Strategic Planning: How to Create and Implement a Plan to Achieve Your Vision for Your Laboratory

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Creating and Implementing your Strategic Plan

Objectives

- Explain the components of a laboratory strategic plan
- Explain how to develop a strategic plan
- Apply SWOT analysis for strategic planning
- Compose the right strategic goals and objectives
- Explain why the process of developing a strategic plan is critical to its successful implementation
Objectives cont.

- Illustrate the importance of operational plans and explain their relationship to the success of the strategic plan goals, objectives and its continual updating
- Employ monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of plan objectives in the laboratory setting
- Explain the importance of M&E in all areas of the laboratory
- Identify ways to strengthen and improve existing methods of M&E
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Content Outline

1. What is a lab strategic plan
   + Vision and mission statements
   + SMARTER goals and objectives
   + SWOT analysis
2. Implementing a lab strategic plan
   + Operational plan
   + Change management
3. Monitoring and evaluating a lab strategic plan
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1. The Strategic Plan
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Why?

- Laboratories are organizations, too
  - Planning is necessary for:
    - Resource allocation
    - Operational effectiveness
    - Providing appropriate laboratory services to meet current and future needs
    - Adapting to constantly changing technological, political, social environments
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Strategic Planning Determines

1. Organization’s direction over time (3-5 years)
2. The plan to get there
3. Ongoing assessment (PDCA)
4. Criteria for success

“If you can’t measure it, you can’t improve it.”
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Needs Assessment
Where are we?

Define roles, priorities and interventions
What should we do?

Consensus
Do we think this is what we should do?

Strategic Plan
What will we be doing in five years?

Annual Operational Plans
What will we do every year?
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Tasks of Strategic Management

1. Form strategic vision
2. Set strategic objectives
3. Design strategy
4. Implement and execute
5. Evaluate performance and initiate corrective actions
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Key Components of Laboratory Strategic Plan

1. Vision and Mission
2. Organizational framework
3. Policy, legal and regulatory framework
4. Human resources
5. Laboratory services (diagnostic)
6. Laboratory support services
7. Laboratory networks
8. Laboratory quality systems
9. Monitoring and evaluation of laboratory services
Start with Vision and Mission Statements

**Vision** –
Defines the future aspirations of the organization

**Mission** –
Broad but clear statement of:
1. What the organization does
2. Who it serves
3. How it does its work
How Do We Develop a Vision?

- How do our stakeholders see us?
- How do we want to be seen in 5 years?
- Envision how we would change the perception of the laboratory system
Mission Statement: Reason for Existing

- Encompass all programs and services
- Should be brief
- Long-lasting
- Guide to what is done and how it is done
- How is your organization different from all others?
- How is your lab system different?
Mission Answers

1. **What** functions does the organization perform?
2. For **Whom** are the functions performed?
3. **How** are the functions fulfilled?
4. **Why** does the organization exist?
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Example of Vision and Mission Statements

Commercial Laboratory

Vision:
Dedicated people improving the health of patients through unsurpassed diagnostic insights and innovation.

Mission
We will be the undisputed world leader in diagnostic testing, information and services.
Example of Vision and Mission Statements

CDC Vision for the 21st Century
“Health Protection…Health Equity”

CDC Mission
Collaborating to create the expertise, information, and tools that people and communities need to protect their health – through health promotion, prevention of disease, injury and disability, and preparedness for new health threats.
Hospital Dept of Lab Medicine Mission Statement:

“The department is concerned with supporting patient care activities through the provision of accurate and timely clinical laboratory information on blood, body fluids and other specimens, as well as providing and consultation to the staff. Department sections include Phlebotomy, Immunology, Andrology, Hematology, Chemistry, Special Chemistry, Microbiology and the Blood Bank. Support services are provided by Laboratory, Information Systems, Specimen Processing and Client Services.”
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One Suggestion

Hospital Dept of Lab Medicine Suggested Mission Statement:

The department supports patient care through the provision of accurate and timely clinical laboratory information and consultation to the staff.
Strategic Goals and Objectives

