

An Assessment of Four Key Strategic Planning Barriers and How to Mitigate or Reduce Them and Their Effects

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Abstract

Purpose. The purpose of this research is to develop a practical ideal model for mitigating or reducing four key strategic planning barriers within agencies and organizations. *Methodology.* A preliminary model was developed based on the review of literature. A survey based on the preliminary model was sent to experts in the field to discover how the model can be improved into an ideal model. *Results.* According to scholars and current leaders in the field there are four common barriers. They are uncertainty, limited resources, lack of universal communication and low productivity or morale. However, there are key factors that can be taken to overcome those four strategic barriers. *Conclusion.* The ideal model shows that there should always be alternative scenarios in place to deal with future uncertainties. It is better to have them and not need them than to need them and be without. When a lack of resources becomes an issue, innovation and imagination should kick in. People should never let limited resources stop their movement. Progress is easier said than done, but it has always been the innovators and those willing to try something different that have become the leaders in their industry. Great innovation comes from involving everyone's input in the organization from the bottom to the top as well as the customers being served. However, to generate great innovation communication is a must, and universal or standardized communication is the key. Simple is often the best way to communicate.

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Chapter I. Introduction

Isn't it nice to accomplish tasks with little to no preparation? Wouldn't it be nice to get something for nothing? Some would consider the term "living life to the fullest" to mean do whatever you want without worrying about the consequences. Some people say do whatever feels good at the moment. Others say live for the now. All of these views promote focusing on the now and not worrying about the future. In line with that thought, there is a special phrase that supports those views. It is "Let's just wing it". "Winging it" is trying to accomplish a goal with very little to no planning or preparation. That may be an acceptable frame of mind when a person is trying to figure out what activities they want to participate in on a recreational outing, but that frame of mind in a business or governmental setting could cause some serious issues that may possibly result in a loss of money and even lives. When it comes to running a business or making policies and laws, the most successful people are the ones that plan in some form or fashion.

The purpose of this research is to cultivate a practical ideal model that will aid organizations in mitigating and reducing four common key strategic planning barriers. Knowing how to overcome the four barriers will strengthen the performance of an organization by providing it with a clear way to accomplishing its goals. The present global society is a microwave society, meaning that it is a society that operates on the now and is constantly moving fast. The environment is ever changing at a rapid pace, and there seems to be a frequent occurrence of natural disasters in various places around the world. Additionally, political turbulence is taking place in many corners of the globe. With all of these predicted and unpredicted life-changing events taking place, there needs to be plans of action. Trying to run a successful organization, business or agency without strategic planning can be like holding a stick

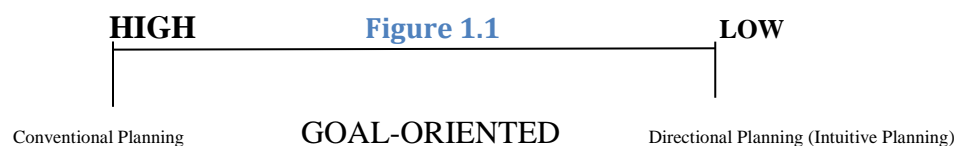
of lit dynamite and hoping that the fire will go out on its own. Nevertheless, barriers often cause people to not accomplish their strategic planning goals due to the fact that those people do not know how to mitigate or reduce the barriers that impeded the strategic planning process. Everyone that is responsible for some kind of planning in an agency or organization should take heed to the information in the literature review. This will enable them to deal with or even completely avoid some of the barriers being discussed. The next chapter will explain what a barrier is and expound on the four key barriers based off of the literature. After an understanding is established during the literature review, the chapter following will discuss the survey that was given to professionals in the field that are involved in the company's strategic planning process. After that chapter ends, this paper will analyze the results of the survey. Lastly, the paper will conclude with a practical ideal model.

What is Planning?

Steiner (1969, 7) describes planning as, “a process that begins with the objectives; defines strategies, policies and detailed plans to achieve them; which establishes an organization to implement decisions; and includes a review of performance and feedback to introduce a new planning cycle.” Usually intrinsically motivated, planning takes place when an organization or agency develops a pattern of operation with the express purpose of meeting their goals. Although setting goals can be difficult at times, some people find this step to be a necessary part of the planning process. McCaskey (1974, 281) explains managers have come to find that some of “their most important planning was done without them ever explicitly having specific goals in mind.” Whether or not specific goals are set, several scholars such as Gardiner, Corbitt and

Adams (2010), Keller (2008), Sorenson and Vidal (2008), and Hofmeister, et al. (2010) agree that some form of planning must take place.

McCaskey (1974, 282) described planning as a process that ranges along a continuum. On the extreme left side of the continuum is conventional planning (a more defined type of planning). On the far right side of the continuum is intuitive planning (a type of planning that requires less definition of one's desired outcomes). Directional planning is considered intuitive. Another characteristic of directional planning according to McCaskey (1974, 290) is that it moves from internal preferences. Not to mention directional plans have a domain that is at times difficult to define. McCaskey also explains that the process of directional planning uses unquantifiable elements. In contrast, conventional planning or planning with goals is a process that moves toward the external goals. Unlike directional planning, conventional planning is quantifiable. In addition, the process has very specific goals that are measurable. Figure 1.1 shows a description of the two types of planning on the goal-oriented planning continuum. There are many different levels and variations of planning that subsist between conventional and directional planning. Nonetheless, conventional planning is the more common type of planning.



Both conventional and directional planning have their strengths and weaknesses, and an effective manager would be wise to know when to use each process. For example, McCaskey (1974, 283) suggests that while goal based planning limits flexibility, it also creates a feeling of purpose and closure. Meanwhile, directional planning usually occurs when there is no external destination or specified goal set up and offers a wide range of plasticity along with the ability to adapt to any situation that may arise. When using directional planning, an organization's

activities are less focused than goal-based planning. According to McCaskey (1974, 288), goal-based plans are best used when the following criteria are met:

- ❖ An organization of planners wants to know what it is focusing on
- ❖ The environment is relatively stable, certain, and predictable
- ❖ There are severe time or resource limitations

McCaskey (1974, 287) continued, explaining that directional plans are best used in the following circumstances:

- ❖ It is too early to set goals
- ❖ An individual or organization has not yet decided who they are or what they want to do
- ❖ The environment is in an unstable condition and full of uncertainties
- ❖ People have not built a sufficient amount of trust or agreement thereby impairing their ability to decide upon a common goal

Although different in many ways, goal-based and directional planning share the same basic steps of diagnosing and prioritizing. Determining sequences of action and coming up with evaluation methods are also shared steps of goal-based and directional planning. Moreover, regardless of which plan method is used, people often encounter barriers during the planning process. To understand what strategic planning barriers are, one must first understand the importance of strategy and strategic planning.

Over the years, “strategy” has become a catchall term, meaning it has been defined by different entities in various ways. People can have their own individual definitions and meanings for the word strategy. Likewise, those meanings may vary depending on the person and their circumstance. For example, Hambrick and Fredrickson (2001, 49) explain that when managers call every process or program a strategy, “they create confusion and undermine their own

credibility”. What these managers and executives might not have realized is that having a clear understanding is one of the most effective ways to mitigate or reduce opposition.

As stated by Hambrick and Fredrickson (2001, 49), the word strategy is derived from the Greek word strategos. The term strategos translated means “the art of the general”. By analyzing the meaning of the word “strategy”, one may better understand the duties of an organization or agency leaders. Hambrick and Fredrickson (2001, 49) stated that a “general is responsible for multiple units on multiple fronts” at once. Like the game of chess, generals must strategically manage a number of pieces and elements to form a cohesive whole. To be most effective, a general is required to organize multiple plans, people, and events at the same time. Examples of people who might be considered “generals” are CEOs of companies, directors of agencies, division presidents, and entrepreneurs; they all must have a strategy.

Hambrick and Fredrickson (2001, 49) describe a strategy as a “central integrated, externally oriented concept of how the business will achieve its objectives”; and even though a strategy consists of an intricate web of choices, the stratagem should not be used for every single important decision an executive or director must make. A strategy addresses how an agency or organization intends to operate in its particular environment. That said the internal arrangements of an organization are not, and should not be, considered part of a strategy. Training programs, policies about compensation, and information systems are all important choices, but they are not strategies. Those types of choices should be used to backup and support the strategy. Hambrick and Fredrickson (2001, 49) state that a strategy has five elements, providing answers to five questions. They are:

❖ “Arenas: Where will we be active?”

- ❖ “Vehicles: How will we get there?”
- ❖ “Differentiators: How will we win in the Market Place?”
- ❖ “Staging: What will be our speed and sequence of moves?”
- ❖ “Economic Logic: How will we obtain our returns?”

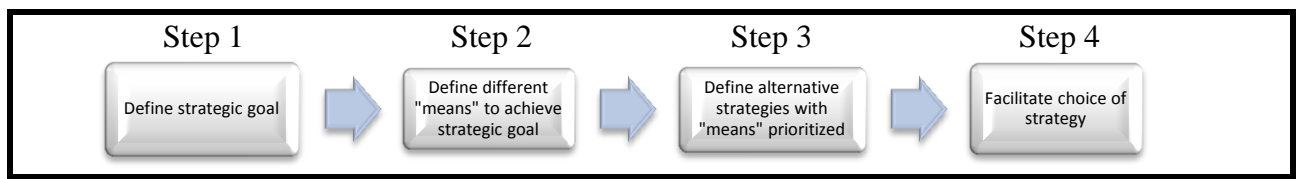
The arena element is where specifically an agency or organization should be in regards to its product or service categories. It is also where details about the arena’s geographic areas, core technologies, and market segments are noted. The vehicle element is where the strategist needs to specify the means needed to enter into a specific product category. The vehicle element also helps to find the means needed for entering into geographic areas and market segments as well as value creation stages. In other words, what will be the method to have that organization’s ideas moved into the arena? The vehicles that will be used in the arena are vital to the success of the process; thus, they must be chosen accurately. Hambrick and Fredrickson (2001, 52) explicated that the element of differentiators is where the strategist determines how to get the customers or constituents to come to the market or service place.

Differentiation, a difficult element to achieve, will only occur when top management creates a unique identifier to make the service or market place distinct. Firms that do not have a unique differentiation are usually the first firms to lose the competition. Hambrick and Fredrickson (2001, 53) describe the element of staging as an action where “decisions about the speed and sequence of strategic initiatives” are made. In keeping with the theories of Hambrick and Fredrickson (2001, 53), the staging element has been given minimal yet needed attention. The element of economic logic acts as the hub of revenue making. In other words, Hambrick and Fredrickson (2001, 53) affirm that the economic key is to attain first-rate prices by extending to customers a product or service that would be challenging to match.

