



# **OFFICE OF DATA PROCESSING**

## **STRATEGIC PLAN FY 1984 – FY 1993**

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## ROLE OF PLANNING IN ODP

1. Strategic planning, in the Office of Data Processing, is the process by which senior management articulates the overall direction for the office for the next ten year period. The plan consists of a small number of strategic goals (this year just two) and an expanded list of areas for strategic emphasis (for want of a better term referred to as objectives). These objectives are divided into several theme categories for convenience. The current plan focuses on the categories of Personnel, Management, Organization, and Computer Services. As will be discussed later, the order of these categories is not accidental. **Personnel** is the key resource in ODP.

2. This plan does not come from a vacuum, nor does it propose to create a perception *de novo*. It builds upon the traditions, actions, and policies of an existing, vibrant organization.

3. The strategic goals and the supporting objectives serve as the framework for the far more detailed and specific planning that must follow. The continuing challenge for ODP line managers is to develop new initiatives and programs that support the priorities of this strategic plan. This follow-on implementation planning will, of course, be central to the success of the strategic plan. The planning process represents a creative opportunity for ODP line managers and technical personnel. The originality and quality of the implementation plans, and the energy and skill devoted to their realization, will determine the focus of ODP's role in the organizational changes caused by the long-predicted information revolution. The planning process is, therefore, fundamental to the success of the office and, more importantly, can significantly improve the effectiveness of the Agency in satisfying its vital mission.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

1. A strategic plan is one means of defining the dynamic relationship between an organization and the environment in which it exists. Because of the strategic nature of this plan, a detailed projection of the environment is not required. Identification of key trends is essential. Two trends are readily apparent:

- GROWTH OF INFORMATION NEEDS

and,

- CONSTANCY OF CHANGE

2. Data processing and information handling requirements continue to expand in magnitude, and vary in their nature. The technology available to satisfy these requirements continues to change and improve. The strategic plan sets directions in this unstable environment. As a corollary, the strategic plan likewise must be flexible and be designed to accommodate change. A rigid plan in a dynamic world is doomed to failure.

3. Further complicating our planning task, is our third environmental factor:

- AMBIGUITY OF GOALS

4. Senior Agency management is beset by an increasingly complex world in continual flux. It is not surprising that guidance for service organizations, such as the Office of Data Processing, is, at best, implicit rather than explicit. We are left with the responsibility and the opportunity to determine our own direction.

5. Finally, the environmental factor that gives us the most hope in the next ten years is the:

- CREATIVITY OF OUR PEOPLE

6. This creativity has served us well since the inception of the office. The challenge is for senior management to harness this creativity and channel it towards satisfying the goals of the Agency. This is, of course, the primary purpose of the strategic planning process.

## OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

1. We have identified two strategic goals for the Office of Data Processing. These recognize the historic role the office has played as a provider of centralized automatic data processing (ADP) services to Agency customers. They also recognize the increasingly more important role ADP services will play in the world of organizations and intelligence organizations, in particular. Our primary goal is, therefore:

- TO PROVIDE ALL AGENCY EMPLOYEES ACCESS TO SECURE AND COST-EFFECTIVE ADP AND OFFICE AUTOMATION SERVICES. THESE SERVICES SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO ENHANCE EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY AND IMPROVE EMPLOYEE EFFECTIVENESS IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR ASSIGNED TASKS.

2. In addition to our role as a provider of services, it is essential we also become an innovator of new information services. We have, therefore, selected a complementary strategic goal that both supports and extends the primary goal described above.

3. It is an ODP strategic goal:

- TO SERVE AS A CATALYST AND LEADER IN THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW INFORMATION SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY INTO THE AGENCY ENVIRONMENT.

4. Implicit in both these strategic goals is a pluralistic view of Agency information systems. ODP recognizes that there are many valid management and technical reasons why one office, such as ODP, cannot and should not become the exclusive provider or innovator in the information systems arena.

5. Also implicit is the recognition that though the roles of provider and innovator can be in conflict, they are also inextricably linked. The provider only ignores innovation at the risk of obsolescence. Increased emphasis must be placed on renewing our technological base, if we are to remain relevant in the dynamic Agency environment.

