

Planning to Outdistance Your Competition

Harvey A. Meier, Ph.D.

Planning Terminology

- **Vision:**
What an organization wants to be (or finds itself becoming), in terms of markets, products, resources, and/or capabilities.
- **Mission:**
What an organization provides, defining business areas and carefully distinguishing the organization from its competitors (or allies).
- **Values:**
Beliefs or philosophies of operations that underlie a company's decision making process.
- **Strategic Objective:**
A desired end of an action: specific, measurable, achievable, reasonable, timed.
- **Strategy:**
A method or course of action developed and implemented to achieve a strategic objective (sub-objective).
- **Action plan:**
Critical steps in executing a strategy and achieving a strategic objective (who, when, how, cost).

Management by Planning

- **Commit to Business Planning**
Make commitment and remain dedicated to business planning. (Owners, board of directors, management, employees)
- **Analyze Business Environment**
Analyze current conditions and future outlook. (Upper management, pertinent personnel, board of directors)

Meier is founder and President of Harvey A. Meier Co., Spokane, Washington.

- **Brainstorm - SWOT Analysis**
Develop an array of ideas and issues to address. (Owners, board of directors, management, pertinent employees; outside facilitator, recommended)
- **Develop Vision, Values, and Mission Statements**
Develop new vision, values, and mission statement or review existing ones. (Owners, board of directors, top management)
- **Develop Company Objectives**
Develop company objectives and list by priority. (Owners, board of directors, management)
- **Develop Strategies**
Develop strategies (course of action) to reach company objectives. (Management)
- **Compare to Old Plan**
Ensure that new business plan coincides with previous plan and that no important issues have been ignored or forgotten in new plan. (Owners, board of directors, management)
- **Develop Action Plans**
Direct resources to implement company objectives. Coordinate with annual operating budget. (Management, employees)
- **Execute Plans**
Implement and monitor execution process closely for any adverse effect on company. Modify action plans if necessary. (Owners, board of directors, management)
- **Business Planning Tips**
Make business planning meetings specific to company planning.
Hold major planning meetings away from company headquarters.
Communicate, in a broad manner, strategic effort of the company to employees and suppliers.
Consolidate information and document into a detailed business and financial plan.