

If You're Not Growing,

YOU'RE DYING

Here are steps to breakthrough growth for your organization.

BY PAUL LEMBERG

An organization never stays still. If it's not developing, it's deteriorating. That's why you need a plan to grow your organization. To create a platform for growth, follow these steps.

Check the 10 Success Factors.

First, consider these 10 critical success factors:

1. **Money factors.** Develop many sources of income to assure cash flow and revenue growth.
2. **New supporters.** Constantly acquire more supporters to secure your future.
3. **Customer satisfaction.** Keep people happy by fulfilling their needs and desires.
4. **Quality.** Be sure your programs and services are first-rate.
5. **Program development.** Continue to create programs to keep your old supporters and attract new ones.
6. **Intellectual capital.** Keep increasing what you know works.
7. **Productivity.** Be efficient and effective.
8. **Strategic relationships.** Build connections with supporters.
9. **Employees.** Attract and retain the very best people.
10. **Sustainability.** Keep it all going.

Ask Three Questions.

For each of the 10 factors, ask these three broad questions:

1. **What can you learn from last year's experience with this factor?**
 - What did you do right? What worked? How can you do more of those "right" things? How can you make them even better? How can you apply what you learned in this area to some other?

- What is missing? What could you add to improve your effectiveness? (Effectiveness can be stated as the ratio of output to input. Efficiency, on the other hand, is how many input actions you take per unit of time. For instance, you can increase the number of fundraising calls you make per hour—that is an increased efficiency. You can increase the volume of funds raised for the same number of calls—that is increased effectiveness.) Random examples of things that might be missing include consistency in marketing, new programs, more fundraisers, a source of new leads, an employee development plan.

2. What are your goals related to this factor?

- Setting new goals can, all by itself, transform your organization.
- Goals work best when they are objective and quantifiable.
- Your goals should be bold and dynamic—big enough to inspire you and everyone around you. Some examples of bold goals:
 - Dominate your market niche.
 - Double the amount of money raised.
 - Solve customer problems in half the current time.
 - Develop a career path for each employee.
 - Have enough cash to cover any emergency.
- You must believe your goals are achievable—no matter how difficult or impossible they might seem.

3. How will you meet these goals?

Choose someone to be responsible for each goal. If no single person is accountable—guess what—it won't happen. Whoever accepts accountability for a goal should answer the following questions:

- What tactics have a good chance of meeting the goal? If you've set bold objectives, you probably don't yet know how to reach them. That's what makes them bold. For now,

you'll need to make up some answers and live with the uncertainty. And while there are no guarantees of success, each target should have a path to get you there. That path will define one or more initiatives and milestones you can put on a timeline.

- What changes will you make relative to this factor? Some examples are adding a new assistant or new reporting lines, eliminating paper memos, or having a monthly quota. Each structural and procedural change will spawn its own initiatives, which you will also put on a timeline.
- Does this initiative require new people? Do you need new job descriptions? Do you need more managers? If you have to add people, feed the financial considerations back into your budget.

Taken together, all the factors, goals, accountable parties, initiatives, structural changes, timelines, measures, and milestones add up to a strategic plan for the year. That plan is guaranteed to help your organization grow.

Since all the success factors are intertwined, you need to consider every one. Gain more supporters, but neglect service—what will happen to customer satisfaction? It will probably go down, which will affect your reputation. Ultimately, support will decrease. Improve product quality but neglect employee reten-

tion? What will happen to quality next year? Likely it will go down. And then what will happen to your supporters? As you can see, each factor's improvement contributes to your organization's survivability and prosperity.

Create a breakthrough in planning—one which commits you to some level of advancement for every one of the critical factors. Having a strategic plan—one which considers all the critical success factors—is a sure way to improve the odds in your favor. ■

Resources

Eadie, Douglas, "Master Change, Or Change Will Master You," *Nonprofit World*, Vol. 14, No. 4.

Lemberg, Paul, "What Not to Do, and How Not to Do It," *Nonprofit World*, Vol. 19, No. 6.

Lemberg, Paul, "Seven Ways to Be Unreasonable," *Nonprofit World*, Vol. 20, No. 5.

Lemberg, Paul, "Why Predict the Future?," *Nonprofit World*, Vol. 19, No. 3.

These resources are available from the Society's Resource Center, www.snpo.org.

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