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Not Stuck in a Drawer: Successfully Implementing a Strategic Plan

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Not stuck in a drawer: Successfully implementing a strategic plan

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Image courtesy of Flickr user liz west.
Introductions

Jennifer

Nicole
Share in the chat box:

1. Why did you sign up for today’s webinar?

2. What are the challenges you’re experiencing (or anticipating) to implementing your strategic plan?
Challenges

1. Translating major goals into actionable steps
2. Determining how the plan will be tracked
3. Identifying who is in charge of making sure objectives are accomplished
4. Communicating the status of the plan
5. Motivating and supporting staff members to make change
Goals

• Think more strategically about how to implement a strategic plan in their local context

• Translate major strategic goals into concrete and scaffolded actions

• Develop strategies to monitor and communicate the success of strategic plans
Kotter’s 8 stage process

1. Establishing a sense of urgency
2. Creating the guiding coalition
3. Developing a vision and strategy
4. Communicating the change vision
5. Empowering employees for broad-based action
6. Generating short-term wins
7. Consolidating gains and producing more change
8. Anchoring new approaches in the culture

Stage 1: Establishing a sense of urgency

Sources of complacency

- Human nature, with its capacity for denial, especially if people are already busy or stressed
- The absence of a major and visible crisis
- Low overall performance standards
- A lack of sufficient performance feedback from external sources
- Too much happy talk from senior management
- A kill-the-messenger-of-bad-news, low-confrontation culture
- Too many visible resources
- Organizational structures that focus employees on narrow functional goals
- Infernal measurement systems that focus on the wrong performance indexes

Source: John Kotter (1996): Leading Change
Examples of Urgency

• Financial
• Changes in library leadership
• Institutional changes (university leadership, degrees and programs, etc.)
• Demographic changes
• Higher Education Landscape
• Public trust/perception
Poll- What urgency do see for strategic planning in your library?

A. Financial
B. Changes in library leadership
C. Institutional changes (university leadership, degrees and programs, etc.)
D. Demographic changes
E. Higher Education Landscape
F. Public trust/perception
G. Other?
Stage 2: Creating the guiding coalition

• Create the team

• Create trust and develop a common goal

• Key characteristics
  • Across departments
  • Staff and Librarians
  • Variety of perspectives
  • Different lengths of tenure

Image courtesy of Flickr user Florence Ivy.
Stage 3: Developing a vision and strategy

SCU Library

Vision

• The Library is a vibrant and vital center for learning, inspiring both intellectual pursuits and community engagement.
Stage 4: Communicating the change vision

• How do you communicate about not only the plan itself, but also the implementation of it?
  • Make the plan visible with clear priorities and objectives

Image courtesy of Flickr user Charlene N Simmons.
Strategic Plan Structure

Priorities -> Goals -> Objectives -> Measures of Success

- **Priorities** Make the plan visible by providing easy to share and remember theme areas.
- **Goals** Make the plan actionable by providing clear actions that staff members can take.
- **Objectives** Allow for scaffolding of achievement of the goal and for assigning point people to monitor and lead action items.
- **Measures of Success** provide a means to check in on the plan and document progress.
Strategic Priorities

• Inspire a Culture of Engagement
• Redefine and Transform Collections
• Empower an innovative and responsive staff
• Cultivate Dynamic Teaching and Learning
• Cultivate a Climate of Assessment
Example Goals: Redefine & Transform Collections

• Goal 1: Articulate a vision for collection development and management in the library.

• Goal 2: Expand the presence of Archives & Special Collections in our community.

• Goal 3: Demonstrate our strong commitment to Open Access.
Develop a Communication Strategy

• Website

• Printed brochure

• Updates at key meetings

• Integrated in ongoing activities (performance reviews, hiring processes, etc.)
Stage 5: Empowering employees for broad-based action

**Barriers to Empowerment**

- Formal structures make it difficult to act
- A lack of needed skills undermines action
- Employees understand the vision and want to make it a reality, but are boxed in
- Bosses discourage actions aimed at implementing the new vision
- Personnel and information systems make it difficult to act

Poll- What barrier to empowerment might you need to address?

A. Formal structure make it difficult to act
B. Lack of needed skills
C. Bosses discourage action
D. Personnel and information systems
E. Other
Stage 6: Generating short-term wins

Three characteristics of a good short-term win

1. It’s visible
2. It’s unambiguous
3. It’s clearly related to the change effort

Role of short-term wins

• Provide evidence that sacrifices are worth it
• Reward change agents with recognition of their work
• Help fine-tune vision and strategies
• Undermine cynics and resisters
• Keep bosses on board
• Build momentum
Assigning Leads

• Tracking the plan
  • Assign co-leads to focus on each priority and develop measures of success
  • Assign action leads for each objective to monitor progress
  • Library management group devotes a meeting each quarter to discussing the status of the plan
Monitoring the Plan

- Break each objective into manageable actions
- Scaffold the change process
- “Stoplight” monitoring
- Provide room to pivot and adjust

Image courtesy of Flickr user moonjaz.
Measures of Success

- Objective 1: Broaden the role of the library in the Open Access ecosystem.
  - Measure of success: The library dedicates stable and significant funding to support Open Access initiatives that are targeted at undergraduate learners.
  - Measure of success: SCU librarians participate in regional and national service opportunities related to OA
### Tracking the Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 1</th>
<th>Comments 4/18/18 meeting</th>
<th>Comments 2/20/19 meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal 1, Objective 1: Explore creative ways to increase support for international and commuter students. (Lead Name)</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>[Person] is working on an event for international students for spring break.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 1, Objective 2: Identify courses and programs with community based learning components in which the Library can play an active role. (Lead Name)</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>[Person] compiled a list of ELSJ courses and subject librarians are indicating which courses they have worked with in the past. [Person] &amp; [Person] are meeting with [Faculty Member] to discuss a potential future ELSJ research project. [Person] met with [Faculty Member] and [Faculty Member] about ways the library could support ELSJ independent study and immersion students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 1, Objective 3: Develop programming that advances the University's diversity initiatives and supports the University's goal of becoming a more inclusive community for all populations. (Co-Lead Names)</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Ongoing for programming and the new diversity fellowship. Diversity Fellows were recruited, hired and onboarded. They are conducting multiple diversity-related projects. Timeline for next round of recruitment posted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Association of College & Research Libraries**
www.acrl.org
Stage 6: Generating short-term wins

Examples of library’s short-term wins

• Created an Undergraduate Diversity Fellows Program
• Crafted a Collection Development Philosophy
• Implemented an event for international students
• Redesigned instructional classrooms
• Increased teaching with Archives & Special Collections materials
• Advanced conversations with faculty & departments around OA
Stage 7: Consolidating gains and producing more change

• What Step 7 looks like in a successful, major change effort:
  • More change, not less
  • More help
  • Leadership from senior management
  • Project management and leadership from below
  • Reduction of unnecessary interdependencies

• At SCU
  • Completed our 2013-2018 plan in 3 years
  • Revised the plan and created new goals and objectives
  • Be conscious of continual change and its impact on staff and workload
  • Being mindful of other things that come in and how that impacts staff
  • Impact of larger administrative changes at SCU
Stage 8: Anchoring new approaches in the culture

1. Comes last, not first
2. Depends on results
3. Requires a lot of talk
4. May involve turnover
5. Makes decisions on succession crucial
Kotter’s 8 stage process

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Questions?

Thank you!
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