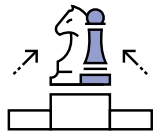


STRATEGIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES

A GUIDE FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS



The basic elements of our professional **strategy, vision, mission, goals, and values**, are essential for our planning processes and the creation of a strategic plan.

These are the most important building blocks for any organization, but **they are not enough on their own to create a strategic plan**, as they do not necessarily include:

- ▶ how the problem and the environment is changing, nor
- ▶ the changing capacity and internal state of our organization.

That is why, in a strategic plan, we supplement these elements by setting **strategic goals** and even formulating **strategic priorities**.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

All strategic planning processes, including the creation of a new strategic cycle and related goals starts with:

- ▶ an analysis of the problem
- ▶ an analysis of the external environment
- ▶ an assessment of the internal state of the organization.

As we analyze the problem and our environment, **larger areas, issues, and long-term challenges** will emerge. It is likely that several goals will be linked to one larger area.

→ For this reason, it may be important to define larger areas, or **priorities**, because these can help maintain focus when formulating goals.

However, as we have said elsewhere, there is no ready-made recipe for writing a strategic plan: **in some cases, there is room** for setting priorities, in other cases this will just be a helpful way of thinking for our team.

GOALS VS. STRATEGIC GOALS

Although we find **(organizational) goals** among the core elements of our strategy, these are more general formulations and are not time-bound. Like our mission, goals generally do not change from one year to the next, and sometimes not even in a 5–10 year period.

Unlike organizational goals, strategic goals are more specific and have a limited time frame: it can be 3, 4, 5 or even 7 years. Due to our increasingly changing environments, it is worth planning for a shorter interval. This limited period is called the **strategic cycle**.

Our strategic plan will therefore always cover one strategic cycle, meaning it will focus on a 3–7 year time frame. Our strategic goals will be focused on that given cycle.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Just as our organizational goals start from the problem, need, or desire we want to address, strategic goals also respond to these, with the only difference being that **they take into account in more detail:**

- ▶ the current state of the problem and the broad environment of the given moment or period;
- ▶ the changes in the organization's environment, including changes in our target audiences.

To illustrate simply:

Strategic goal = current state of the problem and environment + our response

A GOOD STRATEGIC GOAL IS:



- Specific and measurable.
- Can be broken down into sub-goals or additional “tools” that the organization can use to achieve the overall goal.
- Fits the mission and organizational goals.
- Responds to a problem, need, or desire.
- Takes into account the organization's environment, trends, the organization's state, including threats and opportunities.

OPERATIONAL (OR CAPACITY BUILDING) STRATEGIC GOALS



Many organizations face the question of whether to include capacity building or “operational” goals in their strategic goals. This includes, for example, resource development, HR, or communication goals, planned development in a specific operational area, or the creation of new internal systems.

These are extremely important, but **it is worth treating operational goals in different areas separately**. That is:

- ▶ In the professional strategy, record the “outward” goals formulated along the mission
- ▶ and in the operational strategies, record the “internal” operational or capacity building goals.

We encourage every organization to have its **own strategy for each operational area or function**, which records the “inward” goals related to the given area, i.e. the goals directed towards the organization:

- HR and team
- Finance
- Resource development
- Communications
- Measurement and evaluation

These operational strategies provide the opportunity to analyze the given area, draw conclusions, see trends, and look into the future based on that.

EXAMPLE

If we want to develop our volunteer base professionally so that our volunteers are more confident and committed, it will be worth recording this in a separate volunteer strategy. However, just as there is no one-size-fits-all recipe for creating a strategic plan, we can of course record our capacity building goals here as well, but it will be important to make some kind of separation or mark out the outward and inward goals separately.

EXAMPLE OF STRATEGIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Below, we will model the relationship between a strategic priority and its associated strategic goals using the example of the Mozaik Hub.

➔ *(If we were moving to an even more specific level, we are no longer in the framework of a strategic plan but instead of an annual action or project plan. This way we can check and ensure that these are in line with our strategic goals and priorities.)*

Due to its general formulation, **a strategic priority can remain with us even through several strategic cycles**, especially if the environmental challenge or opportunity that brought it to life is also present. In such cases, the strategic priority can remain unchanged and **we only need to assign different strategic objectives to it**.

EXAMPLE (FROM THE CURRENT STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE MOZAIK JEWISH COMMUNITY HUB)

Strategic priorities: Resources and resource development knowledge

Strategic goal(s):

- Further strengthen the knowledge and skills related to resource development among Hub member organizations
- Provide grant support in a predictable and user-friendly manner
- Inspire the community institutions to further cooperate and share their resources.

Strategic priorities: Innovation

Strategic goal(s):

- Provide professional and financial support for new community initiatives
- Provide a professional home for Jewish community activists and social entrepreneurs active in the community
- Help strengthen the culture of innovation among existing organizations by creating educational materials and learning opportunities