The majority of strategic plans created focus only on one or two of the five elements previously discussed while giving others very little thought which essentially leaves the strategic plan with critical omissions. However, it is vital to recognize that the elements named arena, vehicle, differentiator, staging and economic logic are what constitute a strategy according to Hambrick and Fredrickson (2001, 50). By using the five elements, a manager or agency leader becomes more invested in the strategist's plans. As a result, preparation is initiated and takes place amongst those individuals. Strategy is more than just planning. Rather, it is about making choices that are informed, integrated and intentional.

Now, with a clearer understanding of strategy, the characteristics of a strategic plan will be discussed. As Figure 1.2 shows, a strategic plan has four steps. Davis and Sisson, (2009, xii) explain that defining the strategic goal should be the first step so that the agency or organization will have a clear vision of what it would like to accomplish. The second step is to take the goals defined in step one and delineate all of the available means and policy tools that will help to achieve those goals. After all of the means have been prioritized, the alternative strategies should be defined and assessed. The last step is to set the strategic plan up where policy makers can choose one of the alternative strategy approaches.

Figure 1.2

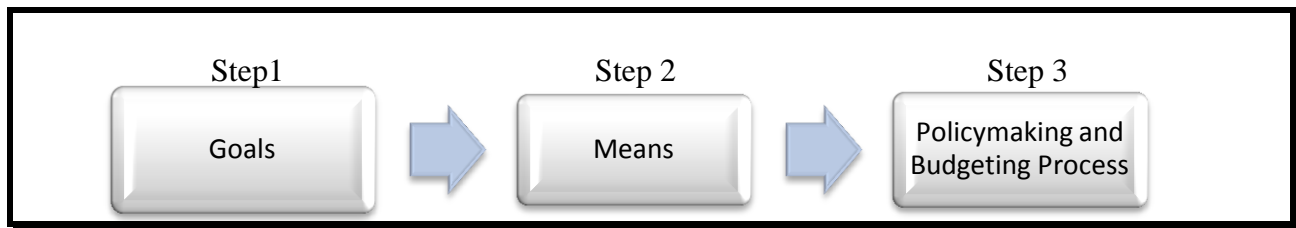


RAND OP242-s.1 (Davis and Sisson 2009)

As Figure 1.3 shows, if one wants to practice strategic planning, he or she would first create a strategic goal and then prioritize the means available to achieve that goal according to Davis and Sisson, (2009, 5). At that point, the individual would be ready to integrate the

prioritized means into a strategy, allowing policy makers to use the strategy as a guide in making decisions regarding policy making and the budgetary process. (Davis and Sisson 2009)

Figure 1.3



RAND OP242-s.1 (Davis and Sisson 2009)

After the strategy has been chosen, the implementation process can begin.

Chapter II. Literature Review

Strategic planning was the subject of many Harvard Business Review Journal Articles from 1956 -1961. Grant (2003, 491) defines strategic planning as “a systematic, formalized approach to strategy formulation”. As early as the 1950s, various corporate leaders have come together to collectively develop different types of professional organizations. Those same organizations helped to start the evolution of strategy ideas and techniques. Grant (2003, 492) indicated an organization known as the American Society of Corporate Planners was founded in 1961. Twenty-six years later the public sector was introduced to strategic planning. Grant (2003, 492) affirms that scientists and researchers focused on two thoughts concerning strategic planning in the 1980s: a) the impact of strategic planning on the performance of agencies or firms, and b) the part strategic planning played in making strategic decisions. Poister and Streib (2005, 45) stated that the Government Performance and Results Act was passed in 1993 requiring Federal agencies to ensue as well as cultivate strategically designed plans.

Furthermore, the government is to associate those plans with performance measures and budgets. As a result, Broom (1995, 10) said that many states started creating similar requirements by way of legislation or executive mandates. In 1995, Frances Berry and Barton Wechsler administered surveys and interviews across a sample of state agencies. Berry and Wechsler (1995, 160) found that 60 percent of the agencies that responded used some form of strategic planning. Poister and Streib (2005, 45) did a study that showed nearly 40 percent of jurisdictions with 25,000 or more people utilizing strategic planning on a citywide basis although there is not a specific set of requirements like that for most local governments. A great number of authors such as Backoff, Wechsler, and Crew Jr., (1993, 128) have elaborated with detail on the difficulty of effectively utilizing strategic planning in local government settings. Grant (2003,

492) advocated that one of the earlier pieces of literature written by Boyd stated that strategic planning has very little effect on the performance of an organization. There may be other people that feel the same way. Nevertheless, the literature suggests strategic planning is vital to the success of an organization. Organizations are often times evaluated on their performance. Executing good performance can be a challenge when there are barriers present and an organization lacks the knowledge of how to overcome them.

Understanding Barriers

Whether performed on a local, state, or national level, strategic planning can be a useful tool if executed and implemented correctly. Douglas Eadie (1983, 450) suggests that “the purpose of strategic planning is to maintain a favorable balance between an organization and its environment over the long run.” Nevertheless, it does not matter how good an organization’s ideas are during the strategic planning process if it has major barriers that cannot be overcome. According to Webster Online Dictionary, “a barrier is something immaterial that impedes or separates”. It is also described as an “obstacle”— something that impedes progress or achievement (Meriam-Webster 2011). There are numerous types of barriers that can hinder the success of strategic planning. Due to how large that scope of issues could be, it would be difficult to address every single one. Therefore, this chapter will address just four of the many barriers to strategic planning.

From the readings of authors such as Geersro and Ritter (2010, 196-198), Ardani, Reith and Josh (2009, 588), Ellis and Revitt (2010, 2) and Berns, Townend, et al. (2009, 25) and in researching a plethora of scholarly works, there have been some barriers discussed that seem to be a little more noticeable than the others. In addition, four major barriers that commonly impede the progress or achievement of successful strategic planning have been found: uncertainty, lack

of resources, lack of universal language/communication, and low motivation or morale. Though these are not the only barriers, they are very prominent barriers. These barriers can seriously obstruct the road to successful strategic planning.

Uncertainty

According to Davis and Sisson (2009, 5), “the United States government does not involve the setting of priorities” in its strategic planning process due to political and bureaucratic reasons, but even more so because of uncertainties. Uncertainty, if not dealt with properly or in a timely manner, could be a catalyst for failure. There is an old saying, “failing to prepare is preparing to fail”. O'Regan and Ghobadian (2007, 13) have done several studies of the various ways strategic planning has been defined and have come to the conclusion that strategic plans should be comprised of written plans covering no less than a year of activity. Also, during the process the planners should have alternative strategic options in mind. Life is unpredictable and uncertainties can arise.

A strategic plan that may have worked before for a certain situation, may not work now on a different situation due to unknown variables. For this reason, it is good to have options. O'Regan and Ghobadian (2007, 13) also suggest that strategic plans should identify future resource requirements while encompassing shorter plans for major functional areas as well as procedures for ongoing monitoring and modifications. Doing so will help ensure that neither the planning process nor the plan itself will run out of resources to continue. Looking ahead and finding out what resources are going to be needed in the future are ways to help mitigate some financial uncertainties. Lastly, O'Regan and Ghobadian (2007, 13) explain that strategic plans should include environmental scanning data, because an environmental scan helps a manager or organizational leader understand its organization's assets, external environment and internal

needs. Environmental scans also make available information that can assist agencies in coming up with a vision, identifying their strengths and weaknesses as well as their opportunities and threats. This kind of information can prove itself helpful in the case of uncertainty.

Since the past decade, there have been rapid global changes in technology, environment, and international political and economic relations. That said, one might wonder how plans written today will continue to be valid later.

As time continues to move forward, forecasting future events locally and worldwide has become difficult. Here again is a case of uncertainty. Who would have predicted with confidence many of the issues that government leaders are currently trying to manage? For example, on December 26, 2004, the world's most powerful earthquake in 40 years caused deadly tidal waves to slam into villages and resorts across South and Southeast Asia's shores. The estimated death toll was 230,000 people in 14 countries.

Graumann, et al., (2005) explain that in late August 2005, Hurricane Katrina caused massive destruction in Louisiana and Mississippi. The official death toll of Hurricane Katrina stood at 1,836 and 705 people were classified as missing. The flood protection systems in New Orleans failed in more than fifty places causing a mass flooding. Waple (2005) reported that the total cost for "Katrina is estimated to be over \$100 billion with over \$34 billion in insured losses." On March 11th, 2011, Japan was hit by a truly devastating tsunami. Not only did it claim the lives and livelihoods of many people, but also caused nuclear reactors to explode and send massive amounts of pollutants into the atmosphere. These few events have occurred in the past decade, but history has proven time and time again that inexorable planning evokes risk of catastrophic failure. All of the previously named disasters and tragedies may or may not have been predicted. That fact can be debated. However, in the midst of them occurring, one thing for

sure is that there was a lot of uncertainty, and it could be argued that those uncertainties cost lives and great amounts of money.

The goal in strategic planning is to also control for the uncertainties when they arrive. Grant (2003, 493) suggests that the downward trend of the global economy in the last quarter of the twentieth century has made it difficult for many organizations and agencies to plan due to the fact that prices as well as exchange and interest rates have been too problematic to accurately predict.

According to Fitzsimmons (2006, 131), “uncertainty demands an appreciation for the importance of flexibility” when it comes to strategic planning. In predicting the future, strategists could be wrong. However, if they do not make any predictions, the strategic choices that need to be made may be irrational due to the fact that there was no time or thought put into them. On the flipside, if predictions are made presumptuously, they may put a strategist in a position where he or she may spread the resources too thin. According to Fitzsimmons (2006, 134), a person cannot plan for the unknown; theory of traditional rational choice demarcates real uncertainty from risk. When risks are taken, their future outcome is unknown. Yet, the outcome can be estimated. Uncertainty is properly characterized as a risk. Due to that fact, variability plays a vital role in the planning factors and scenarios that the strategies are tested against. Regardless of the analytical or decision processes, Fitzsimmons (2006, 134) suggests that the variability in strategic calculations be customized to those processes. While “emphasis on uncertainty buys flexibility” as Fitzsimmons (2006, 137) stated, this flexibility comes at a cost that is unknown — one that muddies the path towards strategic choice. It can also weaken the basis for strategic choice: resource allotment.

