Preparing for the Strategic Plan

Management & Leadership Training Conference 2018

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Readiness Assessment - Worksheet

• Before we get started:
  – Is your agency prepared to engage in strategic planning process?
  – What steps need to be taken to address challenges?
Why do Nonprofits Engage in Strategic Planning?
Importance of Strategic Planning

• Agency Direction
  – Unify people and strategies
  – Mobilize and/or focus resources
  – Anticipate and head off challenges

• Capacity Building
  – Identify and support new leadership
  – Generate energy and confidence

• Performance Management
  – Set context for accountability

• Leadership
  – Support decision-making
  – Strengthen existing leadership
Characteristics of Strategic Planning

- Board-driven, staff engaged
- Driven by data
- Sets long-term goals
  - targeted
  - specific
  - achievable
- **Forces choice** based on
  - strategic needs
  - competing resources
  - and time
- Increases **internal integration & efficiency**
- Promotes **change and innovation**
  - To improve outcomes
- Builds on and **leverages relationships**
Planning Cannot....

• Fill a leadership void
• Fix bad staff or board behavior
• Make money appear
• Mobilize or empower people who are not included
The Role of Planning in Community Action
“CAA(s) must develop both a long-range strategy and specific, short-range plans for using potential resources...In developing its strategy and plans, the CAA shall take into account the areas of greatest community need, the availability of resources, and its own strengths and limitations.”
The Connection

- The **Strategic Plan** should always begin with a review of the data and conclusions from the **Community Needs Assessment**
- The **Strategic Plan** should inform the **Community Action Plan** of how the agency will deliver programs and services
Working Smarter – Utilizing CNA

- Assessment of Partners and Assets
- Potential Causes Influencing Need

Prioritized Needs

Agency Strategy

Recommendations from CNA Team
From Assessment of Needs to Strategic Plan

- Catalogued the needs in service area
  - Goals/Outcomes are meeting prioritized needs
- Identified the level of need
  - Can target objectives for family-agency-community
- Discussed potential causes behind needs
  - Alter strategy to address root causes
- Assessed partners and available resources
  - Identify external Opportunities
  - Realistically attach resources and partners to objectives
- Have recommendations from experienced team
  - Create objectives that help team meet goals and fill gaps
Ensuring a Focus on Family, Agency, and Community

• Utilize Family, Agency, & Community Level needs from CNA.
  – Ask: “Who’s need is it?” to plan accordingly
• Consider the outcomes to be achieved at the Family, Agency, and Community Level.
• Identify strategies to achieve the outcomes and address the needs.
Example

Domain: Employment
Level: Community

Need: The community lacks sufficient living wage jobs
  - People are unable to secure employment because the community does not have jobs available.

Outcome: New jobs created in the community
  - Addressing the factor that affects people’s ability to secure and maintain a job.

Strategy: Launch a Women’s Business Center program to encourage and train women to start or grow their own business
Incorporating the National Community Action Theory of Change

The National Community Action Network Theory of Change

Community Action Goals

**Goal 1:** Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

**Goal 2:** Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.

**Goal 3:** People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.

Services and Strategies

- Employment
- Education & Cognitive Development
- Income, Infrastructure & Asset Building
- Health/Social Behavioral Development
- Housing
- Civic Engagement & Community Involvement

Core Principles

- Recognize the complexity of the issues of poverty
- Build local solutions specific to local needs
- Support family stability as a foundation for economic security
- Advocate for systemic change
- Pursue positive individual, family, and community level change
- Maximize involvement of people with low incomes
- Engage local community partners and citizens in solutions
- Leverage state, federal, and community resources

Performance Management

**How well does the network operate?**

- Local Organizational Standards
- State and Federal Accountability Measures
- Results Oriented Management and Accountability System

**What difference does the network make?**

- Individual and Family National Performance Indicators
- Community National Performance Indicators
Incorporating a Local Theory of Change

Guides the strategic planning process by:

• stimulating important conversations about agency’s assumptions and roles
• communicating clearly what you are working towards
• defining population
• connecting strategies and services to long term outcomes
Big Picture: Understanding the Process and What’s Needed
A Community Action Model for Strategic Planning
Typical Process

