

# 7 Strategic Planning Mistakes

*“...Don’t lose sight of good planning and insight. Hang on to them, for they fill you with life and bring you honor and respect. They keep you safe on your way and keep your feet from stumbling.”*

Proverbs 3:21-23 (NLT)

# The Top 7 Strategic Planning Mistakes

## 1. Lack of an integrated approach

*Consider the whole organization: the interrelationships between departments, motivations, reward systems and how it will be perceived by employees and customers. Most strategic shifts hit a wall not because it wasn't the right move, but because the organization and the people did not follow.*

*One's leadership is tested. If the leaders tend to be task oriented, people averse and directive, you are heading for rough waters. You will either invest additional time upfront effectively managing the change or at the end in conflict to make it happen. Exceptional vs. Mediocre results.*

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## 2. Looking at only a part of the organization or ministry and not the whole.

*Provide equal consideration to “how” the organization functions and behaves and adjust the business and processes accordingly. Align performance and compensation to address the “who” and “why” people work. People, processes and technology are the engine that will move the strategy forward. Careful planning will increase the probability of success. Peter Senge says that learning organizations of the future will make key decisions based on shared understanding of inter-relationships and patterns of change.*

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## 3. Not thinking BIG enough

*Strategic plans are talked about as being future oriented, but when pressed, reveal more about today's problems than tomorrow's opportunities.*

*Good thinking should result in ideas that will differentiate you from the competition with a sustainable advantage. The real winners will reinvent their industry with radical and innovative ideas.*

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## 4. Limiting future thinking based on current reality

*Work from “what could be,” not “what is.” Don’t let the limitations of current reality limit your future. Your people and operational plans are the tools to drive the changes required to meet your future.*

*Creative Tension is the gap between current reality and vision. It can be a source of energy or frustration. Over time, either you pull the vision closer to reality or you pull reality toward the vision. Transformational leadership and effective change efforts will bring you closer to your vision.*

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## 5. Not including key people

*People best support that which they help create. World view has become so broad that it is impossible for one person or group of executives to see every perspective or advantage. Involve key employees representing all levels, suppliers, vendors or other key influencers. They should offer a meaningful contribution that will shape the outcome not just be a token in the process. You will not only include differing opinions but creating a sense of emotional intellectual ownership. They will own the outcome and get their peers on board. The IQ of the team is generally greater than the IQ of the individual. Vision becomes a living force only when people truly believe they can shape their future.*



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## 6. Ignoring the data

*If you are not working with reliable current financial, market and employee data, then get it. An objective perspective will eliminate much of the guesswork. Resist the temptation to discount or change the data just because it leads you to a different conclusion or you don't like what it is telling you. Facts when correctly used can be our friends.*

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## 7. Not measuring key activities aligned with the vision

*How do you know you were effective? How do you know you are making progress? Some things are more difficult to measure but there should be some indicators. What alerted you that a change was necessary? Performance management, compensation, financial metrics and the balanced scorecard should all reveal tactical progress against the strategic plan. You get what you measure.*



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