Javidan (1984, 384) defines environmental uncertainty as “the perceived degree of predictability of the various components compromising the environment”. He expressed that the link between an organization and its environment is the organizational decision-maker, because the decision-makers’ decisions are predicated based on environmental factors. In an empirical study conducted by Javidan (1984, 392), he discovered that the “effect of environmental uncertainty” is likely to be moderated by the two following variables:

- ❖ “The perceived need for internal change”
- ❖ “The perceived value of long-range planning in formulation and implementation of such a change”

In other words, the effects on environmental uncertainty are directed by two variables. The first variable is people’s belief that there is a need for some kind of change to take place internally. The second variable is the people’s belief that there is value in doing long range planning to create, implement and develop that change.

Depending on circumstance, some people will view these changes as temporary while others will view them as major and permanent structural changes. Viewing the vagaries is where the perceived need for internal change factor comes into play. The group that perceives little need for change often sees strategic planning as fruitless. In their eyes, the change is merely temporary. The other group sees that the permanent change requires a need for major modifications for instance diversification, mergers, plus adaptation to new environmental demands.

In an effort to reduce or mitigate barriers of uncertainty when involved in strategic planning, Fitzsimmons (2006, 131) remarked “a natural compromise is to build strategies that are robust across multiple alternative future events, but are still tailored to meet the challenges of the

most likely future events”. That is to say, flexibility in the plan is essential; the plans should be flexible enough to adapt to any necessary changes that may occur within the organization. When strategically planning to control for rapidly changing and turbulent environments, one should create or design multiple alternatives that will still address the needs and challenges of possible future events. At the same time, alternatives should give room for unlikely events to be dealt with as well. Fitzsimmons (2006, 131) expressed that a better way to account for uncertainty in strategic planning would be to address several factors that could be considered as potential threats and/or security challenges. The approach would also need to include “transparent”, “probabilistic”, and explicit reasoning in the planning process to ensure a) a better understanding, and b) disciplined judgments.

Again, for any organization facing uncertainty, retaining flexibility is essential. According to political scientist Betts, (1982, 103) “In an environment that lacks clarity, abounds with conflicting data, and allows no time for rigorous assessment of sources and validity, ambiguity allows intuition or wishfulness to drive interpretation.... The greater the ambiguity, the greater the impact preconceptions”. Rigorous analysis, assessments, and a huge quantity of data are important; however, one should never rule out fundamental human intuition. Fitzsimmons (2006, 135) discusses ambiguity, because he believes along with Betts (1982) it causes a need to add the human element of strategic planning, which is “skepticism about the validity of prediction” or “skepticism of analysis”. In addition, Fitzsimmons (2006, 135) clearly states that “intuition and judgment of decision makers will always be vital to strategy, and attempting to subordinate these factors to some formulaic, deterministic decision-making model, would be both undesirable and unrealistic”. In his book On War, Clausewitz (1984, 85) argues that, “many of the reports that intelligence people generate during war are vacillating and some

even outright wrong.” In addition, according to Clausewitz (1984, 85) , most of these reports are uncertain. Due to this uncertainty; an officer in the war should have within them a standard of judgment, which can only be obtained from men’s knowledge, personal experiences, events as well as common sense. Clausewitz (1984, 85) also suggests that the officer be led by the laws of probability.

The Marketing Mastery (2011) group defines the laws of probability in very simplistic terms. On their website, they state, “the more times you attempt to accomplish a test task or goal, the more likely you are to achieve” and “the more potential variables you include, the lower your chances will be for your desired results to happen”. The laws of probability cannot and should not be taken into account if used with bias. Fitzsimmons (2006, 142) argues that prediction, when it comes to strategic planning, makes people make decisions that expose the beliefs they have about the likeliness of an event occurring and how important it is. This helps them to learn about their own values as well as letting others know how that decision maker thinks. Any prediction can be wrong. Fitzsimmons (2006, 143) suggests that strategists must go back to distinguishing between uncertainty and risk and then they must improve their skill of risk assessment. As well, Fitzsimmons (2006, 143) stated that the two key parameters in all varieties of risk assessment include:

- ❖ “The consequences of a harmful event or condition”
- ❖ “The likelihood of the harmful event or condition occurring”

Fitzsimmons (2006, 144) affirmed that a strategist cannot have a firm perspective on risk if that strategist has no perspective on likelihood. Additionally, if the risk perspective is not there, the strategists cannot differentiate amongst alternative choices. As a result, without a

purposeful choice, a strategy does not exist. Schwartz (1991, 6) maintains that strategist should not create future scenarios with the intention of “seeing the future”. Instead, scenarios should be used to make leaders aware of alternative strategies and necessary decisions to be made.

Limited Resources

Performing actions such as evaluating organizations and agencies through data analysis, meeting facilitation experts, holding training seminars, and staying current with technological changes can be expensive. Because of limited financial resources and/or manpower, many agencies or organizations have difficulty strategically planning these types of things. Having a strategic plan, according to Feiock and Kim (2001, 38), constrains politically driven expansion of development programs. At the same time, a strategic plan may initiate the growth of some developing strategies while discouraging the approbation of other strategies, especially “costly financial incentives”. Lauenstein and Skinner (1980, 4) said, “The organization with superior resources – technology, knowledge, management, human skills and finances usually wins”. All of these items are important resources. Many organizations and agencies spread their resources and talents too thin and end up suffering as a result. With no dominance in or over key resources, they find themselves struggling to stay above water as competitors who dominate their resources enjoy the bigger cash flow and profit margins.

According to Lauenstein and Skinner (1980, 5), one of the causes of low resources is the temptation for organizations or agencies to diversify. Diversification often occurs when organizations are trying to stay competitive. In an effort to cover several areas instead of focusing on one and mastering it, they spread their resources thin in several areas and master none. Lauenstein and Skinner (1980, 5) state, “A study of the Fortune 500 companies indicates that non-diversified companies on the average not only achieved faster growth and superior

return on investments, but also were considered safer by a noted published investment advisory service”.

It is very common for organizations, businesses, and agencies alike to concentrate on the current year when planning. As a result, the strategic issues do not receive the genuine attention that they need, and leadership in specific markets can become increasingly difficult. Some agencies try to operate and survive on short-term operating plans hoping to overcome issues that arise from situations such as operating problems, economic conditions, competitiveness and unexpected actions by customers. Sometimes identification of the key resources is not made clear and the needed investments into those resources are ignored due to dependency on short-term plans for long term situations.

Some organizations and agencies feel like they are failing in lines or areas of business. So, often they try to use their resources to find other lines or incorporate other agencies. Lauenstein and Skinner (1980, 6) propose that using the resources to find other lines or incorporating other agencies is not always bad, but very often the real issue is that the organizations are not effectively managing their present areas and/or resources. The organization just may have not developed the skills and/or capabilities to compete in their industries. After previous successes, some companies, agencies, and organizations become overconfident and believe they can start diversifying without building up their resources; oftentimes, this cockiness leads to miscalculations and lapses of judgment.

The key to dealing with “lack of resource” barriers is first to identify the cause or causes of the limited resources. By identifying where the limitation originated, one will be better equipped to create an effective strategy for developing superior resources. At times, a manager or agency leader, in an effort to accomplishing several goals at one time, will use large amounts

of their vital resources towards fixing all of their goals. The end result is that those leaders and managers spread their resources too thin and end up being able to accomplish very little rather than taking the bulk of vital resources and focusing on a few goals at a time. Lauenstein and Skinner (1980, 10) submit that there is a huge advantage to focusing assets and energies on a narrow sector of objectives and mastering them. They go on to explain that after mastering these objectives, those managers and leaders may use the mastery of the objectives to gain more resources. An organization is better off competing in a field or section that is thoroughly known rather than trying to learn new areas. Lauenstein and Skinner (1980, 10) assert that, “instead of seeking greener fields, managers would usually do better by investing in building resources in present fields or a segment of present fields”. In other words, to gain the most from strategic planning, the key is to concentrate on small sections at a time while building resources. Dye and Sibony (2007, 45) suggest that the solution is for organizations and agencies to free up the units within them from annually having to conduct rigorous strategic planning processes. In most cases, organizations will not have to make major strategic redirections every year, which can be draining and debilitating to an organization.

Dye and Sibony (2007, 45) explain that most major initiatives are fully implemented after an eighteen to thirty six month time frame has passed; thus, to be most effective, managers need to concentrate on completing the entire duration of the program. In addition, there are companies that alternate their business units undergoing the full strategic planning process; this approach allows the senior managers and directors to devote more of their time and energy to the units undergoing the process to maximize the results. However, Dye and Sibony (2007, 45) state that when external events occur that affect the company as a whole, managers must still be able to

interact with the business units that are not going through the strategic process, and those same managers and directors must be able to make “major strategic decisions on an ad hoc basis”.

Limited or No Standardization of Universal Communication

According to Boyd and Reuning-Elliot (1998, 181), there is very little consistency when it comes to the strategic planning of many organizational and agency programs. Over ten years ago, Boyd and Reuning-Elliot (1998, 181) had two explanations for the inconsistencies of strategic planners. The first reason for inconsistency was that "strategic planners" had customarily favored evaluating the interrelationships among subjects or variables rather than taking the time to define the variables. The second explanation was that numerous "strategic planners" and researchers aimed their attention more towards the specifics of the strategies and their differences rather than looking at the overall planning of the strategies and how they fit together in the big picture. However, these inconsistencies may not exist today. In the meantime, a barrier that does still exist today is the lack of “standardization”, which is a result of different standards and rules across an agency or organization as well as different terminologies and definitions which often causes a breakdown in communication. It has been a challenge to measure the effectiveness of certain strategic plans, according to Boyd and Reuning-Elliot (1998, 182), because numerous departments within the same agency or organization use certain universal label names for processes, programs and categories. The problem is that even though the label names are universal, the meanings of each label are not universal across the departments. The labels having different meanings cause too many inconsistencies within an organization, which inherently cause too much confusion within an agency. LaChapelle, McCool and Patterson (2003, 474) said, “Wicked problems and messy situations are typified by multiple competing goals, little scientific agreement on cause-effect relationships, limited time

and resources, lack of information, and structural inequities in access to information and the distribution of political power”. When there is no standardization of processes, systems or communication mediums, a lot of confusion can arise. According to Recklies (2008, 4), academic and business literatures have different definitions and scopes of the term “strategic planning”. Many of the terminologies that give descriptions of strategic planning are inconsistent, because they use different definitions (i.e. strategic planning, financial planning, and strategic management). As a result, these definitions each have different implications and expectations; in turn, they also have different emphasis on tasks and responsibilities at hand.