1. Establish Planning Committee
2. Conduct Research
   - Board and Staff Surveys
   - Community Key Informant Interviews
   - Review Community Needs Assessment
   - Examine Trends
3. Plan Retreat with Board and Key Staff
4. Develop Retreat Agenda & Outcomes
5. Draft Plan
6. Board Adopts Plan
7. Report out on progress quarterly for life of the plan
For More Details on Process

www.CommunityActionPartnership.com
Tools and Resources
Organizational Standards and Training and Technical Assistance
Factors Affecting Timing

- Community Needs Assessment
- Fiscal year/Financial schedules
- Sound and Engaged Board
- Leadership Transitions
- Organizational events (e.g. conferences)
- Capacity and Infrastructure
- Availability of time and resources
- Monitoring schedule
Understanding the Requirements

• Address:
  – reduction of poverty,
  – revitalization of low-income communities, and/or
  – empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient. (6.2)

• Have Family, Agency and/or Community Goals (6.3)

• Include Customer Satisfaction and Consumer Input data (6.4)

• Reflects ROMA with ROMA Trainer/Implementer involved (4.3)

• Approved by governing board within last 5 years (6.1)

• Provide updates on goals to board at least once a year (6.5)
Creating Your Own Goals for Process

- What does the organization want to gain from the process?
- How does the organization want to utilize the plan?
- What needs to be included to ensure success?

*Draft these with the planning committee to help guide the process.*
Roles and Responsibilities
Role of the Board in Planning

Section 676B of the Community Services Block Grant Reauthorization Act of 1998 requires that, as a condition of designation, private nonprofit entities and public organizations administer their CSBG program through tripartite boards that “fully participate in the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program to serve low-income communities.”
## Strategic Planning Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board</th>
<th>Executive Director</th>
<th>Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Provide input on agency’s strategic direction</td>
<td>• Initiate discussion on purpose and timing</td>
<td>• Manage planning committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assist with process design and research</td>
<td>• Ensure adequate resources</td>
<td>• Develop research plan and conduct research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify resources to support process</td>
<td>• Oversee process design and research</td>
<td>• Develop strategic planning process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Engage key internal and external stakeholders</td>
<td>• Manage communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Manage logistics</td>
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Organizing the Planning Committee

- Board
- Executive Director
- Leadership team
- ROMA Trainer/Implementer
- Program managers
- Administrative support
- Consultant, if desired
- Other stakeholders: line staff, customers, key partners
Utilize Knowledge of ROMA Implementers/Trainers

• Provide clarity and training to group on front end
• Serve to double check/evaluate on back end

✓ Are the needs identified in the agency’s CNA utilized and referenced?
✓ Are there outcomes (denoting change) for the identified needs?
✓ Are there strategies or objectives that connect the needs to achieving the outcomes?
✓ Do the strategies proposed match the level of the need (family, agency, community)?
Role of the Planning Committee

• Design strategic planning process
  – Take lead planning role

• Design and conduct research process
  – Develop/Approve/Implement Data Collection Tools

• Provide logistical support
  – Set Agenda for the Retreat

• Manage communication with internal and external stakeholders
Planning Committee Size and Structure: Task Group Model

Planning Committee

- Research
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Planning and Logistics
Key Questions for the Planning Group

• **Why** are we engaging in the strategic planning process? What are its benefits?
• **Who** should participate?
• **How** will we conduct the process?
• **When** is the timeframe for finishing the plan?
• What are the **results** of the strategic planning process? What are the deliverables for each stage of the process?
## Resources Required for Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Items</th>
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</table>
| **staff**           | - Leadership  
                      - Research/Process  
                      - Administrative/Logistics |
| **external expertise** | - Facilitation  
                      - Research |
| **time**            | - Six months  
                      - Nine months  
                      - Twelve months |
| **facilities**      | - Meeting rooms  
                      - Retreat space |
| **budget**          | - In-kind/Volunteer  
                      - Consultants  
                      - Facilities |
## Identify Stakeholders

