



# Strategic Planning

**Strategic Planning** is one of the most relevant exercises an organization can take. Done properly, strategic planning guides all other decisions your organization makes. All too often though, strategic planning ends up being a brief exercise that is rapidly forgotten in the face of day to day issues.

As a result, many organizations try to shorten the amount of time they spend on strategic planning, leading to even less focus on the critical backbone of an organization's direction. In the end, organizations that shortchange strategic planning spend more time dealing with unexpected "fires". More importantly, without planning your organization becomes shaped by events around you, rather than controlling your own destiny.



At True North, we believe that strategic planning takes time because the issues being dealt with are the most fundamental to the organization. The more time the organization spends on their strategy, the more meaningful the work becomes and the bigger their impact.

True North guides our clients through the fundamental steps of Strategic Planning:

- **Goal Setting.** Many organizations have values, missions, visions and goals. Not all of them have a clear sense of how goals can be established to support the mission and vision, or how to make the right trade-offs when not all goals can be met.
- **Strategy Development.** Evaluate your position vis-à-vis your clients, your competitors, your suppliers, partners, staff and your environment, and understand how that position will help you accomplish your goals.
- **Strategic Planning.** Map out the specific steps needed to implement your chosen strategy. This plan may or may not include detailed quantitative goals and metrics.
- **Implementation.** Your strategy can only be successful if the implementation is done effectively. Your organization must actively undertake the challenges set up by this process.
- **Continuous Assessment and Adjustment.** Too often the environment changes but the strategic plan doesn't. Understand how and when to adjust your strategy and plan to avoid possible issues and to take advantage of potential opportunities.

*True North will help you build a strategic plan that acknowledges the rapid pace of change in your world, not a plan that sits on a shelf for 90% of the year.*

*Strategic planning takes time because it deals with an organization's most fundamental issues; strategic planning shouldn't be a once a year event, but part of every day.*

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