Various scholars such as, Kline, Simunich and Weber (2008, 771), Grawitch and Barber (2009, 4), Netteland, Wasson and Morch (2007, 409) and Price (2007, 132) concur that communication of a strategy or strategic plan becomes a problem for many organizations when different units within an organization do not have a set of terminologies designed specifically for that organization with a definite and universal meaning. If employees do not understand their contribution to the creation of a viable strategic plan, they may not take full ownership of it. Taking ownership of a plan is difficult for employees to do when the disposition is not fully understood. In addition, it is hard to recognize purpose or value if the reasons have not been communicated to the employees. Historically, as in the late 1990s, Boyd and Reuning-Elliot, (1998, 182) suggested that many different approaches to planning had taken place, and the terminologies used in evaluating and measuring the effectiveness or value of the plans empirically were very inconsistent at that period of time. As a result, the ability to gauge and assimilate empirical works prior to that period had been significantly diminished. Again, the diminishing of ability to gauge and assimilate empirical works may or may not be the case for

different organizations during this period. Nevertheless, what is known is that universal terminologies are important to having effective communication.

Recklies (2008, 8), recommends seven quintessential elements that must be understood to ensure effective communication when it comes to working on a strategy that he learned from Kotter (1995). The first element is simplicity. All messages of communications should be clear, simple, and concise. Simplicity is often helped by use of the second element, which is visualization, because the images communicated stay in people's minds. Visualization can take place through metaphors, analogies, and examples. The third element is multiple forums. Multiple forums allow the same message to be transferred from many different angles through different vehicles to make sure the message is heard. The fourth element has been a powerful tool in media and advertising since its inception: repetition. Radio stations use repetition to gain popularity on songs; commercials use repetition to push an idea or product into people's minds; even the government uses the repeating of words and statements to push its agendas on the public. The main point of repetition is to ensure that the message being communicated is truly being understood. The fifth element is leading by example. Recklies (2008, 8) proposal emphasizes the point that since behavior is a powerful way to demonstrate a new direction, leading by example may be one of the strongest elements out of the seven.

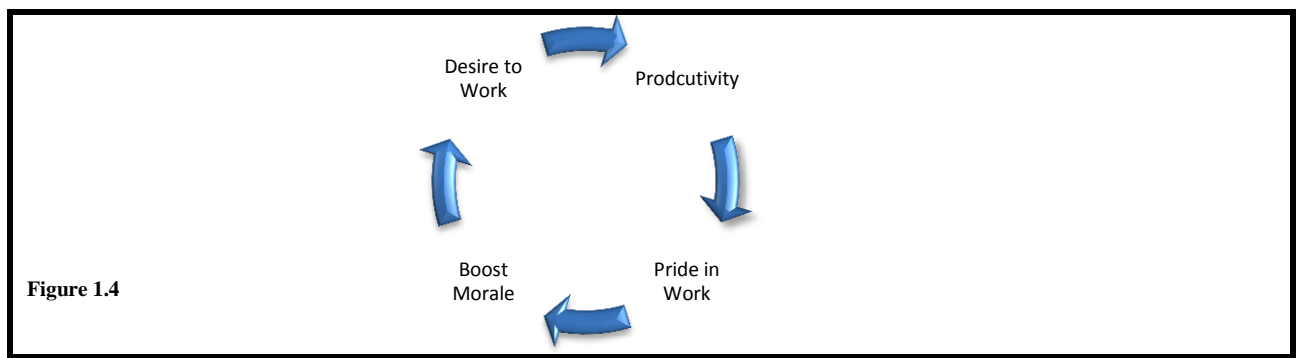
When others see the leader willing to walk the walk, that non-verbal communication says volumes and can be just as effective as the verbal communication alluding to the old proverb, "Give a man a fish and he will be full for a day, but teach a man to fish and he will be full for a lifetime". Teaching is what a person is doing when he or she leads by example. In turn, teaching imparts knowledge that empowers everyone from the administrative assistant to the manager. The sixth element is an explanation of the apparent inconsistencies in a strategy. If there are

major parts of a strategy that seem ambiguous, these ambiguities need to be explained assiduously. The final element is the element of give and take. Instead of relying on one-way communication, communication should be open. Regular communication will help with building trust among employees and colleagues within the agencies and organizations. Recklies (2008, 8) suggests that opinion leaders should be targeted first to build trust, because they can and usually will be your main advocate for the new plan, when it comes to informal communication structures.

Motivation, Morale and Productivity

Trust is a key element in keeping staff motivated. Several scholars such as, MacCormick and Parker (2010, 1776), Foster (2009, 10) and Mumby-Croft (2000, 77) agree that a motivated staff tends to have high morale, which usually translates into higher productivity and a renewed sense of pride in one's work. Figure 1.4 illustrates this cycle. Empowerment is the other key element.

Alaric Robertson's Productivity Flow Model



According to Recklies (2008, 4), “most planning models do not consider the irrational behavior of employees, groups and organizations”. Yet, those same employees, groups and organizations compose an organizational culture. Recklies (2008, 6) suggests that organizations

should establish a culture that allows fruitful debates and tolerates mistakes. Using the element of leading by example, these types of changes should start from the top. Various scholars such as Wyk (2005, 36), Jeong (2007, 11) and Mphuthi (2007, 14) believe that a number of organizational and agency staff persons are not productive, because they feel like their job is mundane, repetitive, and lacks any of their ideas. This type of attitude makes them feel like they are not invested in the plan or project. As a result, the low morale of the staff hinders creativity and the ability to come up with greater innovative strategies. McCaskey (1974, 282) promotes the idea that it is easier to achieve goals and meet deadlines when people are committed to those goals and this is far more effective than doing a meticulous examination of issues.

According to Dye and Sibony (2007, 46), the strategist of the organizations should hold people accountable for their strategic initiatives and require them to make their progress transparent thereby making them responsible for tracking the initiatives that have the biggest impact on the organization and their reviews. In line with that view, Galindo (2010, 19) and Randolph and Kemery (2010, 96) articulate that making employees responsible and accountable for their work empowers them. The heightened sense of investment leads to pride in one's work and higher morale. Adams (2011, 428) stated that Texas House Bill 2009 from the 72nd legislature required state agencies to have a strategic planning process and a set of developed performance measures. Since the time that statute had become obligatory, it has been amended several times. Strategic planning as a result became institutionalized by many of the state agencies. Consequently, each state employees work is tied to a performance measure in some form or fashion.

In Texas, every two years all state agencies and higher education institutions are required to present an updated five year strategic plan. The strategic plans presented must also list

specifically what the desired outcome for the agency or organization is. The strategic plan serves as a reference document to help formulate the Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR). The LAR is structured similarly to the strategic plan and is often used when the decision of how much money to appropriate to each agency is being developed. The states have taken the processes established even farther by gauging how much money to give universities by the academic performance of the school's students. Numerous programs are being cut as a result of not meeting the economic or performance expectations of the state.

According to Cordero (2008, 10) explains that programs such as Trio, an organization designed to encourage and help youth get into college through various student support groups, at times begin strong. However as time progresses the programs may slowly weaken. As a result, officers that have a vital role in the organizations begin to leave and the programs suffer. When the programs suffer to the point of not being able to reach the states performance requirements, funding for the programs is threatened. Sanchez (2005,52) states, "Many non-profits that receive funding from grants require that the organization have a strategic plan. Funding agencies want to know that the organization is well organized and is very clear about their purpose and mission."

Bliss (2011,1) stated, "Every five years, the board evaluates every program at public universities and community and technical colleges in the state to determine which programs produce the fewest degrees. Programs that award an associate degree or bachelor's degree to fewer than 25 students within five years are considered low-producing and are at risk of elimination because of the board's new standard". Dye and Sibony (2007, 47) also explain that being invested in the process is a great way to create a relationship or tie between the evaluations and compensation of the managers and the progress of the new initiatives. Often times, money or extrinsic rewards can be great motivators for higher quality work from managers and staff. In

addition, the organization's management and staff's success could be linked to certain bonus packages. On the other hand, those types of rewards have a temporary effect and the positive results from the rewards dwindle down until the rewards are distributed again which can at times be quite costly.

Another route of motivation, which may have longer-lasting effects, involves getting the members of the organizations and agencies to feel invested in the strategic planning process and organizational goals which will essentially create an intrinsically rewarding sense of pride. Furthermore, feeling invested in the strategic planning process will also create and promote a greater sense of empowerment, loyalty, transparency, trust, integrity, and responsibility.

According to Shields and Tajalli (2006, 323), "categories or classification is the easiest and most basic micro-conceptual framework to see or use". Therefore, the following conceptual framework table lists uses the practical ideal type strategy. As Shields (2003, 10) suggests, the conceptual framework tool was created from the literature review. The left hand column of the table lists each category that was discussed in the literature review. The right column of the table lists the scholarly literature that was reviewed to discuss each of the corresponding categories on the left side of the table.