## OUR SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES

1. Four areas have been selected by ODP senior management as requiring special emphasis, if the office is to meet its two overall strategic goals. The four areas are Personnel, Management, Organization, and Computer Services. As mentioned earlier, Personnel is viewed as the ODP resource that is "on the critical path." The complexity of customer requirements and the information processing environment continues to grow. Without personnel who are highly dedicated and technically sophisticated, our ability to manage this complexity is in doubt. It goes without saying, that in addition to requirements for increasingly skilled and dedicated technical specialists, managers with unusual drive and vision will be essential to our success. Fostering an environment for our employees that is creative, challenging, and rewarding is our major personnel focus. Therefore, under the Personnel category, we believe four interrelated objectives must be emphasized:

### PERSONNEL

- STRENGTHEN PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
  - RECOGNITION THAT PEOPLE ARE THE KEY RESOURCE
- RECRUIT AND RETAIN A COMPETENT AND MOTIVATED WORKFORCE
- EMPHASIZE PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT
  - MANAGEMENT
  - TECHNICAL
- ESTABLISH A UNIVERSAL "MZ" CAREER SERVICE

2. The first two items are self-explanatory. Personnel development, a conscious and planned effort to enhance the skills and experience of our workforce, is the only viable approach that will assure that our people are equipped to meet the challenges they will inevitably face. In addition, we now recognize the requirement for a "two-track" development system. Not all technical personnel desire or have the skills to become managers. Senior technical positions must be established with the appropriate technical challenges and reward structure. Only a dual approach, such as this, will permit us to make optimal use of our talent. Finally, the expansion of the "MZ" (i.e., ADP) career service to encompass individuals in offices other than ODP, is an attempt to expand the career path possibilities of all ODP and Agency ADP

specialists. This is believed an important management initiative that will expand Agency personnel development options and have a secondary effect of ensuring a degree of coordination and standardization in systems development and operations Agency-wide.

3. The second category of supporting objectives is Management. Three areas have been identified as requiring renewed strategic emphasis:

#### MANAGEMENT

- ENSURE AN OPEN AND RIGOROUS MANAGEMENT PROCESS
- ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY AT ALL ORGANIZATIONAL LEVELS
- FORMALLY ESTABLISH PRIORITIES FOR NEW AND EXISTING REQUIREMENTS

4. The next ten years will present new management challenges. Customer requirements will grow in numbers and desired utility, and the resource implications of these requirements will continue to expand. The level of management complexity will increase concomitantly. Grappling with these problems will require management approaches that may differ from those practiced in the past.

5. Coordination must be improved, among office components and with our customers and our co-providers of ADP services. In order to make decisions which will have Agency-wide influence, we must have the confidence of the Agency. Our decisionmaking must be analytical and open to scrutiny. This will ensure that our decisions are in the interests of the Agency and do not emphasize parochial concerns.

6. We also recognize that our managers must continue to be held fully accountable for their performance and decisions. Full acceptance of accountability is necessary for organizational success and personnel development.

7. Finally, our resources will continue to be less than we believe needed. The prudent allocation of our limited resources will become even more essential. We accept the fact that we cannot "do it all." The challenge we face is choosing what to do; selecting what systems to build, and what services to provide.

8. Organization is the third category of strategic objectives. The two key objectives are summarized below:

### **ORGANIZATION**

- **ENSURE OFFICE IS OPEN TO ITS ENVIRONMENT**
  - TECHNOLOGICAL
  - POLITICAL
- **DECENTRALIZE USER SUPPORT**

9. The first objective emphasizes our commitment to openness. We must avoid the development of a "Not Invented Here (NIH)" syndrome. We must objectively evaluate all technical and operational options and not be averse to change, to different methodologies and, indeed, different goals. Valuable ideas and perceptions can come from many sources. We must continue to be receptive to new concepts.

10. The second organizational objective is to move user support outward—to the users. This should improve responsiveness and allow for increased specialization and expertise among user support personnel. Our belief is that decentralized user support will better meet the needs of our customers and reduce ODP resource requirements.