### Internal
- Board
- Leadership team
- Human resources
- Finance/budget
- Facilities
- Program managers
- Front line staff

### External
- Customers
- Key partners
- Funders
- State CSBG Lead Agency
- Nonprofit service providers
- Public agencies
- School system
- Private sector
- Faith community
- Grassroots/advocacy
Getting Buy In

1. Leadership team agrees on the process, demonstrates commitment, and communicates vision
   • *Sometimes utilizing an outside facilitator can help*
2. Foster understanding of how the strategic planning process will address the major issues facing the organization
3. Gather input from all levels of the organization
4. Engage external stakeholders in the process
5. Circulate a draft plan for review and feedback
Small Group Discussion

• How did you begin planning to plan for your last strategic plan?
• What other factors would you consider?
• Is your agency ready to plan?
Getting the Most Out of the Process: Taking Advantage of Assessment Phase
## The SWOT Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helpful</th>
<th>Harmful</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>Weaknesses</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>External</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td>Threats</td>
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</table>
What is a SWOT Analysis

• Assess internal and external factors in preparation for change
  – What agency is doing well [STRENGTHS]
    • Sharing successes across the agency (build morale)
    • How to build on current strengths
  – Areas for improvement [WEAKNESSES]
    • Diverse perspectives from stakeholders (buy-in)
  – Possibilities for the agency [OPPORTUNITIES]
    • Areas for growth and change
  – External factors influencing growth [THREATS]
    • Being realistic and proactive with strengths and opportunities
## Digging Deeper: Another Option

<table>
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<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS</th>
<th>WEAKNESSES</th>
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<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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</table>

### OPPORTUNITIES
- x
- x

#### Opportunity-Strength Strategies
How will we use our **Strengths** to take advantage of Opportunities

#### Opportunity-Weakness Strategies
How can we *overcome our Weaknesses by taking advantage of Opportunities*

### THREATS
- x
- x

#### Threat-Strength Strategies
How can we use our **Strengths** to avoid Threats

#### Threat-Weakness Strategies
How can we *minimize our Weaknesses and avoid Threats*

Source: [The Community Toolbox](https://www.communitytoolbox.com) adapted from Fred David’s Strategic Management Text
Strengths and Weaknesses (Internal)

- Programs and services
- Customer satisfaction and input
- Partnerships with key stakeholders/sectors
- Outreach, awareness, and advocacy
- Human resources/staff
- Facilities
- Funding/budget
Factors of Environment
Opportunities & Threats (External)

- Political: Legislation, Regulations, Funding
- Economic: Labor & Wages, New Industry
- Social: Discrimination & Equity
- Technological: Requirements, Data Advances
- Legal: New Court Cases
- Environmental: Infrastructure, Environmental Justice
Tips for the SWOT Analysis

• Include a diverse group of stakeholders
  – To get buy in and also build capacity
  – Large group with a recorder or attendees with sticky notes
  – Or small groups which then report out and prioritize
• Make sure group is clear on what each category means
• Consider sharing CNA or Customer Satisfaction Results to start the discussion
• Schedule enough time to dig deeper with analysis
  – Capitalizing on Strengths to take advantage of Opportunities
  – Talk through how these results will influence agency strategy
Assessing Vision, Mission, Values

• Can be done as part of SWOT analysis or as a separate exercise
• Mission & Vision review is typically conducted with key leadership and board, but can involve other stakeholders
• Values review is typically conducted with multiple levels of staff
• **Standard 4.1** requires that “The governing board has reviewed the organization’s mission statement within the past 5 years and assured that: 1) the mission addresses poverty; and 2) The organization’s programs and services are in alignment with the mission.
Role & Purpose

Mission, Vision, & Values all help establish direction and a shared framework for operations and activities. They create a sense of unity and clarity.

