
APPENDIX B

*(U) Lessons Learned from Developing Intelligence
Community Strategic Plan*

Introduction

When a new agency director takes the reins, one of the first long term actions invariably taken is the development of a strategy to guide the organization over that individual's incumbency. The intent may be to move the organization in a different direction, reinforce a current practice, or set new benchmarks for the future. For all the work that goes into developing them, such strategies have an 80-percent failure rate regardless of whether they are in the private sector or the US government.^a Unfortunately, few actually achieve the vision for the future that organizations spend massive time, effort, and energy assembling.

Most strategies have goals designed to be reached in three to five years, which is consistent with those of the business world, where CEOs are expected to lead their organizations for five to ten years. Meanwhile, in the Intelligence Community (IC) or the government sector, leaders are in place for only two to three years. Changes in presidential administration further complicate tenure; consequently, IC strategies that might take a year to develop and another year to implement see changes in leadership that necessitate restarting the entire process. This paper describes the processes that have been used, sometimes successfully and sometimes not, in the IC. The lessons learned may contribute to a greater understanding of what is required for creating strategic plans that positions the IC for greater success in the future.

What Is a Strategy & What Is It Intended To Do?

Strategies are statements of major approaches and/or the methods for attaining broad goals and resolving specific issues. Several methods exist to construct strategy, but generally strategy development is broken down into two types—the 'bottom-up approach' and 'top-down approach'.

In general, the 'bottom-up' process solicits ideas from all parts of the organization and winnows the many ideas into a few themes. One positive aspect of this approach is that the workforce is immediately engaged; however, an important drawback is that numerous ideas are presented and many may not conform to the direction in which senior management wants to move the organization. Further, this methodology can take a long time to solicit ideas and sort through them. A modified version of this method was used in the development of the 2009 version of the National Intelligence Strategy. In developing the 2014 version of the NIS, the ODNI gathered a small working group together from representatives of the IC and used their input to help shape the document.

The 'top-down' approach uses a small group working directly with the leader. The team takes direction straight from the boss and articulates his/her ideas, such as was the case in the production of the current CIA Strategic Direction. On the plus side, this approach is direct and has the benefit of being able to succinctly convey the leader's intent. Many IC elements have used this approach.

a. Kaplan, Robert S. and David P. Norton. "The Balanced Scorecard—Translating Strategy Into Action." Harvard Business Review Press, 1996.

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In the best cases, agencies have combined positive aspects of both approaches. The agency leader organized a strategy team which worked directly with the agency director and his leadership team². The group met on a monthly basis to hone ideas they thought would best position the organization for successful operations in the future. When the themes were in a mature state but before they were completely refined, they were presented to the workforce for comment. The comment period lasted a few weeks.

When this phase was completed, the leadership team adjusted the themes and clarified any areas that needed better focus. In several cases, the workforce added helpful, substantive details to ideas that had not been fully explained. The leadership team approved the alterations and forwarded the document to the agency director for approval and signature.

Research and Review – The Price for Skipping Homework

Several steps must precede strategy development. Too many times a new agency director will announce, “I want to take this Agency to the next level. I don’t want to do the same thing as my predecessor. Write me a new plan!” and, in the rush to get the document out the door, the writer(s) fail to do a simple literature review, risking the possibility that, within a year, the plan will have to be ‘updated’ to take into account the mandates that had been overlooked.

Prior to putting pen to paper, the first undertaking is to conduct a review of the current mission, the operating environment, tasks, obligations, and authorities. The review must examine the organization’s mission and vision. Have they changed? Has something been added or altered? Has the new leader changed or does he or she want to adjust the mission, vision, and core values? If so, this is the time to do it.

For the IC, the higher level strategies that provide guidance and direction are the National Security Strategy, National Defense Strategy, National Strategy for Homeland Security, National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, and the National Intelligence Strategy.