11. The final set of objectives supportive of ODP strategic goals are categorized as Computer Service objectives. These are, in turn, broken down into those related to the ADP Utility and those associated with Systems Development. These objectives address the nature of ODP services during the next ten years. Operating the Agency ADP utility has historically been an ODP function—it will continue to be a critical objective.

### **COMPUTER SERVICES—THE UTILITY**

- **CONTINUE TO OPERATE COMPUTER SERVICES TO MEET NEEDS OF THE AGENCY**
- **DEVELOP AN INFORMATION SYSTEMS ARCHITECTURE FOR THE WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA**
- **ESTABLISH AN ENVIRONMENT THAT PERMITS AGENCY CUSTOMERS TO EFFECTIVELY UTILIZE DATA PROCESSING SERVICES**
- **ESTABLISH A BACK-UP FACILITY OUTSIDE THE WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA**

12. The first objective states that our current concept of providing a central ADP service, in effect, a secure ADP utility for Agency customers, is to be continued. We must provide these services through an integrated Headquarters area information systems architecture. Developing such an architecture will require leadership on the part of this office and close coordination with the Offices of Communications and Security. Paramount requirements of this architecture will be compatibility, security, and availability. Data exchange, when security requirements permit, should also be possible.

13. The area of user support, as the third objective states, is to be given renewed emphasis. User-friendly systems and the information systems center concept, for example, are approaches to improving user access. Our thrust will be to improve accessibility through improved software, consulting services, documentation, training, and other approaches that are cost-effective.

14. The last objective relates to the establishment of a back-up facility outside of the local area. This will ensure the continued delivery of critical data processing services in the event of a national or local emergency.

15. The second class of services that have historically been performed by ODP is systems or applications development. Systems development requirements will continue to play a major role in ODP in the next ten years.

#### **COMPUTER SERVICES—SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT**

- EXPEDITE SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT
- EMPHASIZE DEVELOPMENT OF "CORPORATE SYSTEMS"
- UTILIZE CONTRACTOR RESOURCES FOR LARGE SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS
- UTILIZE ODP RESOURCES FOR MEDIUM-SIZE SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (3-10 STAFF-YEARS)
- UTILIZE COMMERCIAL PACKAGES FOR SMALL SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

— END USER RESPONSIBLE FOR MODIFICATIONS



16. As mentioned earlier, we expect that information needs and related systems development requirements will continue to grow. In fact, the enormous current backlog, by itself, would occupy our development resources for several years into the future. This will cause significant time delays prior to project initiation and, due to the increasing complexity of development tasks, an ever-expanding systems development life cycle. Therefore, expediting systems development is a primary office objective.

17. Due to limited staff and budget resources, we will increasingly be forced to make difficult choices as to what systems we develop. Because of their importance to the Agency and the lack of viable development alternatives, Agency-wide administrative systems, so-called "corporate systems," will receive increasing ODP emphasis.

18. It will furthermore be necessary to reorient ODP resources based on project size and scope. It will be the ODP objective to rely on contractor resources (utilizing ODP or customer funding) for large systems development. The size and complexity of many of these projects make reliance on limited staff resources impractical.

19. ODP staff resources will concentrate on so-called medium-sized systems development. In our judgment, projects of this size are more cost-effectively handled in-house. Our final objective in this group is to move small systems development out into the customer offices, emphasizing the use of commercially-available software. ODP will provide enhanced support, such as consulting, to customers accepting development responsibilities. It is our belief that this overall allocation of systems development resources is the most cost-effective approach and in the best interest of the office and Agency.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this strategic plan is to articulate overall office goals and key objectives during the next ten years. It is recognized that other choices of goals and objectives are possible. The goals and objectives described above are not intended to be exhaustive. They have been selected because of the perception of senior ODP management that increased attention to satisfying these objectives will pay major dividends in future office performance. It is our belief that the payoff will become even more apparent during the next planning phase, which involves the development of the implementation plan. It is during this final process, and in the resulting implementation plan, that we can further clarify issues and make the hard choices that will define the nature of the office and its contribution to the Agency during the next ten years.

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