewardship**  
Boards have the ultimate responsibility for the well being of the organization. Planning is one of a number of ways that boards help to provide both leadership and care for an organization. It is also an important platform for increasing the board's role in fund raising. An inclusive planning process and a good plan help board members make a strong case with donors.
  
- **Objectivity**  
Although board members often need to learn a lot about an organization before serious planning takes place, they do have the capacity to be more objective than staff about the basic questions and steps of a planning process: what are the organization's strengths and weakness, what are the opportunities and threats that it faces.
  
- **Capacity**  
Board members often have experience in strategic planning drawn from outside situations.

### **Question 5. How will the Coalition implement Strategic Planning?**

Below are listed several highly recommended steps, which will enable an organization to successfully create and carry out a strategic plan<sup>xi</sup>. Organizations like the Coalition that have never engaged in strategic planning before may find it effective to begin by carrying out some, but not all, of the steps involved at one time. The process can be effectively spread over several meetings. Organization members will be involved in the strategic planning indirectly by learning about the plan and what they should do to implement it at the Assemblies and through the organization's newsletter and by giving their feedback.

1. Check if you are ready to start the planning process.  
Use "Check Your Readiness to Plan"<sup>xii</sup> in the Supplementary Reading for the Guide to Strategic Planning" p.3 to see whether you are ready to start.
  
2. Agree on a strategic planning process.  
The board has agreed on the need to undertake a strategic planning process at a meeting in October 2001.
  
3. Define or review the organization's mission.  
A handout distributed to members details the importance of the mission statement and describes which steps are necessary to develop the appropriate mission statement for the Coalition. The Coalition's members unanimously approved a new mission statement in December 2000 at the General Assembly.
  
4. Carry out an assessment of the Coalition's internal and external environment.  
Evaluation of Coalition's strengths and weakness will constitute an internal environmental scan, while an analysis of election experiences and the current political, economic, and social environment will serve as an external evaluation.

5. Identify key organizational issues and concerns.

A questionnaire distributed to the Regional and National Assemblies, the Board of Directors, and staff, poses specific questions to try to clarify which issues most concern the Coalition's members. The Board should revisit these questions as it begins its work.

6. Develop a shared vision for the Coalition.

Here, Coalition members should consider this scenario: 5 years from now a distinguished visitor comes to Kyrgyzstan and visits the Coalition. Which specific and tangible accomplishments would the Coalition be able to point out?<sup>xiii</sup> The results of the aforementioned questionnaire will help to get a sense of what kind of organization the Coalition hopes to be in the future and which goals it hopes to achieve. At this point, it is important to remember that Coalition members must be creative and also question the relevance of their vision, asking if the goals and objectives laid out in that vision are realistic.

7. Develop a series of goals or organizational status statements that describe the organization in a specified number of years—assuming it is successful in carrying out its mission.

This step is basically the break down and transformation of the Coalition's vision into a series of key goals for the organization. The Board of Directors will address this step. The Assemblies may also participate in the development of such statements if time permits.

8. Agree upon key strategic objectives to reach the goals and address key issues identified through the environmental scan.

This step necessitates the creation of more specific strategies that address particular goals. This will be the responsibility of the Board of Directors with input from the Coalition's staff.

9. Develop an action plan that addresses goals and specific objectives and work plans on an annual basis.

This step requires decisions to be made about the various approaches the Coalition will take to arrive at their goal. This involves programs and services, advocacy, and collaboration projects. The staff will be responsible for this step. Use "Steps for Developing Work Plans"<sup>xiv</sup> worksheet in the Supplementary Reading for the Guide to Strategic Planning p.5

10. Prepare a written strategic plan that summarizes each of the previous steps described.

There is no single method to write up a strategic plan. It should include the results of the previous steps, including the mission and vision of the Coalition, the findings of the environmental scan, and the specific strategies that the Coalition has decided to implement. The Board of Directors and staff will be responsible for writing of this document.

11. Build in procedures for monitoring, and modifying strategies based on the changes in the external environment or the organization.

It is very important that the strategic plan developed by the Coalition be monitored to ensure that the organization's methods and goals remain relevant and up-to-date. Again,

the Board of Directors and the staff will be responsible for reviewing the Coalition's plan and for assuring that the strategies are changed as needed.