“Influencing documents” should also be reviewed; these are Executive Orders and Directives, established law, statutory and delegated authorities, Congressionally Directed Actions that prescribe roles and responsibilities and measures the agency is required to take. Also reviewed are any Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) with other agencies and departments whose missions regularly interface with one’s own, that delineate roles and responsibilities. The direction of these documents may affect strategic goals or objectives; they should be read and understood by those developing the strategy, as they show the underpinnings and foundation on which government organizations operate. A thorough understanding of these documents will go a long way towards getting buy-in from stakeholders and will assist with future communication efforts to the workforce.


When DCI George Tenet developed his first Strategic Direction in 1998, he chose a single, trusted individual to approach agency leadership individually, solicit their ideas, record their thoughts, and consolidate their ideas. The individual had to revise each section several times as each directorate leader and the DCI made changes to drafts; the process took over nine months before anyone outside the small group had an opportunity to look at the document. Another drawback was that it required the workforce to understand, accept, and adjust to new ideas about which they themselves had provided little or no input. In addition, this approach required extra communication effort up and down the chain of command, increasing the likelihood that, in any given level of management that did not understand or agree with the goals and objectives, resistance to change would result.

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Leadership Discussions – What's the Focus?

The review should also examine all facets of administration, finance, operations, acquisition, and governance. This includes reviewing how the organization has performed to see whether there are any known deficiencies, areas for improvement, or opportunities to downsize and take risks.

In developing the ODNI's *Vision 2015—A Globally Networked and Integrated Intelligence Enterprise*, staff reviewed all of these documents, subordinate operational directives, strategies, and implementation plans, as they currently existed. Since the ODNI had been in existence less than three years, planners examined every study of the IC since the inception of the National Security Act of 1947 and every blue ribbon panel and commission that mentioned problems or provided recommendations.^a That review provided planners with an 'as-is' and a realistic baseline of the

a.  *US Intelligence Community Reform Studies Since 1947*. CIA: Center for the Study of Intelligence, April 2005 [U].

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Next, the team conducted an open literature review of trends, technology advances, and suppositions on future development in the IC. Team members talked with advanced technology technicians, social media experts, marketing personnel, and futurists, conducting research on government, industry, and intelligence organizations to learn about the future environment, not limited to just current mission areas. Worldwide drivers and trends will affect operations just as significantly as advances in technology in our particular arenas, and the team needed to examine how globalization; innovation and technology issues; energy and the environment matters; political, military, social, and cultural factors; demographic and health numbers; and economic and financial factors would reinforce or amplify the effects of change on the IC.⁵ This effort

helped articulate a potential future environment in which the IC would operate.

In the end, these considerations populated the four domains of a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis of the intelligence enterprise. Taken together, these attributes paint a picture of the resources, capabilities, and investments needed for the future. To ensure future success, organizations need to understand possible environments; this, then, becomes the substance of the leadership team's discussion.

Leadership Discussions – What's the Focus?

Once the literature review research has been presented to the organization's leadership, areas for discussion should focus on those matters that pose a shift in the strategic landscape and their implications for the organization and its parent organization (e.g., the Defense Intelligence Agency would look to the Department of Defense and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI); the Federal Bureau of Investigation would look to the Department of Justice and the ODNI; the ODNI would look to the White House). Topics should include persistent threats, new opportunities, evolving and emerging missions, technological innovations, uncertainty, and risk. At this point, leadership must recognize and develop consensus around the idea that the future strategic environment will require certain capabilities. The leadership then conducts an analysis of the current state of operations, highlighting gaps the agency needs to narrow or eliminate in order to conduct its missions effectively, or to reinforce those areas that are already working well.

In developing the 100 Day Plan for Integration and Collaboration⁶ (100 Day Plan; 11 April 2007), the 500 Day Plan for Integration and Collaboration (500 Day Plan; 10 October 2007)⁷, and an agency strategy, there was considerable debate about what was important. Over a period

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of several months in each case, the leadership team debated ideas about what organizational structures and processes needed to remain the same, be altered, stopped, or expanded upon. What was the impetus for change? What were those processes, procedures, tools, and techniques that worked now, but would not work in the future? When would the agency need to make changes? How long could the agency wait? What capabilities would be needed? How would these changes affect the workforce? How would the changing mission affect an agency's partners? If the agency or the IC stopped doing some particular work, how would it affect peers, foreign partners, and the business community?

