



Creative Business Consulting Business Tips



Strategic thinking...

The last issue of CBC Business Tips provided you with information on the overall strategic planning process. This issue focuses on the question: **How will your company continue to be prosperous and successful in the future?** Strategic thinking builds the foundation of your company's strategic plan and is essential for ensuring that your business will thrive into the future. The goals of strategic thinking are to develop your company's **Core Values, Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and Strategic Priorities**. Without these essential planning tools, your company may lack clear direction and begin to flounder. I strongly emphasize to clients how important strategic thinking is for ensuring the continued success of their business.

THE CORE VALUES

of your organization are a direct reflection of the philosophical convictions held by your management team. What do you value in your work? Integrity? Friendly customer service? Increased sales? Each core value should reflect a key factor that will have a major impact on the future success of your business. Once you have a list of 8-10 core values, I suggest that you write a brief sentence that clearly establishes your company's position on that

value. Example: Communication: listening to understand and collaborate with our clients.

A MISSION STATEMENT

provides clear communication regarding the nature and purpose of your company. It is a great way of gaining commitment from everyone within your organization and of securing future business with your key stakeholders. A clear and concise mission statement can also provide firm guidance for all important management decisions. I suggest that your mission statement be easy for anyone to read. Here are some questions for you to consider in writing a mission statement.

- What is the nature of your business?
- Who are the key stakeholders that you do business with?
- What values are essential to your success?

Example: Mission Statement:

City of Walnut Creek, California:
The City of Walnut Creek, working in partnership with the community, is committed to enhancing our quality of life by promoting:

- A positive environment where people can live, work, and play
- A vibrant local economy to enhance and sustain long-term fiscal stability
- A progressive workplace where dedicated employees can make a difference.

A VISION STATEMENT

communicates your dreams for the future of your company. What do you want your company to be known for? What successes do you want to achieve? I suggest that your vision statement be inspiring and provide a challenge to future achievement. To achieve this, I use a variety of techniques designed to enhance intuitive or creative thinking. It is best to have a vision statement that is brief, catchy and easy to remember. I suggest using ten words or less. A well-crafted vision statement can help to motivate your employees and get support from your key stakeholders.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

are the major goals that you need to set in order to fulfill your vision and mission statements. I encourage planners to consider what primary factors will affect the continued success of their business (e.g., client needs, products or services offered, market growth, etc.). Once your strategic priorities have been determined, you are ready to move into the second phase of your strategic plan, that of Long-Range Planning. Be sure to read the next issue of CBC Business Tips for useful information on Long-Range and Tactical Strategic Planning.

If you are interested in additional information or would like to schedule a Strategic Planning seminar, please contact:

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