- Mission & Vision
  - Organizational compass
- Values
  - Moral compass
Reviewing Your Vision Statement

• Does it describe your agency’s optimal goal and reason for existence?
• Does it describe the ideal conditions of how the community would look if key agency goals were completely addressed?
• Does it present an inspiring view of the preferred future?
• Is it brief and easy to communicate?
• Is it shared by members of the community?
Reviewing Your Mission Statement

• What are the primary **needs** of the families, organizations, and communities we serve?
• What **goals** do we want to achieve for the families, organizations, and community in our service area?
• What is our core business and primary services?
• What are our service delivery **strategies**?
• Who are our primary **customers**?
• Who are our primary **partners**?
• What is our **theory of change**?
• Are our services, programs, and other activities **aligned** with our strengths and opportunities? With our mission?
ROMA: Four Key Mission Elements

• Population
• Services
• Outcomes
• Relationship

Example:
To work with community allies to serve the people of YY County through multi-generational services to achieve self-sufficiency.
Questions to Connect Mission to Programs

• Where are we providing services but not achieving good outcomes? *(Where do we need to do better?)*
• Where are we providing services but not meeting family and community needs? *(Where do we need to do more?)*
• Where are there gaps in services and/or needs for different types of services? *(Where do we need new services?)*
• On a scale of “completely disconnected” to “highly integrated”, where are our services? *(Where do we need to align services?)*
• How effective is our overall anti-poverty agenda?
  --Network of stakeholder relationships
  --Awareness of poverty-related issues by the broader community
  --Strength of a policy/systems change agenda
Reviewing Your Values

• How do we want to treat others?
• How do we want to be treated ourselves?
• What are our attitudes and values about our clients? Processes? Performance?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Effective Values Statements</th>
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<tr>
<td>Phrased to convey real meaning with authenticity</td>
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Bringing the Values to Life

• Communicate values to all stakeholders. Usually multiple methods are required to reinforce the information & integrate the concepts into the culture, as well as the planning process.

• Ideas include:
  – Posting values in the workplace
  – Recognize people who integrate the values into their everyday work
  – Incorporate the values into recruiting and performance appraisal process
### Reviewing Readiness Assessment

**Readiness Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are the following conditions in place for a successful strategic planning process?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Unsure or N/A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment, support, and involvement from senior leadership – especially the Executive Director and Board President</td>
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<td>Clarity on roles, expectations, input and who will make decisions in the process</td>
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<tr>
<td>The ability and willingness to gather the information needed for the SWOT and current programs</td>
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<td>The commitment to assemble a planning committee and the willingness of staff and board members to participate</td>
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<tr>
<td>An adequate commitment of resources to complete the process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Both the board and staff understand the strategic planning process</td>
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<td>Senior leaders and the board are willing to consider recommendations made during the process</td>
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<tr>
<td>There are no high-impact decision to be made by an external source in the next 6 months</td>
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<td>No merger or other strategic partnerships are under way</td>
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<td>A commitment to allocate sufficient resources to support the implementation of core strategies and programs exists</td>
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**How will we address the issues or concerns raised from the above assessment?**

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This tool was adapted from the Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies “The Strategic Planning Toolkit.”
When the CAA Decides
Now is the Time...

- Get committee and chair established
- Set a defined time frame in which to complete the project
- Decide if bringing in a consultant and if so, get them involved early
- Committee start data collection process
- Schedule board/staff retreat and have it held sacred on people’s calendars
- Refresh memory of previous plan and Community Assessment
Next Session on Strategic Planning

Wednesday, January 10th: 2:00 PM- 5:00 PM

Developing and Implementing an Outcomes Based Strategic Plan

Presenters:
Jarle Crocker, Ph.D., CCAP, NCRT
Director of Training and Technical Assistance, Community Action Partnership
Courtney Kohler, MPA, CCAP, NCRT
Senior Associate, Community Action Partnership
Resources

• **A Comprehensive Guide to Community Action Strategic Planning** – Community Action Partnership

• **Developing a Strategic Plan** – Community Toolbox, Ch. 8

• **Strategic and Operational Planning Toolkit** – Tasmanian Government

• **Creating a Local Theory of Change** – ANCRT/CAP ROMA NG Training Series
Contacts at the Partnership

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