This is an important debate: change is disruptive but necessary. Organizations cannot change everything they want nor can they afford not to improve. Deciding what needs to change, what can wait for a later time, and what does not need to change has tremendous ramifications.

While working on an IC agency strategic plan, prior to each discussion, the strategy development team provided the leadership an agenda and suggested language for the related section of the strategy. During leadership's deliberations, the agency strategy team took notes and afterward honed the language to depict themes that emerged during the leadership team's subsequent discussions.

During each of those subsequent discussions, leadership examined in detail the potential effects the future environment might place on particular mission areas the agency wanted to improve or change. The leadership examined one discipline, function, practice, or capability at a time. They discussed realistically the current state of practice in the

agency and how the agency should operate in this area in the future. They also shared thoughts about the tools, processes, policies, procedures, or structures that the agency needed to introduce in order to work more efficiently, while maintaining the agency's agility, flexibility, and ability to respond quickly to new challenges.

In the development of an agency strategic plan, the document generated from each discussion became an overall concept of operations (CONOPS). It outlined the way the agency operated and how the agency desired to operate in the future, with the description of the future state's serving as a rough outline for the agency's goals and objectives. In addition, the CONOPS served as the roadmap for achieving the end state of the plan. The leadership would be able to look at resources required over the entire budget cycle and could plan to position more resources in one area over another as necessary. At the same time, they could adjust goals to be realistically achievable over the course of the budget cycle or designated time frame of the plan.

Goals and Objectives—Being SMART

Strategic plans have goals and objectives, where goals are defined as broad statements of what the organization hopes to achieve in a specified time frame and objectives are specific,

During the development of Vision 2015, DNI McConnell held a series of off-sites with the directors of each of the IC's agencies, leadership of the ODNI, and the leaders of the intelligence oversight committees. After each session, the note takers refined the essence of the discussion and used the material to kick off the next session. In turn, the material formed the framework for the document.

concrete, measurable statements of what will be done to achieve a goal. It is very difficult to measure

impact with just numbers: the organization also needs qualitative information to be able to communicate impact. A best practice is to have a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures.

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Goals and Objectives—Being SMART

In most cases, organizations discuss goals and objectives as if they were lofty ideals that may or may not be accomplished. Leadership needs to emphasize the necessity and urgency of achieving the goals; they should be described almost as imperatives. The importance of goals and objectives is to ensure that the agency or department is positioned for success in the future, and there can be no hope involved—they must be accomplished. Objectives should also be written as if they are mandated requirements. In much the same manner as goal imperatives, objectives are requirement statements that describe the outcome that must be achieved.

The criteria for developing goals and objectives are very similar to the criteria used in performance reporting. Here, the SMART acronym is not only relevant but very useful: SMART stands for specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-specific:

- specific objectives are observable or verifiable: there must be a physical element tied to the accomplishment and there must be a deliverable item as the final result (e.g., the creation of a device or a written policy or report);
- measurable objectives describe an observable or verifiable result that can be compared against an established standard;
- achievable objectives can be successfully accomplished with available resources, within the time available;
- relevant objectives are aligned to the goals of the agency; and
- time specific objectives include realistic time frames for completion; they have a specified start and/or end dates.

A generic example in the Human Resources area may be the following. With the goal, “All employees will maintain continuous learning for professional development,” objectives might include:

- integrated inter-departmental online and classroom training platforms that build occupational skills and leadership development;
- academic, business, and other governmental intern programs that expand expertise in agency core skill sets; and
- cross-directorate assignment options that allow employees to apply their diverse talents and perspectives to solve complex agency challenges.

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*(U) Lessons Learned from Developing Intelligence Community Strategic Plan****Time Frame – A Year at a Time***

A main element of a strategy is determining the time frame for achieving the needed capabilities. Depending on the industry, strategies have different time frames. In the nuclear power generation field, a strategy may have a time period involving decades; in the electronics industry, it may be as little as 18 months. In the private sector, some heads of organizations usually are in their positions for several years—in some cases, decades. They are able to set long term goals and adjust after an initial period of implementation.