## **A Supplementary Reading for the Guide to Strategic Planning**

Prepared by the National Democratic Institute for the "Coalition of NGO's for Democracy and Civil Society"

### **Worksheet A**

## **GLOSSARY OF STRATEGIC PLANNING TERMS**

**Strategic Planning** - is a long-term planning process that involves both evaluation of an organization's mission, vision, and main goals and consideration of internal and external factors that will influence the organization's activity and overall success.

**Vision** – is a statement that explains the ultimate goal of an organization and what it wants to be in the future.

**Mission** - is a statement that explains the purpose of an organization's existence and, occasionally, how the organization accomplishes its mission.

**Values** - are an organization's core principles that determine how the organization conducts itself and how it relates to the outside world. They might include principles like transparency, honesty, punctuality, respectfulness to internal and external stakeholders, and devotion to the organization's mission.

**Stakeholders** - are all individuals who are in some way related to or affected by the organization or its programs (staff, volunteers, members, donors, partners, etc.)

**Strategic Goals** - are the results or impact directly related to both an organization's mission and vision. They may be both long-term and short-term goals, which an organization must consider to be sustainable and successful.

**Strategies** - are general patterns of actions directed at achievement of strategic issues or goals.

**Objectives** - are steps towards achieving a goal. They should be specific, reasonable, attainable, results-oriented and time-limited.

**Strategic issue** – presumes long-term results and benefits.

**Operational issue** – requires direct action and presumes short-term outcomes and benefits.

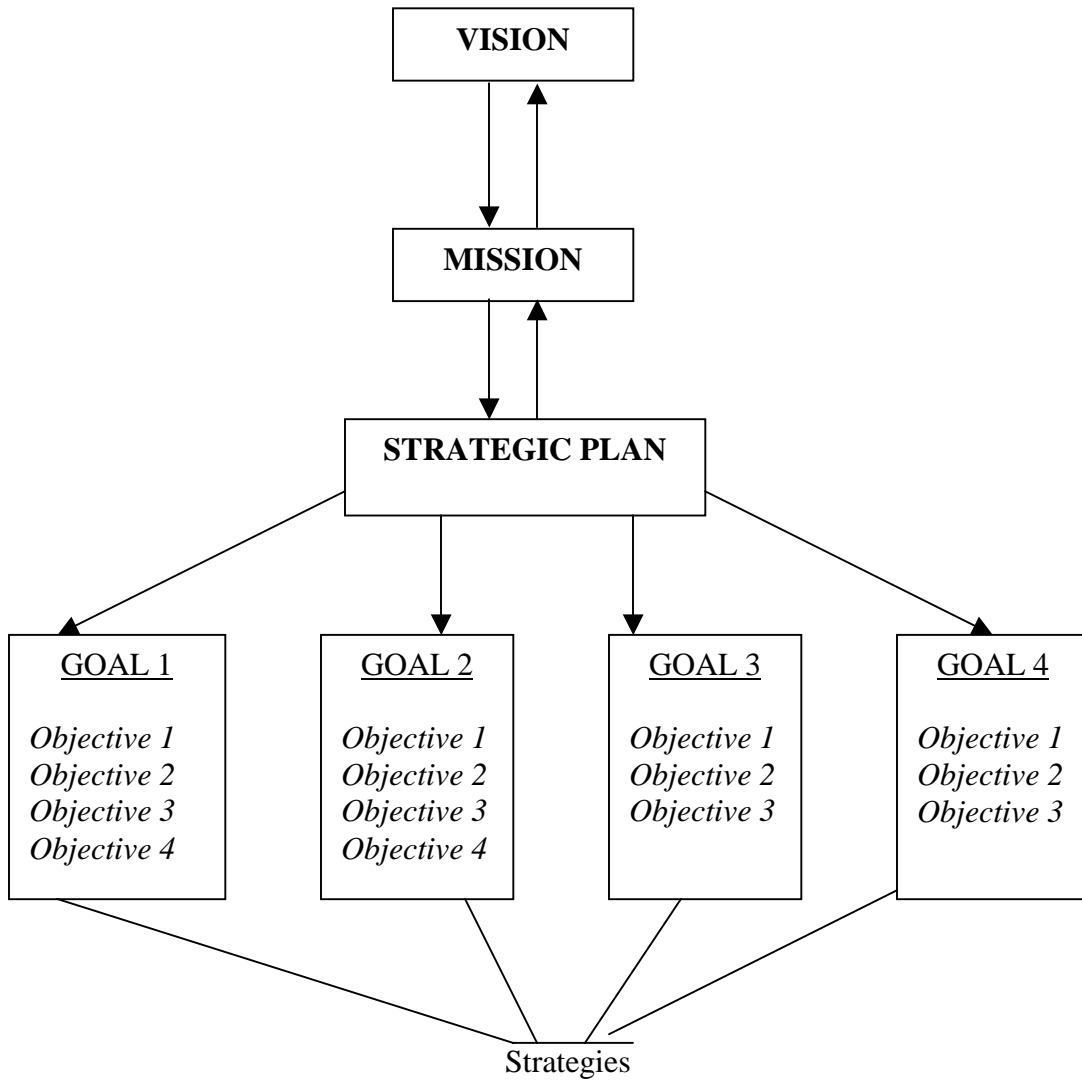
**Activities** - are a combination of efforts and actions that are the actual implementation of a particular objective.