**Goal:** Written statement describing broad accomplishments necessary to fulfill mission

**Objective:** Written statement describing measurable targets of achievement to reach goal

*Be realistic in defining goals/objectives*
SMARTER Goals/Objectives

The objectives must be: SMART OR SMARTER

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Realistic
Time
Extending capabilities (challenging)
Rewarding the challenge
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SWOT Analysis - Definition

A tool used to organize and analyze the factors that will impact organizational effectiveness

- **Strengths**
- **Weaknesses**
- **Opportunities**
- **Threats**
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SWOT Success

1. Requires objectivity – involve all stakeholders
2. Involve all levels of leadership and operations
3. Involve customers
4. Open atmosphere where no fear of expressing viewpoint
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SWOT Matrix

- Situational analysis/environmental scan of your internal and external environment – assessment of the laboratory and its environment

- Organize significant issues in SWOT matrix
  - Internal successes (strengths)
  - Internal gaps (weaknesses)
  - External resources (opportunities)
  - External problems and gaps (threats)
## SWOT Analysis Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities</strong></td>
<td>S-O Strategies</td>
<td>W-O Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Threats</strong></td>
<td>S-T Strategies</td>
<td>W-T Strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Using the SWOT Matrix

- Keep focus on what is important
- Develop strategies (strategic initiatives)
  - Based on strength that relates to opportunity
  - In response to weakness that relates to threat
- Think strategically
Vision without action is merely a dream; 
Action without vision just passes the time: 
Vision with action can change the world. 

Joel Barker
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Activity

**Individual Exercise:**
Complete a SWOT analysis for your laboratory, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The analysis should be completed on the template provided and you should be prepared to present your analysis to the large group.
2. Implementing the Plan
Implementation of the Plan

- Responsibility and accountability
  - Performance planning and evaluation
    - Monitoring and ensuring ongoing success

- Implementation principles
  - Commitment
  - Continual process
    - Plan should be governed by process of continuous improvement
Find Your Champion

Identify personnel to lead implementation – champions

Champions:
- Understand the “culture” of your organization and people who make things happen
- Possess
  - Leadership
  - Motivation
  - Energy
Strategic to Operational

The strategic goal is the finish line (specific and measurable)

The operational plan is the map to get you across the finish line

*Operational plan defines how to implement strategic plan*
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Operation Plan = Implementation

- Core Leadership Team must coordinate entire process
- Operational plan defines activities to progress towards Strategic Plan objectives
- Responsibility assigned and aligned with budget
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Annual Operational Plans

- Breaks down targets into manageable portions
- Spreads cost over time
- Assigns task and sets timelines
- Addresses changing priorities
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Alignment in the System

Alignment of mission and plan

Top Leaders

Program Directors

Laboratory Professionals

Mission and Vision

Resources

Policy and Programs

Strategic Initiatives

Planning

Management

Implementation

Control

Quality Practices

2011 ASCP Annual Meeting
Managing the Unexpected

- Loss of funding
- Loss of key personnel
- Situational change: plan is no longer pertinent
- ‘Political’ change
- Other (e.g. change of ownership of hospital)
Leading Through Change

Strong leadership needed to successfully navigate change in lab environment
Leader versus Manager

- A manager controls a set of processes that help to keep a complex system of people and technology functioning smoothly…

*Keeps trains running on schedule!*

- A leader will promote change, opportunity, growth and define the future…

*Builds new train tracks!*
# Creating and Implementing your Strategic Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manager</th>
<th>Leader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>Innovator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How and when</td>
<td>What and why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems focus</td>
<td>People focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain</td>
<td>Develop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Long term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottom line</td>
<td>Horizon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Leadership Principles for Success

1. Model the way
2. Inspire shared vision
3. Challenge the process
4. Enables others to act
5. Encourage and appreciate
3. Monitoring and Evaluation of the Plan
Definitions

**Monitoring**: routine tracking of service and program performance using information collected on an ongoing basis

**Evaluation**: systematic collection of information to explore achievements and failures thus allowing improvements
Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Ensures direction outlined in strategic plan
2. Assign responsibility for monitoring

Are goals and objectives being achieved?
If not, evaluate reasons. . . and
- deviate from plan and/or
- change plan

Document deviations/changes for future
Objectives of M&E Plan

1. Guide processes for tracking performance
   - Describe core indicators
   - Describe processes
   - Provide standards for data quality assessments, supervision
   - Basis for M&E resource needs
Objectives of M&E Plan cont.