In the IC, strategies generally are written for a three to five year period, but this is also one of the reasons federal government strategies are susceptible to failure: the strategy may be written for the three to five year period, but the agency head is only in the job an average of 18–24 months. It is a vicious cycle: a new director takes over an organization, and at some point commissions a team to develop a strategic plan. The development phase lasts six to nine months and the strategy is promulgated around one year after the director has been in place. Strategy plans are implemented just around the time the director is about to turn the position over to his or her replacement.

There are some exceptions in the national security field, notably the FBI, where the director has a fixed tenure and may manage implementation over the long term. The best chance for success, of course, is to have the agency head in position for a lengthy period and actively supervise progress. If that is not possible, the next best outcome is to involve the senior leaders of the organization who will remain and have them assist in the development of the strategic plan and articulate the case to

the next leader, in order to continue implementing the previous plan. The new leader can make adjustments to the implementation plan based on his or her priorities; however, most new leaders want to emphasize a new direction or new ways to operate an organization and will insist on developing a new strategy. The best practice then, is to develop a strategy with goals and objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, and aligned to the budget execution year. IC budgets are rarely stable, but in the current environment of fiscal austerity, aligning the implementation of the strategic plan to an annual cycle allows initiatives associated with the plan to be adjusted to available resources and achievable during the one fiscal year.

Because of the short time frame of the 100 Day Plan, weekly meetings were held to monitor progress. As time passed, there was overlap between a number of initiatives: projects slowed progress until decisions were made about direction and priority. As Day 100 approached, there were a number of initiatives that were in jeopardy of not being completed by the designated date. At Day 97, the DNI stopped by the plan coordination center and asked how it was going. He was informed that there were a couple of initiatives that would make the deadline, but about three that would not. He then asked what he could do to make it happen and was advised that the greatest single thing he could do was attend the weekly progress meetings to show that his plan was important and to make decisions when conflicts arose. When the 500 Day Plan started, biweekly progress meetings were held. The DNI attended every one, unless he was travelling or at the White House. When he was not able to attend, the PDDNI chaired the meeting.

Governance & Oversight—No Chance for Success without It

An effective governance structure begins with strong leadership, to establish direction and hold the organization accountable. In today's complex environment, leadership must provide effective governance in support of business needs and mission effectiveness. This governance includes the structures and processes for

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Strategic Implementation Plan – The Hardest Part

setting direction, establishing standards, and prioritizing investments.

Proper governance enables the agency or department to leverage a framework for accountability. In many cases, organizations allow each directorate or subordinate element to implement its own portion of the strategic goals and objectives, exclusive of the other elements of the organization. Generally this decentralization of the effort causes unnecessary work. Some subordinate elements move faster than others. Some do not realize their solution affects others until the resolution is announced, and, in almost all cases, the elements do not coordinate with one another.

However, in this increasingly interdependent world, leadership must realize that strategic plan goals and objectives affect all elements of an agency. In many cases, solutions require more than one element of the organization to be involved in the solution and its implementation. Problems cannot be worked independently as they had in the past. The outcome that a particular unit devises and implements generally affects all other operations in the organization.

During the 100 Day Plan, the initiative managers were designated as 'leads.' Because they were 'leads,' they felt ownership of the initiatives and made decisions on priorities and directions that unduly affected a large portion of the organization. As a lesson learned, for the 500 Day Plan initiative managers were rechristened 'stewards.' As such, they were not seen as owning the particular initiative, but were accountable to the DNI to manage the initiative's progress for the benefit of the entire organization. In addition, initiatives were designed to involve at least two or more directorates; if an initiative could be only done within a single directorate, it did not rise to the level of importance for the overall plan.