**Conceptual Framework:
Assessing 4 Major Strategic Planning Barriers and Reducing or Mitigating Them**

Practical Ideal Type II Category	Scholarly Support
Uncertainty Barriers	
<p><i>Overcoming Uncertainty Barriers:</i> The Organization and Agency Leaders should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Define their strategic goal ❖ Define different means to achieve that strategic goal ❖ Define alternative strategies with the “means” prioritized ❖ Facilitate a choice of strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Davis & Sisson (2009) ,O' Regan & Ghobadian (2007), Graumann et al (2005), Waple (2005), Grant (2003), Fitzsimmons (2006), Javidan (1984), Betts (1982), Clausewitz (1984), Pierce (2011), Schwartz (1991)
Limited Resource Barriers	
<p><i>Overcoming Lack of or Limited Resource Barriers:</i> The Organization, Agency and strategy team leaders should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Identify the cause of the limited resources ❖ Focus their assets on a narrow sector of objectives and then use the gain received to obtain greater gain. ❖ Compete in the field or sector that they know rather than jumping the gun and trying to take on new ones ❖ Concentrate on small sections while building resources ❖ Select certain units within the agency to undergo the strategic planning process as opposed to the whole agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Feiock & Kim (2001), Lauenstein & Skinner (1980), Dye & Sibony (2007)
Limited or No Standardization/Universal Communication Barriers	
<p><i>Overcoming Lack of Standardization and Universal Communication Barriers:</i> All members of the organization and agency should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Keep communication simple ❖ Use metaphors, analogies and examples ❖ Use multiple forums to get message across ❖ Use repetition in getting message across ❖ Lead by Example ❖ Explain apparent inconsistencies in the strategy ❖ Practice two way communication as opposed to one way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Boyd & Reuning-Elliot (1998), Blomquist & Schlager (2005), Recklies (2008), Kotter (1995), McCaskey (1974), Dye & Sibony (2007), Grawitch and Barber (2009), Netteland, Wasson and Morch (2007), Price (2007), Kline, Simunich and Weber (2008)
Motivation, Morale and Productivity Barriers	
<p><i>Overcoming Motivation, Morale and Productivity Barriers:</i> Directors and Executive Managers of Agencies, Organizations and Companies should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Hold organizational or agency managers and staff accountable to their initiatives ❖ Make managers responsible for their outcome ❖ Allow flexibility in decision making ❖ Tie in evaluations and compensations of managers with the progress of their initiatives in the strategic planning process. ❖ Help staff create a feeling of vested interest in the processes and programs ❖ Make members of the agency/organization feel valuable and like their opinions matter, because they do ❖ Put just as much emphasis on helping the managers and staff to feel the intrinsic rewards just as much at the extrinsic rewards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Recklies (2008), McCaskey (1974), Dye and Sibony (2007), Mintzberg, MacCormick and Parker(2010), Mumby-Croft (2000), Bliss (2011), Cordero (2008), Foster (2009), Adams (2011), Kowalik and Yoder (2010), Randolph and Kemery (2010), Jeong (2007), Wyk (2005), Galindo (2010), Mphuthi (2007)

Chapter III. Methodology

Introduction

Literature suggests certain procedures can be taken to mitigate or reduce the strategic planning barriers and their effects. This study will incorporate suggestions offered in the literature with the opinions of directors and managers whose organizations have, within the past decade, been deemed by their overall communities as successful. The purpose of this research is to gather information in order to create a practical guide that can aid in overcoming four key strategic barriers. The four categories of strategic planning barriers identified through literature will function as the framework for the collection of data.

Operationalization

Chapter II showed a thorough study of recent literature on reducing or mitigating the four strategic planning barriers. From that literature review, a number of survey questions, composed of open- and close-ended questions, were derived. To account for the subjective and qualitative nature of some of the material, it was thought prudent to create a survey using a mixed format of both open- and close-ended questions. Some of these objectives entail the opinions of persons within the organization. After gathering and evaluating the information obtained from the surveys, an ideal model or guide on how to overcome the four strategic planning barriers discussed will be developed. In order to operationalize the key parts of the practical ideal model, the survey questions will first be associated with the conceptual framework. The barriers being discussed and the descriptive research being done on them will be tied together. Shields (1998, 202) suggests, that descriptive research and categories of discussion be paired together so that the research purpose is tied to the practical ideals of the study when creating an operationalization table.

Table 3.1 operationalizes various aspects of the preliminary model through a set of questions that will be asked of experts. Descriptive statistics will be used to gauge the results of the survey. Copies of the survey questions are available in Appendices I and II.

Table 3.1: Operationalization Table of a Practical Ideal Type II Model of How to Mitigate or Reduce 4 Key Strategic Planning Barriers

Practical Ideal Type II Category	Questionnaire	Question	Scale of Measurement
Uncertainty Barriers			
<i>Overcoming Uncertainty Barriers: The organization or agency Leader(s) should:</i>			
define the mission of the agency before developing a strategic plan	Questionnaire	The first step in a strategic plan should be defining the mission of the organization.	5 – Point Likert Scale
define its strategic goals	Questionnaire	An organization should define goals that are geared towards the mission statement.	5 – Point Likert Scale
define alternative means to achieve its strategic goals	Questionnaire	An organization should develop alternative means of achieving its strategic goals.	5 – Point Likert Scale
prioritize alternative strategies starting with the most achievable goal first	Questionnaire	Alternative means of achieving strategic goals should be prioritized in order of their importance.	5 – Point Likert Scale
select the most effective alternative for achieving its goals	Questionnaire	An organization should select an alternative means that achieves its goals in the most effective way.	5 – Point Likert Scale

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

Table 3.1: *Continued*

Practical Ideal Type II Category	Questionnaire	Question	Scale of Measurement
Limited Resource Barriers			
<i>Overcoming Lack of or Limited Resource Barriers: The organization or agency Leader(s) should:</i>			
identify the cause(s) of their limited resources	Questionnaire	Prior to developing the strategic plan, an organization should assess its available resources.	5 – Point Likert Scale
	Questionnaire	Organizational leaders should identify the cause(s) of their limited resources before developing a strategic plan.	5 – Point Likert Scale
focus on one department at a time so that they can maximize its benefits and use them to assist in developing a strategic plan for the next department	Questionnaire	When trying to gain more resources for developing a strategic plan, it is best for an organization to focus on only one department and get the maximum benefit out of it to aid with the strategic planning of the next department.	5 – Point Likert Scale
focus their assets on a narrow sector of objectives and then use the gain received to obtain greater gain.	Questionnaire	An organization should not exhaust all of its resources trying to achieve several strategic goals at once within an area of concern.	5 – Point Likert Scale
	Questionnaire	An organization should focus a large portion of its resources on a narrow set of objectives and try to gain more resources as a result.	5 – Point Likert Scale
compete in the field or sector that they know very well rather than less known areas	Questionnaire	Organizations should only compete in the areas where they have expertise rather than expanding their resources in fields they are not familiar with.	5 – Point Likert Scale
concentrate on achievable goals while building resources	Questionnaire	Organizations should focus their resources primarily on achievable goals to build their limited resources.	5 – Point Likert Scale
begin their strategic planning w select units and gradually expand the strategic planning to all other units if they have never had a strategic plan	Questionnaire	Instead of developing a strategic plan for the entire organization at the beginning, organizations should gradually develop strategic plans for selected units.	5 – Point Likert Scale
1 = Strongly Disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Neutral	4 = Agree
			5 = Strongly Agree

Table 3.1: Continued

Practical Ideal Type II Category	Questionnaire	Question	Scale of Measurement
Limited or No Standardization/Universal Communication Barriers			
<i>Overcoming Lack of Standardization and Universal Communication Barriers The Strategic Team Leader(s) should:</i>			
keep Communication Simple.	Questionnaire	An organization should try to avoid using complex words when trying to communicate with its members or employees.	5 – Point Likert Scale
	Questionnaire	Terminology used in an organization should have a standardized meaning across all parts of the organization.	5 – Point Likert Scale
	Questionnaire	Organizational leaders should ensure that the message they are trying to communicate is simple enough for everyone to comprehend.	5 – Point Likert Scale
use metaphors, analogies and examples.	Questionnaire	When giving instructions or trying to communicate a point, organizations should use metaphors, analogies and examples.	5 – Point Likert Scale
	Interview	What do you feel is the best method to use when trying to get your organization to see your vision?	5 – Point Likert Scale
use multiple forums to get message across.	Questionnaire	Different methods of communication should be used when trying to get a message across. I.e. (e-bulletins, posters, flyers, word of mouth)	5 – Point Likert Scale
use repetition in getting messages across.	Questionnaire	To get the messages across, the management should repeat the message more than once.	5 – Point Likert Scale
lead by example.	Questionnaire	It is more important to lead by example than just give instructions.	5 – Point Likert Scale
explain apparent inconsistencies in the strategy.	Questionnaire	When the members of an organization express that they see inconsistencies in the strategic plan, the planners should thoroughly explain each apparent inconsistency.	5 – Point Likert Scale
practice two way communications as opposed to one way.	Questionnaire	When trying to communicate a strategy, it is important to have a two way communication as opposed to an up-down communication.	5 – Point Likert Scale

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

Table 3.1: Continued

Practical Ideal Type II Category	Questionnaire	Question	Scale of Measurement
Motivation, Morale and Productivity Barriers			
<i>Overcoming Motivation, Morale and Productivity Barriers: Directors and Executive Managers should:</i>			
hold participants in the strategic planning accountable to their initiatives	Questionnaire	Management as well as staff should be held accountable for achieving the goals of the strategic plan.	5 – Point Likert Scale
	Questionnaire	Each member of the management team should clearly specify his or her strategic planning responsibilities and visions in written form.	5 – Point Likert Scale
make managers responsible for achieving their assigned responsibilities	Questionnaire	Managers should be held accountable for fulfilling their responsibilities.	5 – Point Likert Scale
allow flexibility in decision making	Questionnaire	Managers should be given flexibility in their decisions.	5 – Point Likert Scale
tie in compensation and merits directly tied to the performance and strategic planning initiatives of the managers.	Questionnaire	Compensation and merits should be directly tied to the performance and strategic planning initiatives of the managers.	5 – Point Likert Scale
help staff create a feeling of vested interest in the processes and programs.	Questionnaire	The management should promote a feeling of vested interest in the processes and programs within the organization.	5 – Point Likert Scale
convey to the employees that their opinion is respected and they are valued members of the organization	Questionnaire	The management should make the members of their organization feel valued and let them know that their opinions matter.	5 – Point Likert Scale
help the employees gain intrinsic rewards from their involvement in the organization	Questionnaire	Management should create a working environment that promotes a feeling of intrinsic reward in what employees are doing.	5 – Point Likert Scale

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

As table 3.1 illustrates, each category was assimilated into multiple choice questions measured on a Lickert scale spanning from one, meaning strongly disagree, to five, meaning strongly agree. The open-ended questions were at the end of the survey. Open-ended questions were also on the survey to probe the opinions and views of the respondents. This particular survey was distributed to directors, managers and strategic planning team leaders of organizations that have won awards such as the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence Program Award, President's Quality Award, or Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation Award.

Methods of Data Collection

Data collected from the survey were used to create a practical ideal model. The survey was distributed to directors, managers and strategic planning team leaders of organizations that have been considered the top performers in their respective areas. The survey was given to organizational leaders in the private sector as well as and public sector. The objective of the survey was to gather those organizational leader's expert opinions on the subject of mitigating or reducing strategic planning barriers such as uncertainty, limited resources, lack of standardization or universal communication, and low productivity or lack of morale barriers. A significant strength of the survey was having the entire sample chosen from a pool of recipients that received awards from credible organizations.