**Work plan** – is a written, prioritized set of actions with indicated time limits for certain steps and an assigned person(s) responsible for each action. It can be written for the strategic plan or any goal or activity. A good plan creates a clear picture of a sequence of actions, deadlines to be met, and a division of responsibilities among members of a working group. (For more details, please see “Steps for Developing Work Plans”, p.5)

**Activity plan** – is similar to a work plan, but is more detailed.

Worksheet B

**STRATEGIC PLANNING**



(For more details, refer to the Guide to Strategic Planning [pp. 1-5])



### Worksheet C

**CHECK YOUR  
READINESS  
TO PLAN**

- Assess your organizational readiness:
  - What criteria for successful planning are in place?
  - Which pitfalls can be avoided?
  - What can you learn from your prior experience with planning?
- Answer the question:
  - Are you ready to plan? Go or No Go

The Following Criteria For Successful Planning Are in Place

Yes	No	Criteria
		1. Commitment and support from top leadership, especially the executive director and board president, throughout the entire and process.
		2. Commitment to clarifying roles and expectations for all participants in the planning process, including clarity as to who will contribute to the plan and who will be the decisionmakers.
		3. Willingness to understand and respond to the organization’s internal and external environment (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats); a commitment to gathering relevant information for assessing current programs and evaluating how to meet current and future stakeholder needs – sufficient market research.
		4. At least one strategic thinker and at least one person to act as an objective sounding board (someone to make sure the projected goals and objectives are realistic) who are willing to be active participants on the Planning Committee
		5. Willingness to be inclusive and encourage broad participation, so that people feel “ownership” of and are energized by the process.
		6. An adequate commitment of organizational resources (for example, staff time, board time, dollars spent on the process (for market research, consultants, etc.), to complete the planning process as designed.
		7. A board and staff that understand the purpose of planning, realize what they are and are not able to accomplish, and have reached a consensus about the desired outcomes of the planning process.
		8. A willingness to question the status quo, to look at new ways of doing things; a willingness to ask the hard questions, face difficult choices, and make decisions that are best for the stakeholders.
		9. Good working relationships and no serious conflicts between key players.

### Worksheet D

**PLANNING  
PROCESS  
OUTCOMES AND  
ISSUES**

- What does your organization wish to achieve from a planning process?
- Which issues or choices do you think need to be addressed?
- Are there any non-negotiables or constraints that need to be articulated up front?

What would success look like at the completion of the planning process? What does your organization wish to achieve from a planning process?

What are the issues facing your organization? What questions need to be answered during the planning process?

*Strategic issue* – presumes long-term results and benefits

*Operational issue* – requires direct action and presumes short-term outcomes and benefits

Issue	Why is it an issue? What are the consequences of not responding?	Check whether the issue is strategic or operational	
		Strategic	Operational

Are there any issues that are non-negotiable (not open for discussion or compromise)?

## Worksheet E

### **STEPS FOR DEVELOPING WORK PLANS**

1. Read through all of the goals and objectives developed as part of the retreat. Try to determine which goal the project would fit under. Make sure that the project you are planning is not duplicated somewhere else in the list. If there is a similar project, try to understand exactly what the difference is. Can the other project be included as part of the steps of this project? If yes, try to integrate that project into the work plan.
2. Look closely at the specific wording of the project. Does 1) strategy fit the criteria established at the retreat for objectives – is it 2) measurable and 3) attainable, 4) results-oriented, and 5) time-limited? If necessary, rewrite the statement to fit these criteria.