A better way to ensure cross-organizational integration is to assign more than one steward or champion to oversee the work on a specific goal or objective. Stewards and champions, while

they do not own or lead the effort, are responsible and accountable to leadership for progress on the goal or objective. They are required to work with their co-stewards and champions in developing solutions, implementing actions, and coordinating across organizations. Because they do not 'own' the particular effort, cross-organizational partnerships arise, together with greater cognizance of the effects of the actions on the goals and objectives are having on the entire organization.

The steward or champion should be an agency senior manager in charge of a major directorate or office. He or she should not be able to delegate this responsibility down to subordinates who will not have the organizational influence that the senior manager does. Stewards or champions foster collaboration between initiative stakeholders and monitor and report on initiative and task progress. They also resolve issues and assist in communicating purpose and impact of the goals and objectives throughout the agency or department.

***Strategic Implementation Plan –
The Hardest Part***

Stewards or champions need to develop CONOPs describing how each of the agency or department goals for which they are accountable operates and the steps the agency or department must take to reach that goal. Individual CONOPs should fall neatly within the overall CONOPs that were developed from the initial leadership discussions. The stewards or champions must then conduct—for each goal—a gap analysis between the current state and the capabilities desired by end of specified time frame. This gap analysis identifies the work and resources needed to achieve the stated capabilities, which will then translate into initiatives to achieve the capabilities. These initiatives are then consolidated into one document to make up the framework for the agency or department's annual implementation plans.

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A best practice also used in industry is associating the names of stewards or champions with the initiatives for which they are accountable; making monthly/quarterly progress reports available to the organization workforce; and making this work an objective in their performance appraisals. No leaders like to have their name and a yellow or red notation for the workforce to see if the progress of the initiative is behind schedule. It forces a personal responsibility for ensuring the tasks are completed.

With the mandate of this type of interaction, communication on executing strategy between and among staffs and organizations accelerated collaboration and increased cross-department contact. It was possible to see interaction between different initiatives in the implementation plan and significant interaction between initiatives in any given objective or imperative. This was intentional, and it accelerated integration between organizations. Coordinating completion of initiatives and tasks in the implementation plan required constant communication between groups while providing better understanding of and visibility into agency capabilities and workforce expertise.

Review of progress on the implementation initiatives should take place at least monthly during a regular leadership meeting, with the agency's strategy support team's assisting stewards or champions with the monthly reporting on initiative progress. The overall status is then provided to the workforce on a monthly or quarterly basis. The system for reporting progress on the strategic plan must be kept simple: the workforce has regular missions to perform, after all. In most cases, the changes required from the strategic plan will be new work, and if the reporting structure is onerous, the information provided will be incomplete or—worse—it will be ignored.

Synchronization—A Force Multiplier

While a lot of time and effort is put into developing the strategy and the mechanism for its implementation, equally critical are synchronizing efforts of change management and communicating the plan. Change management begins the moment there is a decision to develop a new strategy. Communication is the means of delivery. After the leadership formulates the main themes and achieves alignment on the approach, the strategy support team should meet with the agency or department's communications team to lay out a plan of action to communicate the plan to the workforce, attempting to answer questions like, "Why now? Who is involved? What is the difference between the strategy and the strategic implementation plan? How is this strategic plan different from past agency or departmental strategic planning efforts? How will the agency or department implement the strategic plan?"

While the main focus of the strategy is the agency or department workforce, there are other groups who will also be very interested in the details of the plan: public influencers and journalists who report on the agency or department are interested in how this strategy affects the public or changes the direction of the agency or department. Other government agencies and departments will look to see how changes in a given organization's operations or focus may affect them. Congressional oversight committees are interested in the agency or department's direction, any new funding needs, and the impact of these on constituents. Staffers ask whether the strategy complies with existing mandated actions or intent.

The strategy support team works with the agency leadership on developing products and briefings about the strategy for internal members, organizational affinity groups, external partners, other governmental organizations, and the organization's congressional affairs staff. This must be done in the final phases of writing

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Change Management—It Is About Culture

the strategy and the implementation plan is being crafted. Congress will expect to be notified by a Congressional Notification before a new strategy is announced publicly and, depending on the time of year, the strategy will need to be incorporated in budget briefings and other conversations or hearings in which the direction of the agency or department is under consideration.

