



The Best of Brainstorming

How Strategic Planning Can Help Your Fair!

Presented by Rebecca Desmond, CFE

What is Strategic Planning?

- Road Map
- Types



– Goals Based

- is “probably the most common and starts with focus on the organization’s mission (and vision and/or values), goals to work toward the mission, strategies to achieve the goals, and action planning (who will do what and by when).”
Strategic Planning (in nonprofit or for-profit organizations)
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– Issues Based

- “often starts by examining issues facing the organization, strategies to address those issues, and action plans.”
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Why do I need Strategic Planning at my fair?

- Brings together board, staff and community creating a single vision for the fair
- New board and/or staff orientation tool
- Provides mechanism for team work at all levels



Who participates in our Strategic Plan?

- Barebones
 - Executive staff and board
- Nuclear family
 - All staff and board
- Extended family
 - All staff and board plus invited representatives from fair partners (i.e. Foundation, Junior Livestock Auction Committee)



Who participates in our Strategic Plan?

- Block party
 - All of the above plus community members
 - Online and/or hard copy surveys
 - Focus groups



Components of a Strategic Plan

- Vision Statement
- Mission Statement
- Values
- SWOT Analysis
- Goals and Objectives





Vision Statement

- Where does the fair want to be in 10 or more years?
 - Example: "Premier event facility in the county."
 - Example: "Agriculture education and promotion hub in the region."
 - Example: "Self sustaining and free of government support."

Mission Statement



- Purpose of the fair organization
 - Example: "To promote excellence in agriculture awareness and education."
 - Example: " To provide and promote a multi-use facility for the community while remaining fiscally responsible."
 - Example: "To support and promote agriculture, youth, education, and provide a successful venue for community events."

Values

- Values the organization strives to demonstrate in its dealing with its customers, constituencies, and partners, as well as among the management, board, and staff of the organization.
 - Examples:
 - The role as stewards and guardians of the fairgrounds.
 - Community and family involvement
 - Building relationships
 - Education
 - Financial strength
 - Customer service



SWOT Analysis

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats

- This analysis is the heart of the brainstorming that looks at the internal and external elements of your operation.



Strengths

- Internal
 - Examples
 - Strong staff
 - Dedicated board
 - Good location of fairgrounds
 - Lots of parking
 - Fiscally strong
 - Board and staff work as a team



Weaknesses

- Internal
 - Examples
 - Aged facilities and infrastructure
 - Lack of parking
 - Being a state agency
 - Lack of adequate equestrian facility
 - Lack of RV parking
 - Landlocked



Opportunities

- External
 - Examples
 - Alternative funding such as grants
 - Sponsorships
 - Agency-to-agency support
 - New tribal casino
 - Federal stimulus program
 - Volunteers



Threats

- External
 - Examples
 - Economy
 - Declining youth in agriculture organizations
 - Highway bypass
 - New tribal casino
 - Decline in state funding

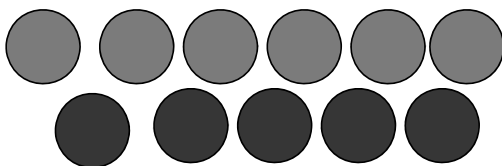


○ The power of the sticker dot

- How items listed on a flip chart can change your fair
 - Participants in strategic planning session all get to vote on what they think are the most important items to address
 - Each participant gets six sticker dots
 - First important rule: No sticker dots can be traded, sold, auctioned off, or just given to another participant.
 - Second important rule: Only one dot per item per person.

The power of a sticker dot

- Dots will begin to group and priorities come to light
- From here, goals and objectives are determined



Goals and objectives

- Similar priorities from the SWOT analysis can be grouped under one common goal

– Example

- Goal #1 – Increase interim revenue
 - Upgrade main rental hall
 - » Staff develop and implement plan
 - Develop fairgrounds interim marketing material
 - » Staff or contractor create marketing plan and materials
 - Explore funding to build a new equestrian arena
 - » Staff and board look into partnerships, grants, corporate support, etc.



What do we do with our Strategic Plan once it is complete?

- Do not let it collect dust—use it!
- Can help develop projects and help you avoid projects
- Don't worry if some objectives don't get done
- Review and update plan every three to five years.





Final thought

- “Quite often, an organization's strategic planners already know much of what will go into a strategic plan (this is true for business planning, too). However, development of the strategic plan greatly helps to clarify the organization's plans and ensure that key leaders are all ‘on the same script’. Far more important than the strategic plan document, is the strategic planning process itself.”

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The State of California

“Promoting excellence in agriculture awareness and education.”

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