3. Get a general idea of the scope of the project before you begin the work plan. Is this clearly one of the top priority projects for your organization, and, will you be able to devote as much time as is necessary to complete the project? Or is it one of many priorities that must share equally in the organization's resources? Get a clear idea in your own mind about the size and scope of the project.
4. Make a list of all of the necessary tasks required to complete the project. List them all. Don't use general descriptions; be very specific. Each step should represent an individual task, something that could be assigned to someone and completed. Combine tasks that clearly fit into one description and that will be conducted by one person. Break out all of the others.

*Example for a newsletter work plan:*

<b>Well defined tasks:</b>	“Assign articles to writers”
	“Write articles”
<b>Poorly defined tasks:</b>	“Get articles”
	“Put together newsletter”

5. List all of the tasks on a copy of a blank work plan. Use several sheets if necessary. Write the tasks according to their logical sequence.
6. Assign responsibility for each of the tasks to an individual person. In several cases, more than one person will actually be involved in the project, but only one person can be the task coordinator and should have the ultimate responsibility for tracking, implementing and completing the project. Contact people who have shown an interest in the project to see if they are interested in helping on that particular task. Give them a general idea of the task responsibility and timing. If you cannot identify someone willing to and capable of accepting responsibility for the task, leave it blank. Be realistic about how much one person can accomplish. It is better to underestimate by a little and to have extra time than to overestimate a staff person's or the organization's capabilities and fail to reach the objective.
7. Figure out approximately when the task will need to be completed. In many cases, this step is best accomplished starting from the last task and moving to the first. Juggle these times according to holidays and other key events.
8. Identify which tasks are going to require money. If possible, at least one person should estimate the cost of the task. If you are unable to determine the specific costs for the project, note somewhere on the worksheet that it will require money. Begin to think about where your organization or group will get the funds necessary. Including fundraising, grant writing, and reporting to donors as a necessary crosscutting task for each program and project.
9. Look at the entire work plan and give it a reality check. Does it include everything? Is this realistic? What are the chances of this project happening according to the work plan? What possible problems or situations might change the work plan, and how likely is it

that a change will be necessary? How can you adjust the work plan to make it more workable and realistic?

10. Give the work plan to someone who has not seen the project before. Do they understand it? Does it clearly explain what is going to be done, and how? Incorporate the suggested changes into the work or program plan.
11. Submit the work plan to the strategic planning committee for their review. The projects should be reviewed to see that they are consistent with the committee's purpose and compatible with the other projects developed within the committee. All suggestions that can make the projects more effective should be incorporated into the plans.

## **Worksheet F**

### **THE PITFALLS OF PLANNING**

*Keep the following things in mind:*

- Planning is only as good as the information on which it is based.
- Planning is not magic; you can't always get what you want.
- Put planning in its place and time.
- Be aware of too much of a good thing: Planning can become a substitute for action.
- Do not rely on 'models'; be creative and plan considering the unique features of your organization.
- Support a good planning discussion with a written plan followed by action.
- Do not use heavy or confusing language in the written plan. A plan that no one wants to read or that no one understands is useless.

## Worksheet G

# THE PITFALLS OF PLANNING

by [Arlene Goldbard](#)

The main pitfall of planning - the one from which all others derive - is falling into the delusion that planning can determine outcome. The error of this proposition is a commonplace. In 17th century Japan, Ihara Saikaku wrote "There is always something to upset the most careful of human calculations." Robert Burns, the bard of 18th century Scotland, put it as follows: "The best laid schemes o' mice and men/Gang aft a-gley." I cannot name the late-20th century wit who coined the resonant phrase "Shit happens," but whatever elegance it lacks in comparison with its predecessors it more than makes up in economy of expression.

If the wisdom of the ages won't suffice to make this point, consider only the top layer of recent human events, the happenings big enough to make banner headlines. Notwithstanding global intelligence operations, including unlimited access to computer simulations, who was able to predict the fall of the Berlin Wall? The Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia? The end of apartheid in South Africa? As I write, headlines trumpet the top-speed collapse of the Asian economic miracle, long-touted as a triumph of economic planning. Who would have guessed?

Planning cannot guarantee the outcome you want. Instead, it can help you to achieve something integral to any future success: readiness to face the challenges that chance presents. Rule number one for coping with challenges is to know what you're up against. Allow me to offer some of the pitfalls of planning in the hopes that forewarned, you will be forearmed against them.