During the 100 Day Plan and the 500 Day Plan, the initiative teams provided status to the strategy team using a simple electronic form that consisted of a single drop down button and a text box. The drop down menu reported progress as

- white: not started
- green: on track
- yellow: minor issues
- red: late or major issues
- black: task completed

The strategy team compiled the information in a single graphic or handout and distributed it at the leadership meeting. This was the first item on the agenda and was addressed quickly, generally in less than 30 minutes. The strategy team lead provided an overall progress report on and highlighted the initiatives that had issues.

For the initiatives that were experiencing issues, the steward provided the information to the other leadership team members and the agency director. The only time the strategy team lead member addressed the assembled group was to request the agency director make a decision during an impasse between two initiatives. When an impasse occurred between initiatives, the strategy team lead worked with both stewards to obtain their viewpoints and then presented these, along with the strategy team's unbiased recommendation to the agency director for a decision.

Change Management—It Is About Culture

An agency or department change management plan paints a clear picture of what change must occur, creates a realistic and inspiring vision of the future state, and provides the path for getting there. Critical for any strategy is a change management plan designed to gain the support for and commitment to the vision and the initiatives of the change from all levels of management. The change management plan is a critical element of explaining the strategy to the workforce, outside influencers, and others interested in the business of the agency or department.

Every organization has its own culture. Culture can be defined as the accepted practices, processes, procedures, structure, and mores of the organization. A strategic plan represents change to that culture and must address the reasons why the culture should accept the new ways of doing business. For the agency or departmental strategy and implementation plan, the leadership ensures implementation through stewards or champions; stewards or champions are seen as change leaders who endorse the plan through personal involvement, visible action, and participation in the change process.

There are common barriers to change management. Overcoming these obstacles can bring an organization a very long way towards acceptance of the changes that the organization's leaders desire. They are:

- Agency processes prevent cross-talk and overregulate communication conduits about needed change.
- There is little or no regular management encouragement for the changes.
- Some communication vehicles are difficult to access.
- The agency's conduits and vehicles cannot support the desired information content in the

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manner in which the change information needs to be provided.

- Neither the current nor the desired state of operations can be articulated by the leadership and change agents.

The ways to overcome common barriers are for leadership to lead by example. Collaboration starts at the top: management must be serious and accountable for promoting collaboration. They must implement and utilize every available vehicle for more effective communication, and leadership must audit the message regularly. Managers and leaders must engage with the workforce on a regular basis to strengthen the message, train and communicate regularly, and tell the staff what's expected in regular written and electronic communications, following this up with verbal discussions. Lastly, they must listen to critics who are able to identify what is wrong with the message, and then respond quickly and appropriately.

Leaders should obtain initial buy-in to a major strategic plan before the initial publication of the document. On one such occasion, the agency director called a meeting for all senior officers of the organization and explained what the strategy was, how it was a change for the organization, and that—as the leaders of his agency—they were being asked for their support and active participation. Just as the military regularly have general/flag officer meetings to announce major campaign efforts, in this instance the agency director used his 'generals' to support the action and communicate it personally to the workforce.

The agency or department communication plan portion of the change management plan takes into account when the strategy will be presented to each group and the manner in which it will be presented. The intent is initially to provide an awareness of the plan and how it will affect each individual and group. Continuous communication about the strategy—what it means and why it is necessary—must be provided to workforce, partners, and agency supporters. Later communication efforts gradually move from awareness to understanding, acceptance, adoption, and ownership. As the workforce begins to

understand, communication efforts finally mature into commitment to the plan and action, once implementation of the strategy takes place.

Groups and individuals internal to the organization may not see elements of the strategy from the same viewpoint: leaders, managers, and the workforce may perceive the various aspects of the plan differently. Senior managers have divergent interpretations from junior managers and workforce members. Disciplines and functions (collection, analysis, counterintelligence, enterprise management, security, and other specialties) will scrutinize it through a wholly different prism. Diversity and affinity groups also will have their own interpretations. Finally, each individual and group will analyze the plan according to their own biases and concerns.