2. Provide timely, quality information for evidence based decision-making
3. Ensure continuous improvement
4. Illustrate influencing factors
M&E Plan – How?

- Establish and implement processes for monitoring implementation of activities
  - Identify responsible persons
  - Establish regular reporting mechanisms
  - Schedule regular review meetings to assess progress and adjust objectives
How to Select M&E Indicators

1. Focus on strategic objective and challenges
2. Set realistic targets to establish clear expectations
3. Address challenges that can be corrected or improved
4. Select specific indicators
M&E Implementation Requires

Engagement of and communication with stakeholders through continual monitoring, feedback, regular reporting, and adjustments.
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Sample M&E Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M&amp;E Activity Plan</th>
<th>Person responsible</th>
<th>Costing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Component 1: QMS system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Component 2: Human Capacity Development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Year 1
1.1 57,638
1.2 132,372
1.3 3,749
2.1 344,160
2.2 12,688
2.3 38,400

Year 2
1.1 57,638
1.2 45,372
1.3 3,749
2.1 344,160
2.2 12,688
2.3 38,400

Total
1.1 115,276
1.2 177,744
1.3 7,498
2.1 688,320
2.2 25,376
2.3 76,800
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Are We There Yet?

- Gauge progress (Are you accomplishing what you set out to do?)
- Realign activities to meet new priorities
- Ensure regular reporting (Provides information on each partner’s progress)
- Provide feedback and promote communication
Final Thoughts

1. Strategic planning is performed every 3-5 years
2. Operational planning is performed each year
3. Monitoring and evaluation is on-going

A strategic plan without an operational plan will only collect dust on the shelf!
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Activity

Small Group Activity: Developing an implementation plan

Goals
Objectives
Activities
Timelines
Financing
Activity

Develop a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the strategic objective you outlined in the previous exercise.
Activity 1: SWOT Analysis Framework

Use the template to document a SWOT analysis for each of the major component areas listed below.
I. Institutional and Management Framework
II. Laboratory Services
III. Human Resources (use for this activity)
IV. Laboratory Support Services
V. Laboratory Quality Systems
VI. Monitoring and Evaluation of Laboratory Services
VII. Policy, Legal and Regulatory Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List laboratory’s strengths here</td>
<td>List organizational weaknesses here</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List organizational opportunities here</td>
<td>List threats to the organization here</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 2: Implementation Plan

Task: Develop two additional objectives to achieve the stated goal and two strategic initiatives to achieve the objectives. Place the objectives and initiatives on a timeline, assign a person to do the work, and indicate how it will be financed if required.

Goal: Strengthen the recruitment, training and retention of a competent workforce to meet the needs of the laboratory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective Planned Intervention</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Financing</th>
<th>Who does the work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1: Increase number of applicants for technical level job openings by 50%.</td>
<td></td>
<td>From salary savings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1a: Attend at least two job fairs/yr.</td>
<td>X X X</td>
<td>?? Lab admin.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1b: Increase notification of job openings.</td>
<td>X X X</td>
<td>?? HR staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objective 2:

Activity 2:

Activity 2:

Objective 3:

Activity 3a:

Activity 3b:

Activity 3: Monitoring and Evaluation Activity Plan

Define what success/outcome is to be achieved, who is responsible, how and when to measure and evaluate the outcomes for each objective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Define success/outcome</th>
<th>Responsible Person</th>
<th>Evaluation Timeline</th>
<th>How to evaluate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y1 Y2 Y3 Y4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Participated in at least two job fairs in yrs 2, 3, &amp; 4.</td>
<td>Lab administrator</td>
<td>X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>Recruitment materials prepared.</td>
<td>HR</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>Arranged for attendance at job fairs.</td>
<td>HR &amp; lab staff</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2b</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>3a</td>
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<tr>
<td>3b</td>
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