- **PLANNING IS ONLY AS GOOD AS THE INFORMATION ON WHICH IT IS BASED.** Too often, groups rely on untested assumptions or hunches, erecting their plans on unsteady ground. Everyone "just knows" there'll be no problem getting a distributor for a video, or that it would be impossible to find funding for a new facility; or it's "obvious" that a part-time person would suffice to accomplish a brand-new and sorely needed task. It's the obvious things that everyone just knows that are most likely to trip you up. We were once called in to help a client who'd gotten into a lot of trouble by assuming it would be a snap to solve a problem that had stymied its whole field for years. The client's optimistic pronouncements were greeted by the field as arrogant examples of unjustified self-confidence that could only have been based on disrespect for other's efforts to solve the same problem. The client had to do a lot of apologizing and fence-mending that could have been avoided if only they'd taken the time to find out how others had attempted to address the problem in the past. Not only that, the basic assumption was wrong: most of the "new" solutions the client had put forward had already been tested by others and found wanting. If you're going to plan, it's worth the extra time to test assumptions and hunches against reality.
- **PLANNING ISN'T MAGIC: YOU CAN'T ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU WANT.** Frequently, organizations contemplating new initiatives - a program, a facility, staff expansion - begin by writing the last page of their plans, the one where everyone lives happily ever after. But the process of planning is one of research and investigation.

Results can no more be predetermined than can the outcome of a scientific experiment. Considering a major expansion of activity means taking stock of organizational readiness in many ways. Is there a need for the new activity? An audience or constituency? Do you have access to the expertise? The material resources? The time required to do it right? Planning is a tool that can help you decide whether to go forward, not just how. If the answers to key questions are "no," then the outcome of planning should be to postpone the contemplated expansion, working toward readiness to tackle it farther down the road.

- **ADAPTABLE BEATS OBDURATE, ANYTIME.** Some planners see themselves as creating a blueprint, building a future the way one builds a house. If things don't go according to plan, they blame other people's failure to "get with the program." But an organization isn't an artifact to be set in place with planks and nails. In contrast to a construction project, organization-building is never complete; like all life-forms, an organization's choices are to continuously adapt or die. Rather than planning as if the future were pre-determined, plan for flexibility. Plans that can't be changed shouldn't be written.
- **PUT PLANNING IN ITS PLACE AND TIME.** Some groups don't recognize that it takes time and effort to plan well. They want the results, but aren't able or willing to make the investment. They end up in the worst of both worlds: their ongoing work is set back because they took time to plan without thinking through the implications; and their too-rushed plans end up half-baked ideas. Be realistic about what you can invest. Find a way to plan that suits your available resources - time, energy, money.
- **TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING: PLANNING CAN BECOME A SUBSTITUTE FOR ACTION.** Times have been hard for many nonprofit organizations. One of the ironies of funding cutbacks in recent years is that it has sometimes been easier to obtain support for planning than for programming. Some funders evidently believe that merely talking about self-sufficiency - to pick just one example - is a perfectly good way to achieve it. This can lead to an obsessive internal focus: fleeing the indifferent outside world - the "big world" - people retreat to the "little worlds" of their organizations, where they can at least have company in their misery. "They're always having retreats to figure out who they are," someone recently said of a well-funded but aimless organization. "That's a bad sign."
- **WHAT GOES AROUND, COMES AROUND: GROUPS CAN BE BLINDSIDED BY THE ISSUES THAT PLANNING REVEALS.** There's a mollifying rhythm to the daily grind, as diligence, deadlines, and distractions keep tensions and conflicts at bay. When an organization pauses to plan, what's been submerged may come up for air. Suppose everyone is asked to dream of future roles or projects, and two staff members' dreams come into major conflict? Suppose there's a discussion of workplace culture, fingers are pointed, defenses mustered, rifts revealed? When an organization undertakes to plan, everyone should be made aware that issues may arise that need talking through, that there may be moments of heat, struggle, even head-on collision. Your planning process should include the time, focus, and talent for the mediation needed to resolve such conflicts, so you can turn to face the future as a team.