The agency or department communication plan ensures there is a clear and compelling

business case for the change including 'hard' and 'soft' benefits and ensures that the case for change is clearly articulated in language understandable to all. It makes clear what priority should be placed on the strat-

egy in relation to other initiatives being conducted by the agency or department.

Communication products and briefings should continually refer to the compelling business case in discussions with stakeholders. The agency or department communication plan designs various multimedia avenues—print, audio, visual, etc.,—to resonate with the audience. While many "know" about the strategy, it takes several sessions to help individuals see how the strategy benefits them in the long term and what roles they may play in making agency or department strategy happen.

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*Addressing Lessons Learned—Upfront***Addressing Lessons Learned—Upfront**

Strategies fail when they do not address four basic barriers:

- the vision barrier
- the people barrier
- the management barrier, and
- the resource barrier

The vision barrier takes place because less than five percent of the workforce usually understands the strategy, and the rest may not see how they are integral to its success. The people barrier takes place when managers do not see a link between what they are tasked to do on a daily basis and the goals and objectives of the strategy. The management barrier takes place because 85 percent of senior executives in organizations spend less than one hour a month discussing their strategy. Lastly, the resource barrier takes place when the strategy is not given the resources necessary to carry it out. But there are ways to overcome these barriers.

To overcome the vision barrier, the organization must:

- Develop a clear, actionable vision of the strategy describing core concepts and desired end-state;
- Communicate the vision of the strategy using multiple channels and tailored messages to both the agency or department and key external stakeholders;
- Translate the strategy's vision into agency terms and activities; and
- Identify success criteria (e.g., how do we know when we did it right?).

To overcome the management barrier, the organization must:

- Identify the top internal management priorities and link them to the concepts of the strategy;

- Place the strategy and priorities at top of the management agenda (leadership meetings); and
- Link strategy, priorities, and budget to performance reviews.

To overcome the resource barrier, the organization must:

- Reflect the strategy in planning and programming guidance;
- Translate the strategy into implementation plans;
- Align current budget and initiatives to key themes and concepts in the strategy; and
- Create performance measures and link them to higher level critical success factors.

To overcome the resource barrier, the organization must:

- Assign stewards or champions for completion of initiatives aligned to strategy;
- Post progress on agency websites and other media;
- Link personnel evaluation reviews to progress against the strategy at the manager and workforce level, for those involved in tasks and initiatives; and
- Ensure that recognition and rewards reflect the priorities of the strategy.

As the strategy is being written, leadership needs to understand that translating the vision of the strategy into fielded capabilities requires communication, leadership commitment, alignment of resources, and the right mix of incentives. The agency or departmental communication plan is geared towards ensuring that the workforce is aware and understands its role in the strategy. The leadership commits to the strategy by actually signing the document, being responsible for the goals and objectives as stewards or champions, and having regular meetings solely focused on progress of the strat-

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egy. Tying the budget to the strategy through planning, programming, budgeting, and evaluation makes the strategic plan real in the eyes of the members of the organization.

Value Proposition—The Logic Chain for Change

There is always the question, “Why do this strategy now?” A strategic plan value proposition reflects the main building blocks of any strategy in the IC. The particulars can be added to or made more specific. At the base, improving the work environment, learning, and skill sets increases the quality of the workforce as a whole. As the workforce improves, individuals are more able to work together both within and outside the organization. This in turn helps integrate the agency or department, and improving integration removes barriers that degrade mission performance and creates favorable condi-

tions for cross-directorate collaboration on mission needs. Implementing the strategic plan drives integration and fosters collaboration, and ultimately leads to better mission performance. In turn, the agency or department’s strategic plan supports the government by linking the agency or department to its customers and optimizing its operations and operating systems in support of its missions.

Conclusion

The guidelines suggested in this paper will allow organizations in the IC the flexibility to concentrate on the areas they believe need special attention. Following these steps and guidelines can increase the chance of success and provides a structure in which to build a successful strategy, avoiding the pitfalls to which many organizations succumb in the process of developing and implementing strategic plans.



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