Sample

The directors, managers and strategic planning team leaders are the units of analysis. Three different organizations that give out awards based on performance and other criteria listed above were observed. Those three organizations give awards to government and private

organizations all over the United States. The private organizations consist of a myriad of industries. The Baldrige awards cover manufacturing, small businesses, healthcare, non-profits, education and service industries both private and public. The President's Quality Award covers all of the Federal agencies that are interrelated with the executive branch. The Council of Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation awards cover colleges, organizations, vendors and other stakeholders in the international regulatory community who deal with any entity that is involved in the non-voluntary, licensure certification as well as those that regulate occupations and professions. This study also selected organizations and agencies that received their awards within the past decade and had proven themselves to be leaders in their respective areas.

After the above-mentioned leaders were selected, a list of the directors' and managers' names and contact information was researched and reviewed. After reviewing the list, various names were randomly picked out from each industry and awards program. Recipients from various years between 2001 and 2011 were chosen. A total of 133 people were selected from these various organizations.

Design

Simple descriptive statistics derived from the survey answers will be used to help create a practical ideal guide. The percentages of respondents will be viewed so that their opinions will be gauged, relative to those listed in the literature review. Every question also had a comment box beneath it which allowed the respondents space to express themselves in greater detail, should they have felt thus inclined. A comparison of those results will then be made and the responses from the open-ended questions will be analyzed to form a conclusion.

Procedures

The online survey engine, “Survey Monkey” was chosen to send out the surveys. To facilitate survey distribution, encourage greater participation and obtain a greater response rate, a direct link to the survey was also sent to selected organizations to post on their blog of award recipients.

Human Subjects Protection

This paper cannot identify the individuals who participated in the survey. They will remain completely anonymous. The surveying was approved by the Institutional Review Board with exemption number 2011X7168. The certificate of approval is located in Appendix III. If further information is needed, contact the Institutional Review Board at http://www.osp.txstate.edu/irb/irb_inquiry.html. Assuring the respondents of the survey that they would remain anonymous allowed for a submission of less biased answers due to the fact that the respondents did not have to worry how they would be judged if their personal info was put with their answer. Therefore, the answers in the following result section are very candid.

Chapter 4. Results

This chapter reviews, analyzes and discusses the results of the survey given to the organizational leaders such as the directors, managers and strategic-planning team leaders. The survey was distributed to all 133 organizational leaders by way of direct link and survey monkey. Out of the 133 people, 51 responded and took the survey. The completion rate was 37%. Since these organizations span the United States and other international communities, any biases towards location were controlled for. In addition, since these award organizations span a wide variety of industries, any biases towards type of industry were controlled for; it did not matter whether the industry was public or private.

There were 35 questions in total. Thirty of them used a Lickert Scale and the last five were open-ended. The open-ended questions allowed respondents the opportunity to express themselves freely without any restraints other than staying in the context of the question. The answers that were made in the comment box or written in the open-ended question section were compiled into distinctive groups. Answers that were similar were all grouped together. Some of those will be discussed in the conclusion. All survey responses appear in the same order as questions in the survey.

Table 4.1: Percentage of Respondents that Agreed with Survey Questions

	Questions	%
	Uncertainty Barriers	
1	The first step in a strategic plan should be defining the mission of the organization.	96.0%
2	An organization should define goals that are geared towards the mission statement.	35.0 %
3	An organization should develop alternative means of achieving its strategic goals.	88.3%
4	Alternative means of achieving strategic goals should be prioritized in order of their importance.	88.3%
5	An organization should select an alternative means that achieves its goals in the most effective way.	80.4%

In the first category of barriers, questions one through five deals with uncertainty. For question one, the respondents of the survey almost unanimously agree that defining the mission of the organization

should be the very first step in strategic planning, but some even went further to say that the mission, vision and values should already be defined, thus making the strategic-planning team concentrate on the mission and goals of the plan itself. The same percentages of people believes that their goals should be geared towards the mission statement in question two, because the goals are what give their mission statement support. Questions three through five, which deal with the development, prioritization and selection of alternatives to achieve the goals, seem to have a wider array of opinions as compared to question two which includes strongly agree all the way to strongly disagree. Some of the respondents stated that alternatives should be tied to scenarios; yet since the probability is unknown for each, there is really no way of prioritizing the alternatives. Others stated that contingency plans are good, but unrealistic to develop upfront; therefore, it is better to build a culture of flexibility that can react to unexpected obstacles. Most feel that there should always be some kind of alternatives in place.

Table 4.2: Percentage of Respondents that Agreed with Survey Questions

	Questions	%
	Limited Resource Barriers	
6	Prior to developing the strategic plan, an organization should assess its available resources.	86.3%
7	Organizational leaders should identify the cause(s) of their limited resources before developing a strategic plan.	78.4%
8	When trying to gain more resources for developing a strategic plan, it is best for an organization to focus on only one department and get the maximum benefit out of it to aid with the strategic planning of the next department.	19.6%
9	An organization should not exhaust all of its resources trying to achieve several strategic goals at once within an area of concern.	76.5%
10	An organization should focus a large portion of its resources on a narrow set of objectives and try to gain more resources as a result.	37.3%
11	Organizations should only compete in the areas where they have expertise rather than expanding their resources in fields they are not familiar with.	37.2%
12	Organizations should focus their resources primarily on achievable goals to build their limited resources.	66.7%
13	Instead of developing a strategic plan for the entire organization at the beginning, organizations should gradually develop strategic plans for selected units.	29.4%

In the second category of the barriers, which deals with limited resources, a majority of respondents agree with questions six through eight which state that some assessment of an organization's resources needs to be done prior to developing a strategic plan. However, most of the same respondents

are also saying do not be limited by your lack of resources; rather, find a way to get more. The majority of respondents disagree with the literature when it comes to focusing on only one department to get the maximum benefit at a time. In addition, there is a wide array of opinions when it comes to question nine. The majority agrees that an organization should not exhaust all of its resources trying to achieve several strategic goals at one time within one area of concern. As for questions 10 and 11, the number of respondents that agree is almost equal to the number of respondents that do not agree on how much of the limited resources should be allocated to known objectives where the organization has the most expertise. Numerous respondents indicate that it should be up to the resource managers to determine capacity when it comes to growing demands and dwindling resources. Others say return on investments is important and the strategies that have the highest possible return on investment need to be identified. As for question twelve, significant numbers of respondents agree with spending the majority of resources on achievable goals. However, there were a few respondents that feel like the word “achievable” means doing the bare minimum and that there is a greater reward in taking the risks, thus pushing the organization to a higher standard. This philosophy could be argued either way. As for question 13, which deals with gradually developing strategic plans for some departments rather than organization-wide, the majority disagrees with this type of phased strategic planning.

Many of the respondents think the “big picture” is what the organizational leaders need to focus on, and the strategic view should and will include the entire organization. Others even expressed that the strategy should be developed from top down. Developing the strategy from top down would allow the organizational leaders to create the mission and focus then project the big picture for the staff and employees to see. The staff can then give their input on how they believe the mission can be best accomplished. However, the input can be accepted after the employees have proven that they have a clear understanding of the focus and can also visualize the big picture.

Table 4.3: Percentage of Respondents that Agreed with Survey Questions

	Questions	%
	Limited or No Standardization/Universal Communication Barriers	
14	An organization should try to avoid using complex words when trying to communicate with its members or employees.	84.4%
15	Terminology used in an organization should have a standardized meaning across all parts of the organization.	92.1%
16	Organizational leaders should ensure that the message they are trying to communicate is simple enough for everyone to comprehend.	96.1%
17	When giving instructions or trying to communicate a point, organizations should use metaphors, analogies and examples.	68.6%
18	Different methods of communication should be used when trying to get a message across. i.e. (e-bulletins, posters, flyers, word of mouth)	87.5%
19	To get the messages across, the management should repeat the message more than once.	86.3%
20	It is more important to lead by example than just give instructions.	92.1%
21	When the members of an organization express that they see inconsistencies in the strategic plan, the planners should thoroughly explain each apparent inconsistency.	78.5%
22	When trying to communicate a strategy, it is important to have a two way communication as opposed to an up-down communication.	84.3%

Most of the respondents for questions 14 through 16 feel that their communication is more effective when using simplistic laymen's terms. In addition, almost all the respondents agree the terminology should be standardized across the organization. There were none who disagreed with this statement. For questions 17 and 18, almost all the respondents agree that using more than one method of communication such as analogies and examples via e-bulletins and flyers is more effective than just the one conventional way. One of the respondents' common themes was to do whatever gets the message across, because employees respond and comprehend in different ways. At the same time, the communication should be relevant to the culture of the organization.

On question 19, respondents feel that repeating the message numerous times is more likely to stick in the employees' minds. A few respondents disagree with the statement in question 20 that management should lead by example. Nevertheless, most respondents feel it is important to go the extra mile and explain any inconsistencies found in the strategic plan. They also believe that managers should lead by example first, then instruction. Both are needed, but leading by example should be the priority. Most people agree with in question 22, that two-way communication is the best way to converse with an

employee. However, there are still a few who feel that one person needs to talk while the other does nothing but listen.

Table 4.4: Percentage of Respondents that Agreed with Survey Questions

	Questions	%
	Motivation, Morale and Productivity Barriers	
23	Management as well as staff should be held accountable for achieving the goals of the strategic plan.	98.0%
24	Each member of the management team should clearly specify his or her strategic planning responsibilities and visions in written form.	88.0%
25	Managers should be held accountable for fulfilling their responsibilities.	100%
26	Managers should be given flexibility in their decisions.	84.0%
27	Compensation and merits should be directly tied to the performance and strategic planning initiatives of the managers.	72.0%
28	The management should promote a feeling of vested interest in the processes and programs within the organization.	98.0%
29	The management should make the members of their organization feel valued and let them know that their opinions matter.	98.0%
30	Management should create a working environment that promotes a feeling of intrinsic reward in what employees are doing.	96.0%

For questions 23 and 24, none of the respondents disagreed when it came to the statement, “management as well as staff should be held accountable for achieving the goals of the strategic plan” and that “each member of the management team should clearly specify his or her strategic planning responsibilities and visions in written form”. Moreover, all of the respondents unanimously agree that managers should be accountable for fulfilling their responsibilities. Most of the respondents think compensation and merits should be tied directly to the manager’s performance and strategic-planning initiatives. However, in response to question 27, some added that there needs to be a consistent and accurate review process in place for measuring individual achievement. Other respondents said if this does happen, they should be fair to the managers by letting them know up front how they will be measured. On questions 29 and 30, every respondent across the board feels like management should create a pleasant working environment by making the employees feel valued and appreciated. Some respondents went further, saying that every organization should have core values and beliefs. This helps with the cohesiveness and closeness of the staff within the organization. They also agree with the

statement that management should help promote in employees a sense of intrinsic reward in their work and help them see the impact of the big picture.