- **BOILERPLATES AND COOKIE-CUTTERS ARE THE WRONG TOOLS FOR THIS JOB.** Some planners opt for a "model" approach: all dance companies are supposed to develop this way, media centers that way; here are the seven stages of museum development; follow the ten "best practices" of community arts councils. It's not that other organizations' experiences aren't relevant to your own. Sometimes they're perfectly germane. But not often. Perfect congruence is more likely to be a fortuitous accident than an application of science: even a broken clock is right twice a day. Think about how complex and various individual human beings are. Even if I were equipped with a database of the ways that hundreds of individuals roughly your age and background had behaved in a variety of situations, in competition with your partner or best friend, I could never hope to win a game whose object was to guess your next move - let alone advise you on what it should be. Organizations, multiplying the complexity and diversity of their individual members, deserve to find their own paths rather than being pushed through an organizational assembly-line. In planning, insist on your right to march to a different drummer.
- **WRITING IT UP IN PLANSPEAK RATHER THAN PLAIN LANGUAGE UNDOES THE GOOD OF PLANNING.** Sometimes organizations have great face-to-face planning experiences: good discussions, moments of profound insight, the excitement of contemplating future possibility, the elation of a meeting of the minds. But feelings don't last long: they need to be carried forward into action, guided by a written plan. Some planning documents are so vague, abstract, and general, they're useless to the people who invested so much in considering their futures. Typically, an aim is listed - "become self-sufficient in five years" - and beneath it, phrases suggesting a range of ways to advance that aim: "expand earned income," "secure individual donations," "develop endowment." As time goes by and the memory of the face-to-face experience fades, the planning document's generalities are drained of any meaning that might once have clung to them. If you are going to take the time to plan, do it right: talk through alternative scenarios for realizing your aims; map out ways to test them; be concrete about guiding values, deadlines, ways to evaluate your experiments. Put enough flesh on the bare bones of your plans to keep the document alive and kicking, or it will be buried in a drawer before the ink has dried.

To speed you on your way, I offer a small selection of sage efforts to describe the future by people who were no doubt smarter, braver, or more intoxicated than either you or I. They were also wrong - or the truths they hit on were so partial as to be entirely inadequate - which brings us back to the point about planning: not to be right, but to be ready.

"I have seen the future; and it works."

– Muckraking author Lincoln Steffen on the Soviet Union, circa 1919

"If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face - forever."

–George Orwell, NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR (published in 1949)

"Deer will be grazing in Times Square in forty years."

–Timothy Leary, 1967.

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**B** - created especially for the "Supplementary Reading for the Guide to Strategic Planning" by the *National Democratic Institute-Kyrgyzstan*, 2001

**C** - *Support Center for Nonprofit Management*, 1997

**D** - *Support Center for Nonprofit Management*, 1997

**E** – with minor changes from the "Steps for Developing Work Plans", *Pilot Board Training*, December 6, 1992, *Citizen Forestry Support System*

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<sup>ii</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>iii</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>iv</sup> "Strategic Planning", the *National Center for Nonprofit Boards*, p. 18

<sup>v</sup> "Strategic Planning: A Self-help Guide," prepared by Emily Gantz McKay, President, MOSAICA. Originally prepared for SHATIL, revised for the National Council of La Raza, and further revised June 1994 for the use of the International Rescue Committee with the Refugee Women in Development Project.

<sup>vi</sup> *The Complete Guide to Nonprofit Management*, ed. Robert H. Wilbur. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.) p. 16.

<sup>vii</sup> For more in-depth information see on the importance of strategic planning see, *The Strategic Planning Workbook for Nonprofit Organizations*, (Minnesota: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 1986.) pp. 13-14.

<sup>viii</sup> "Strategic Planning" from the *National Center for Nonprofit Boards* p.3

<sup>ix</sup> With minor changes from the "Strategic Planning for Nonprofit and For-profit Organizations", Carter McNamara

<sup>x</sup> *Ibid.* p.5

<sup>xi</sup> The ten steps listed below were taken from "Strategic Planning: A Self-help Guide," prepared by Emily Gantz McKay., page 4. See endnote (i.) for more information. The notes attached to each of the ten steps are original and specific to the Coalition.



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<sup>xii</sup> This checklist was taken from worksheets for planning of the *Support Center for Nonprofit Management (USA)*, 1997

<sup>xiii</sup> This scenario in a slightly different form can be found in "Strategy Development: a frame work for the Board," written by Stephen McCormick and David D. Chrislip, based on the 1998 Board seminars in Dubrovnik, Croatia and Chakvi, and Georgia. p. 24.

<sup>xiv</sup> with minor changes from the "Steps for Developing Work Plans", Pilot Board Training, December 6, 1992, *Citizen Forestry Support System*