

# Strategic Plan Writing Tips

Performance and Accountability Consultants' Meeting

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# The Best Strategic Plans...

- ...are not that long** – If your last plan was more than 50 pages in length, see if you can cut it in half.
- ...come from a process that started with a review of the results from the last strategic plan.**
  - Which measures show improvement, no change, and decline?
    - What percent of the time were you able to meet or exceed your targets?
  - How effective were your change strategies?
- ...are strategic** – In the first few pages can a reader discover:
  - The purpose of the agency (Mission)?
  - What the agency actually does to accomplish that mission?
  - How the agency monitors its progress (Performance Measures)?
  - What are the most important things the agency wants to accomplish during the period covered by this plan (Goals)?
  - What is the agency going to do differently to accomplish its goals (Strategies)?

# The Best Strategic Plans...(cont.)

## ...have a limited number of measures

- What are the 10-15 measures that matter so much they are regularly reviewed by senior managers?
  - Speaking of those measures...Are they really measures? Too many strategic plan writers confuse tasks, strategies, objectives, and performance measures.
  - Start your measures with, “The number of...”, or “The percent of...”, or “The amount of...”

## ...are related to the agency budget

- How well does the budget activity inventory compare to what the strategic plan says the agency does?
- Are upcoming budget requests related to accomplishing the objectives and strategies laid out in the strategic plan? How?

## ...have a clear accountability trail

- **Who** will do **what** by **when**?
- **How** will you know if it worked?

# Other Strategic Plan Writing Tips

- Use charts and diagrams to save words
- Minimize clip art and superfluous pictures
- Use tactical business plans to capture what is important at the division-level, not the strategic plan
- Before you write a single performance measure, write clear objective statements
  - What do you want to “Increase”, “Decrease”, or “Maintain”
- Use your Baldrige Assessment, Employee Survey, OFM Assessment, and GMAP presentations to help craft future objectives and strategies.
- Include your agency budget staff
- Performance targets should take into account current capabilities and reflect strategic intent, and available resources
  - “If wishes were horses, beggars would ride.” Marshall Willett
  - “...by what method?” Dr. W. Edwards Deming
- Use your OFM resources for help and advice – Budget Analyst, Brian & Jeffrey

# Strategic Planning Words That Usually Mean Nobody is Going to Do Anything Different

## Bogus Verbs - What is this person, entity, or organization going to do?

Address	Assess	Assist	Encourage	Enhance
Ensure	Emphasize	Envision	Explore	Facilitate
Foster	Help	Identify	Indicate	Initiate
Obtain	Promote	Pursue	Reflect	Support

## Quasi-Bogus Verbs – Only commit someone to a mental action; usually un-measurable

Achieve	Consider	Develop	Discuss	Monitor
Plan	Regulate	Review		

## Bogus Nouns – Almost any bogus verb can be turned into a bogus noun.

Approach	Concerns	Discussion	Deliverables	Effectiveness
Effort	Emphasis	Framework	Initiative	Initiation
Issues	Role	Solution	Undertaking	Utilization

## Bogus Adjectives – Open to a number of meanings; generally subjective

Appropriate	Balanced	Comprehensive	Effective	Proper
Reasonable	Strategic			