Table 4.5: Top Answers for Open-Ended Questions

31. When the respondents to the survey were asked to name the three most critical elements of strategic planning, the three top answers were:
A clearly defined vision
Available Resources
Understanding of your industry and colleagues' language and company culture.
32. When asked what types of tools are used when doing strategic planning, the top three answers were:
Spread Sheets
Strategy software
Chalk, Dry Erase or smart boards.
33. When asked the best method to use when trying to get an organization to see the leader's vision, the most prominent response was:
Face-to-face communication
Visual Interactive media
Town hall meetings
34. When asked where the best strategic planning ideas come from, the most prominent answers were:
Everyone in the organization
Brainstorming sessions
35. When asked how one measures the success of their strategic plan, the most prominent answers were:
The achievement of goals
The results of the plan
Town hall meetings

Chapter 5. Conclusion

Kaufmann (1993,9) states that “a major component of a strategic plan is the vision.” Mintzberg (1994, 107) states that “the most successful strategies are visions, not plans.” He also suggests that modern strategic planning has become more like strategic programming. Mintzberg describes strategic planning as an “articulation of strategies or visions that already exist,” when in fact a true strategic plan does not just exist. A strategic plan is derived from a manager gathering information collectively from his or her experiences and from the experiences of people all through the organization. It is also derived from solid data gathered through research and testing. After all the information and data are gathered, they are synthesized into a vision pointing the organization in the direction that it should go.

Dye and Sibony (2007, 42) explain that the strategic planning process has a vital role in ameliorating across the board satisfaction with strategy development, and that there are five steps that directors and executives can use to make existing processes run better. The first step is to start with the issues by thoroughly identifying and discussing the ones that will have or are having the biggest impact on the organization or agency’s future performance. The next step is to bring the “right people” together. Bringing the right people together can be done by avoiding the practice of focusing primarily on gathering data and packaging elements of strategic planning and thereby neglecting the contributions of individuals, which are vital interactive components, according to Dye and Sibony (2007, 43). Thirdly, Dye and Sibony (2007, 45) state that strategic planning sessions should not be an annual event. However, they should adapt the meeting and planning times to each organization’s needs. Strategic planning should be spaced out between two and five years at least. Some major initiatives can take as long as eighteen to thirty six months to implement. Spacing out planning sessions allows organizational leaders to spend

quality time planning and allows them to concentrate on the major initiatives from the previous planning session. Fourth, Dye and Sibony (2007, 45) suggest that there should be some kind of performance-management system established, because that will play a vital role in making sure that the plan goes beyond the planning stages and is actually executed. Dye and Sibony (2007, 46) said, “putting in place a system to measure and monitor their progress can greatly enhance the impact of the planning process. Finally Dye and Sibony (2007, 47) recommend integrating Human Resources into the performance equation. If the managers are making sure that the strategic plans are implemented and executed, human resources should be evaluating the performance of those managers and how they are compensated which creates a form of checks and balance type system.

The conversations about key strategies should take place between the directors and organizational leaders. Nonetheless, it is also essential to involve the team members or those who will actually be carrying out the work. Organizations may have one of the four barriers or all of the barriers discussed earlier in the research. Whatever the case, carrying out the suggested strategies to overcome those barriers will greatly improve the success of strategic-planning endeavors. A future recommendation is to conduct an analysis of the varying degrees of impact that the aforementioned barriers have on the public sector versus the private sector as well as how much the public sectors opinions about the solutions suggested differ from or agree with the private sectors opinions.

The literature has ideas and concepts that are very in-line with the some of today’s experts in the field. Both the experts and the literature discuss four important factors in overcoming the barriers discussed: vision, purpose, people and innovation. If any of these factors are lacking, strategic planning will be a greater struggle than necessary. When dealing with

uncertainty barriers, there should always be alternatives in place to deal with different scenarios. It is better to have them and not need them than to need them and be without. Innovation and imagination should be the tools used when limited resources become an obstacle. Limited resources should not be a reason that an organization is stagnant. Organizations or people that use innovation are the ones that usually end up leading their respective industries. It takes input from all members and customers served to activate that spirit of innovation in the leaders. However, to make this spirit of innovation come alive, communication is a must and universal or standardized communication is the key. Simple is often the best way to communicate.

People on one accord can change the world. If the organizational leaders listen and remain open to answers and questions alike, they will be enlightened and not limited to their own ideas. In the words of an anonymous respondent, “Getting people to see your vision - Celebrating the past successes is important. You want to honor what has been done. Then painting the real need and picture for why change is needed. It must be compelling to help people understand the driver for change; getting their buy-in in shaping the vision. So it moves from being ‘your’ vision to a shared ‘our’ vision.” In line with the literature and the survey by today’s organizational leaders, having a shared vision should be the foundation of a business’s building block.

The Practical Model Summary

Overcoming Uncertainty Barriers:

- ❖ Define your strategic goal
- ❖ Define different means to achieve that strategic goal
- ❖ Define alternative strategies with the “means” prioritized
- ❖ Facilitate a choice of strategy

Overcoming Lack of or Limited Resource Barriers:

- ❖ Identify the cause of the limited resources
- ❖ Focus your assets on a narrow sector of objectives and then use those to gain more resources
- ❖ Compete in the field or sector that you know rather than jumping the gun and trying to take on new ones
- ❖ Concentrate on small sections while building resources
- ❖ Select certain units within the agency to undergo the strategic planning process as opposed to the whole agency

Overcoming Lack of Standardization and Universal Communication Barriers:

- ❖ Keep communication simple
- ❖ Use metaphors, analogies and examples
- ❖ Use multiple forums to get the message across
- ❖ Use repetition to get the message across
- ❖ Lead by example
- ❖ Explain apparent inconsistencies in the strategy
- ❖ Practice two-way communication as opposed to one way

Overcoming Motivation, Morale and Productivity Barriers:

- ❖ Hold organizational or agency managers and staff accountable to their initiatives
- ❖ Make managers responsible for their outcome
- ❖ Allow flexibility in decision-making
- ❖ Tie in evaluations and compensations of managers with the progress of their initiatives in the strategic-planning process.
- ❖ Help staff create a feeling of vested interest in the processes and programs

- ❖ Make members of the agency/organization feel valuable and like their opinions matter, because they do
- ❖ Put just as much emphasis on helping the managers and staff to feel the intrinsic rewards just as much at the extrinsic rewards

Knowing and following these rules, steps, suggestions, and advisements will enhance the quality of strategic planning and lead to a new and improved organization and productive agency.

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APPENDIX I

Results of Respondents Answers for Lickert Scale Survey Questions 1 - 30

	Questions (n=51)	% Strongly Disagree	% Disagree	% Neutral	% Agree	% Strongly Agree
1	The first step in a strategic plan should be defining the mission of the organization.	0.0%	2.0%	2.0%	23.5%	72.5%
2	An organization should define goals that are geared towards the mission statement.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	27.5%	7.5%
3	An organization should develop alternative means of achieving its strategic goals.	2.0%	2.0%	7.8%	51.0%	37.3%
4	Alternative means of achieving strategic goals should be prioritized in order of their importance.	0.0%	3.9%	7.8%	37.3%	51.0%
5	An organization should select an alternative means that achieves its goals in the most effective way.	3.9%	2.0%	13.7%	37.3%	43.1%
6	Prior to developing the strategic plan, an organization should assess its available resources	2.0%	7.8%	3.9%	37.3%	49.0%
7	Organizational leaders should identify the cause(s) of their limited resources before developing a strategic plan.	2.0%	13.7%	5.9%	43.1%	35.3%
8	When trying to gain more resources for developing a strategic plan, it is best for an organization to focus on only one department and get the maximum benefit out of it to aid with the strategic planning of the next department.	13.7%	39.2%	27.5%	15.7%	3.9%
9	An organization should <u>not</u> exhaust all of its resources trying to achieve several strategic goals at once within an area of concern.	0.0%	7.8%	15.7%	51.0%	25.5%
10	An organization should focus a large portion of its resources on a narrow set of objectives and try to gain more resources as a result.	3.9%	27.5%	31.4%	25.5%	11.8%
11	Organizations should only compete in the areas where they have expertise rather than expanding their resources in fields they are not familiar with.	9.8%	21.6%	31.4%	23.5%	13.7%
12	Organizations should focus their resources primarily on achievable goals to build their limited resources.	0.0%	11.8%	21.6%	45.1%	21.6%
13	Instead of developing a strategic plan for the entire organization at the beginning, organizations should gradually develop strategic plans for selected units.	19.6%	39.2%	11.8%	19.6%	9.8%
14	An organization should try to avoid using complex words when trying to communicate with its members or employees.	2.0%	3.9%	9.8%	47.1%	37.3%

APPENDIX I
Results of Respondents Answers for Lickert Scale Survey Questions 1 – 30: *Continued*

15	Terminology used in an organization should have a standardized meaning across all parts of the organization.	0.0%	0.0%	7.8%	43.1%	49.0%
16	Organizational leaders should ensure that the message they are trying to communicate is simple enough for everyone to comprehend.	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	29.4%	66.7%
17	When giving instructions or trying to communicate a point, organizations should use metaphors, analogies and examples.	0.0%	5.9%	22.5%	45.1%	23.5%
18	Different methods of communication should be used when trying to get a message across. I.e. (e-bulletins, posters, flyers, word of mouth)	2.0%	3.9%	5.9%	27.5%	60.8%
19	To get the messages across, the management should repeat the message more than once.	0.0%	5.9%	7.8%	31.4%	54.9%
20	It is more important to lead by example than just give instructions.	0.0%	3.9%	3.9%	23.5%	68.6%
21	When the members of an organization express that they see inconsistencies in the strategic plan, the planners should thoroughly explain each apparent inconsistency.	3.9%	5.9%	11.8%	47.1%	31.4%
22	When trying to communicate a strategy, it is important to have a two way communication as opposed to an up-down communication.	0.0%	7.8%	7.8%	33.3%	51.0%
23	Management as well as staff should be held accountable for achieving the goals of the strategic plan.	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	26.0%	72.0%
24	Each member of the management team should clearly specify his or her strategic planning responsibilities and visions in written form.	0.0%	0.0%	12.0%	36.0%	52.0%
25	Managers should be held accountable for fulfilling their responsibilities	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	18.0%	82.0%
26	Managers should be given flexibility in their decisions.	0.0%	0.0%	16.0%	44.0%	40.0%
27	Compensation and merits should be directly tied to the performance and strategic planning initiatives of the managers	2.0%	6.0%	20.0%	44.0%	28.0%
28	The management should promote a feeling of vested interest in the processes and programs within the organization.	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	36.0%	62.0%
29	The management should make the members of their organization feel valued and let them know that their opinions matter.	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	16.0%	82.0%
30	Management should create a working environment that promotes a feeling of intrinsic reward in what employees are doing.	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	36.0%	60.0%

