



NATIONAL CENTER FOR
FAMILY PHILANTHROPY

Family Giving Online Knowledge Center Sample Forms, Checklists, and Policies

TITLE: Example of a Family Foundation Strategic Plan

SOURCE: *Voyage of Discovery: A Planning Workbook for Philanthropic Families*

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EXAMPLE OF A FAMILY FOUNDATION STRATEGIC PLAN

Introduction

Following is an example of a plan that a family foundation might create after following the exercises in *Voyage of Discovery: A Planning Workbook for Philanthropic Families*. This plan is only an example, and should not be taken as complete.

Remember the following tips for successful utilization of your strategic plan:

- Keep the plan short. Broad goals and specific strategies are all that is needed. The implementation plan, containing such items as timelines, personnel resources needed, and financial resources should be in a separate document.
- Put the plan in the front of your board book at every meeting. Recall its main points sometime during the meeting.
- In your implementation plan, set some benchmarks and regularly review progress toward your goals.
- Don't try to plan for more than three years ahead. Times change too quickly.

Strategic Plan for the Joyful News Foundation

Preface:

The board of the Joyful News Foundation developed this plan over a period of six months. The board extended their regular board meetings to discuss their main areas of interest. Their activities included revisiting their mission, and designing goals and strategies for the areas that fit the foundation's current work.

Mission:

The mission of the Joyful News Foundation is to honor the legacy of our foundress, Annie News, and to carry out the foundation's program interests in the communities in which her descendants live and work.

Goals by Issue Area:

I. GOVERNANCE

Goal Statement One:

The Joyful News Foundation will work to create a strong and educated board of trustees that can respond to community needs and make effective program decisions.

Strategies:

- a) The board will develop for itself a set of board member job descriptions (roles and responsibilities) and ask every member to adhere to these.
- b) The board will encourage its members to attend local or national conferences and bring back to other members information that is useful to the Joyful News Foundation.
- c) The board will establish an orientation session for new members, and will develop a mentoring process for them with seasoned board members.

Goal Statement Two:

The board of the Joyful News Foundation will develop and put in motion a succession plan.

Strategies:

- a) The trustees of the Joyful News Foundation will explore the interest of fourth generation members of the family in joining the board of the foundation. They will do this through family surveys and regional meetings of younger family members.
- b) Subsequent to these meetings and surveys, a committee of the board will develop a fair and equitable plan for adding interested younger members to the board over the next three years.
- c) Before this plan is finalized, the board of trustees will design and implement a system of rotating terms for current board members, such that each will take a three year term which may be renewed twice. In addition, a number of additional board seats will be made available to allow for representatives from each branch to come on to the board.

II. PROGRAM

Goal Statement One:

The board of the Joyful News Foundation will implement new program guidelines and will institute a new focus area.

Strategies:

- a) The foundation will engage several experts to assist its thinking in creating a focus area in early childhood projects. The experts will be chosen by the chair of the board in consultation with local resources and will help the board identify the problem in this area that requires foundation attention.
- b) After reviewing the results of expert advice, the board will adopt a program which provides a focus for solving a problem in the early childhood area. This focus may be local, in the community of our foundress, or national, covering multi-sites or it may be research oriented.
- c) The foundation may employ a broad based Request for Proposals process or it may invite a more limited field of organizations to apply to be the foundation's partner in this work.
- d) The foundation will revise its community giving in the cities where trustees live. Those grants will now be given annually through discretionary funds allotted for each trustee, and such grants must conform to the overall guidelines developed during this process.
- e) The new program guidelines for the foundation, in addition to the focus on early childhood, will address the environment and health issues. The new guidelines are:

(Guidelines developed during the planning process entered here.)

Goal Statement Two:

The foundation will revise its manner of making grants in communities where trustees live, to make them more consistent with the new guidelines of the foundation.

Strategies:

- a) Local grants where trustees live or work will be handled by providing each trustee with an amount of discretionary grantmaking funds
- b) Trustees will report to the board annually on the outcomes of the grants made through their discretionary funds the previous year. Connection to the work of the foundation will be emphasized.
- c) A new program of matching funds for trustees' personal donations will also be instituted to encourage additional giving. Those grants need not be within the foundation's guidelines.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

Goal Statement:

The foundation will update its internal and external communications to increase the efficiency of the foundation.

Strategies:

- a) All trustees will be brought up to date with email for faster communications within the foundation.

- b) An intranet system will be set up so that trustees may have a secure way to have exchanges with regard to the foundation's business.
- c) The website will be updated so that it will become interactive, allowing applications online.
- d) The foundation will distribute its new guidelines widely, and encourage eligible organizations and agencies to apply.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

Goal Statement:

The foundation will proceed to hire a full time staff person to replace the program consultant in order to carry out the plan and find permanent offices for the foundation.

Strategies:

- a) The chair will appoint a committee of the board to assist in the search for a staff person. If necessary, the committee will authorize the use of a search firm. The committee will design the job description for the new executive director.
- b) The chair will appoint another committee to find appropriate office space. The committee will not finalize new office arrangements until the new executive is hired.
- c) The finance committee of the foundation is charged with creating a budget for these expansions.

V. ASSETS

Goal Statement:

The foundation will begin to provide its investment managers with expected goals in asset development for the coming year.

Strategies:

- a) The foundation chair will appoint an investment committee of the board. This committee may invite up to three outside the board members to assist it.
- b) The investment committee will design an investment policy to be presented to the board at the next meeting.
- c) The board, on the advice of the investment committee will identify asset development goals for the coming year, and communicate those to the investment managers.
- d) A system of evaluating the performance of the investment managers will be in place within one year, and will take place annually after that.