

Suggested Template 1

Purpose: A strategic plan is a simple document that summarizes why an institution exists, what it is trying to accomplish, and how it will go about doing so. Its "audience" is anyone who wants to know the institution's most important ideas, issues, and priorities: board members, faculty, staff, students, alumni, volunteers, clients, funders, peers at other institutions, the press, and the public. It is a document that should offer edification and guidance – so, the more concise and ordered the document, the greater the likelihood that it will be useful, that it will be used, and that it will be helpful in guiding the operations of the institution.

Below is an example of a common format for a strategic plan, as well as brief descriptions of each component listed, which will help organize team thoughts and materials. The point of this document is to allow the best possible explanation of the University's plan for the future and the format should serve the message.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The final document should include a table of contents. These are the sections commonly included in a strategic plan:

I. Introduction by the President

A cover letter from the president of the institution introduces the plan to readers. The letter gives a "stamp of approval" to the plan and demonstrates that the institution has achieved a critical level of internal agreement. (This introduction is often combined with the Executive Summary below.)

II. Executive Summary

In one to two pages, this section should summarize the strategic plan: it should reference the mission and vision; highlight the long-range goals (what the institution is seeking to accomplish); and note the Strategic Plan Chronology (process for developing the plan); and thank participants involved in the process. From this summary, readers should understand what is most important about the institution.

III. Institutional History, Governance and Organizational Structure

In one or two pages, the reader should learn the story of the institution (key events, triumphs, and changes over time) so that reader can understand its historical context (just as the planning committee needed to at the beginning of the planning process).

IV. Mission and Vision Statements

These statements can stand alone without any introductory text, because essentially they introduce and define themselves.

V. Core Values

Underlying philosophy and principles on which the institutional community wants decisions to be made and actions to be taken. These statements express the beliefs which capture the tenets, convictions and ideology of the institution and may include the University's *Points of Integrity*.