

Do You Have A Plan Or A Wish? Strategic Planning I Part 1

“A goal without a plan is just a wish.” – Antoine de Saint-Expery



We all have goals both personal and professional. “I want to go to Austria.” “I want to workout more.” “I want to be able to give my employees a raise.” “I want to sell 90% of my machine time.” All of these “wants” are only wishes without a plan. And when it comes to business, those goals are achievable through a strategic plan that is carefully crafted, implemented and evaluated.

Creating A Strategic Plan

There can be several levels to a strategic plan, but the “bones” are:

- Goals — what you want to achieve (the destination)
- Strategy — how you are going to achieve the goal (the map)
- Tactics — what needs to be done to follow strategy. (the actions taken to follow the map)
- Deadlines — the expected timeframe to achieve tactics
- Owners — (not to be confused with the shop owner) the point person in charge of making sure the tactics are completed within the allotted timeframe. The owner may need others to complete the task.

A strategic plan should not be created in a vacuum. To build a truly dynamic plan, gather a group of stakeholders who can provide different perspectives. Stakeholders can be management, machinists, customers, sales, quality, IT, marketing — anyone whose perspective can help shape a viable plan. For example, creating a goal of integrating a new ERP system may be desired, but without the input of someone from IT, the feasibility, tactics and deadlines would be difficult to determine.

The example to the right is a simple outline of one goal in a strategic plan for a medium size shop. Keep in mind, a strategic plan should have at least three goals. (Thank you to Henning Industrial Software for their assistance with this article.) **P**

GOAL: Increase Productivity

Increase productivity by 5% each year

STRATEGY: Integrate New ERP System

Integrate a new ERP system.
Owner: Shop owner | Deadline: 24 months*

TACTIC: Find System

Research and find system to best fit current processes.
Owner: Shop owner | Deadline: 6 months*

TACTIC: Allocate Financial Resources

Work with budget to allocate the necessary financial resources for purchase, implementation and training.
Owner: Shop owner | Deadline: 3 months*

TACTIC: Implementation

Implement ERP system.
Owner: IT | Deadline: 12 months*

TACTIC: Implementation — Testing

Test ERP with current systems.
Owner: IT | Deadline: 18 months*

TACTIC: Implementation — Training

Implement ERP system.
Owner: IT | Deadline: 20 months*

TACTIC: Implementation — Launch

Implement ERP system.
Owner: IT | Deadline: 24 months*

*Use actual dates

Carli Kistler-Miller, MBA has over 25 years of experience with operations, event/meeting planning, marketing, writing and communications. Email: cmiller@pmpa.org — Website: pmpa.org.