APPENDIX II

Results of Respondents Answers for Open Ended Survey Questions 31 – 35:

Q31. What do you feel are the 3 most critical elements of strategic planning?	
1	Environmental Scan Customer Data Operational Data
2	Clearly defined vision Inclusion of all groups - employees and constituents; Feedback to let participants know they were heard
3	1. Communication 2. Collaboration 3. Culture The value of strategic planning is not the plan. It is in the process. The involvement of your organization in shaping its future is a powerful tool for building respect, loyalty, excellence and success.
4	1. What are we trying to accomplish and why 2. measuring success/assessment& managing assumptions 3.Mapping out how to get there
5	1. It should be done on a periodic basis 2. It should be as far reaching as possible 3. It should involve as many staff and customers as possible.
6	Ultimate Goal, Communication, Compromise
7	1. A Clear sense of mission & goals. 2. Effective & efficient management. 3. Proper appropriation of resources.
8	Know your core competencies (internal) Know your purpose and passion (internal) Know how these can be used to serve others (external)
9	The attitude of the management/employees 2, Workplace parameters 3.Financial Status of the Organization
10	1. Organization 2. Comprehension 3. Value
11	flexibility, expert analysis, big picture follow-through
12	1. Clarity of the plan/goals (specific, measurable, attainable) 2. Communication (internal/external) 3. Consistency (across the board)
13	Understanding target audience/consumers 2-understanding your staff and what/who you have to work with 3-back up plans
14	Communication Realistic Goals People Resources
15	Planning, resources and leadership
16	Mission, realistic time frame, resources
17	1. Understanding the mission...2. Knowing the available resources...Clear achievable objectives...
18	Knowing your goals, resources & strengths
19	Writing the vision, plans to achieve the vision, present the vision to others
20	Plan
21	Resources, goals, dissemination of plan
22	Development of Mission Statement Formulation of Goals Strategy for implementing the Goals
23	Teamwork Organization and commitment
24	Different stakeholders at the table, options of income, follow-through
25	Focus on core strengths understand how divisions work together prioritize your resources
26	Clearly identifying any obstacles to success. Clearly identifying and agreeing on goals/desired destination. Identifying and examining other successful organizations to benchmark.

APPENDIX II

Results of Respondents Answers for Open Ended Survey Questions 31 – 35: *Continued*

27	Accountability Manager championing the vision Focusing on key measures
28	people, equipment, customers
29	1) Partition at all levels 2) Keep mission in mind (focus) 3) Stretch, and don't be limited by, "But we've always done it that way."
30	Understanding the basic mission of the organization Incorporating as broad a cross-section of the organization as feasible into the planning process Involving key external stake-holders in the planning process (e.g., customers)
31	Understanding an organization's purpose is the first step. Why does it exist? Next, it must be understood what the organization does to meet that purpose. Then, the plan can be developed with around those things.

Q32. What types of software and non-software tools are used when doing your strategic planning?	
1	Active Strategy Software; excel spreadsheets
2	Good ole fashion flip charts in small groups to capture brainstorming ideas. There is nothing more powerful than seeing your words on the wall. Electronic dissemination of ideas and goals is invaluable. The gathering of information is best done low tech. The dissemination of the results is best accomplished high tech. Make it a people process every chance you get.
3	Any that is needed. Surveys, word processors, spreadsheets, projectors smart boards.
4	Microsoft power point.
5	Microsoft Project Professional
6	PowerPoint, Excel, Graphs, White board
7	MS Project MS Visio
8	PowerPoint, face-to-face small group meetings
9	I am using Excel and PowerPoint. They are simple and effective.
10	Excel, word,
11	Excel Budgeting Software Access ACS Planning Center Online
12	Excel
13	Microsoft excels and word.
14	Juran Institutes model for strategic planning.
15	All available
16	Microsoft word, excel, power point, are 2 main tools used
17	Microsoft office, research through media (internet)
18	Charts, dry erase board
19	Excel and statistics to analyze trends
20	Active Strategy Balanced Scorecard Visio for Process Mapping Access for project management Project Planning Software SharePoint
21	Telephones, website, social media
22	Small-group, non-intimidating brainstorming meetings with employees/staff. Collation of ideas. Buy-off

APPENDIX II

Results of Respondents Answers for Open Ended Survey Questions 31 – 35: *Continued*

23	Videotaping of focus group meetings Seeking comments by email and social media
24	MS word, paper and pens on large post it notes

Q33. What do you feel is the best method to use when trying to get your organization to see your vision?	
1	Face to Face meetings
2	Town meetings to develop and discuss the vision
3	Celebrating the past successes is important. You want to honor what has been done. Then painting the real need and picture for why change is needed. It must be compelling to help people understand the driver for change. Getting their buy in in shaping the vision. So it moves from being "your" vision to a shared "our" vision.
4	Constantly communicating using verbal, media/visual communication in different ways.
5	6 Thinking Hats
6	Visuals, examples
7	Examples, and illustration
8	A variety of media driven tools such as hand-books, flyers, poster etc...
9	Have them help create it.
10	A well thought out presentation
11	2-Way Verbal/Written Communication
12	Big picture alongside how each dept./person contributes
13	Presentation (communication of the issues/goals/solutions) Data analysis seems to be the most effective method in attracting attention.
14	Personal meetings and organizational presentations
15	State it Restate it Make it tangible to the organization ASAP
16	Lay out the vision and make the vision something that is reachable.
17	Speak their language, if it is music, movies,(clips/YouTube), memo, email...get to know your team
18	Making the vision as visual as possible and getting buy in at all levels
19	Different types, use everything method available including social networking
20	Power point presentation is very helpful
21	Lay out the full plan on paper and through meetings and flyers and marketing in house to support the goals of your vision and provide incentive to those that effectively achieve those goals and your vision.
22	Develop the vision together as a core group
23	Simple yet attractive visuals
24	Face to face communication
25	Open and free discussion with staff in developing and implementing your vision.
26	New Employee Orientation Series Performance Measures part of individual evaluation
27	Holding meetings to bring about change.

APPENDIX II

Results of Respondents Answers for Open Ended Survey Questions 31 – 35: *Continued*

28	Employee/staff participation and feedback
29	Internal focus groups with employees to achieve buy-in during the planning process and then town hall Meetings to communicate the vision
30	I don't know that there is just one method - I think as many methods as possible should be used

Q34. Where do you think the best strategic planning ideas come from?	
1	The employees doing the work and the constituents of the organization
2	The people on the front line of your organization and your customers.
3	Perhaps the people who are on the ground, who are responsible for the work/results of the organization
4	They come from everywhere and we should look everywhere for them.
5	Employees that have hands on experiences
6	Collective Brainstorming
7	Organizational leaders, management & staff combined.
8	Inside the organization.
9	From other entrepreneurs who have become successful.
10	Discussion between management and employees.
11	Everyone & anyone
12	Employees.
13	Meetings with those who will be involved
14	The needs that are being addressed should dictate the plan. After that ideas have a way of presenting themselves bottom up and/or top down
15	Customers and employees
16	The team members everyone opinion
17	Customer feedback, the members of the organization, and identifying the Best in Class for benchmarking opportunities.
18	The non-managerial workers
19	Exams/ group brain storming
20	The people that work for and with you. You don't know everything and no man is an Island so use the people that you thought worthy enough to hire.
21	The organization's members.
22	Members who are utilizing your services, employees, finance
23	Our customers and people doing the work
24	Those who do the job every day from others doing the same job
25	Brainstorming sessions
26	51% employees/staff 49% management
27	From rank and file employees
28	From anyone and everyone in an organization who has something to say - ALL should be listened to

APPENDIX II

Results of Respondents Answers for Open Ended Survey Questions 31 – 35: *Continued*

Q35. How do you measure the success of you strategic planning process?	
1	Achievement of Goals
2	Strategic natives are identified and tracked
3	It is always in results. Did you do what you said you were going to do and did it do what you said it would do...make you better.
4	Evaluation/feedback form, actual results of the strategy (i.e. financial strategy should see increase in finances/revenue, etc.)
5	A quality product was produced that included input from as many internal and external stakeholders as possible.
6	If it works
7	If original goal was achieved
8	By the results yielded through each accomplished milestone within an allotted timeline...
9	Comprehensive enterprise scorecard that measures the "system."
10	Your point was made, and your business has become a success.
11	Completion of goals on time.
12	Quantifiable bottom-line but also how close to main goal company has come -have more options after benchmark analysis?
13	Quantifiable data and specific achievements
14	Setting reasonable goals to start and look at failure or success to me those goals as you go
15	By creating goals and action steps that are measurable
16	Measurement depends on the time table of the plan
17	The effectiveness of the team unity.
18	On time achievement of objectives.
19	How well and timely you meet your goals
20	On how well it was presented and received by the staff & company
21	When the plan is working effectively.
22	When everyone can tell you what the plan is and how the goals will be reached.
23	Completion of the strategic plan so that you can develop a baseline or continue data to measure outcome
24	If we accomplished the goals set out in the strategic plan
25	Yearly evaluation by Senior management employee and customer satisfaction Balanced scorecard measures
26	By the strength of the plan and the buy in of the employees and management team.
27	Do employees/staff buy-off on it? Are goals accomplished (or considerable progress made)?
28	Level of participation in the process The number of concrete goals in the plan that are accomplished within the time horizon of the plan
29	That is a great question. I'm not sure. One suggestion would be to review employees after the plan is out to see how it is being absorbed throughout the agency.

APPENDIX III



Institutional Review Board Application

Certificate of Approval

Applicant: Alaric Robertson

Application Number : 2011X7168

Project Title: An Assessment of 4 Key Strategic Planning Barriers and How to Mitigate or Reduce Them and Their Effects

Date of Approval: 08/25/11 12:04:34

Expiration Date: None(Application Approved - Exempt)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Blanks".

Assistant Vice President for Research
and Federal Relations

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jon Lane".

Chair, Institutional Review Board