



## Strategic Planning

### **Don't forget to Plan:**

Great leaders have a vision for their organization and to successfully accomplish that vision they must create a series of strategies and plans. However, in the era of doing more with less many senior managers do not have a vision and are merely on a treadmill of coordinating daily activities within their organizations.

It is easy to get stuck in the urgency of the day, but it is also a good way to ensure your organization is going to have problems down the road. Avoid this common pitfall and make sure that you, as a senior manager, take time on a regular basis (at least monthly) to review your vision and align your strategies and plans accordingly. I have always found it valuable to do this exercise with some of my key managers and leaders on a regular basis.

After you have created a vision with an accompanying set of strategies and plans then you need to share it with your management and your employees. This doesn't need to be elaborate and a one page summary should suffice to clearly communicate up and down the organization. Be sure to review the plan and intentions with your staff in a regular staff meeting, and if possible then gather all employees together to discuss the plan. You can help support your management team by having them answer questions from the audience as appropriate (don't just give them the tough questions but rather the questions that fall squarely into their area of responsibility).

The next step is to then make sure that all of your employees are working on projects and activities that clearly align with your plan. As you go through this process you may find people working on projects that don't support the current or old objectives and these projects should most likely be stopped. After the employees understand the vision, have heard from senior management and have had their work aligned to the plan, the organization is prepared to really accomplish some great things. Don't think you are finished at this point, as you and your management team need to stay focused on achieving the goals. A regular Plan of Record process to monitor projects throughout the organization will be critical. As your management team matures with managing the plans you should have dashboard discussions on a regularly schedule date that clearly show what projects are in trouble (no need to review the ones that are moving forward on budget and on schedule).

Creating the vision and plans to implement that vision is the easy work. Managing the plan over many months, even years, is what becomes much tougher.



Depending on your organization's culture you may need to address different areas to ensure success.

***Call us if you need help with this process or want to discuss various strategies that may be better suited for your environment.***