

FACTORS IN A PLAN TO PLAN

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A ***plan to plan*** is a working agreement among key players, typically leadership but sometime involving key external stakeholders, which details:

- The key outcomes of a successful planning process, including a Table of Contents for the completed strategic plan
- The key tasks which are individually necessary, and collectively sufficient, to achieve the outcomes
- A timetable of those tasks, perhaps working backwards from the desired end date of the planning process
- Assignment of those tasks to internal leaders, internal work groups and external consultants
- Budget for costs associated with the tasks

Because no institution, at any given point in time, is exactly like any other institution, no plan to plan should be exactly like any other. An effective plan to plan can meet the needs of an organization if it addresses key questions such as:

Outcomes

What outcomes are required to meet internal requirements? External requirements? What does the final Table of Contents look like?

What process outcomes do we want to achieve as well?

Timing

When does the process start? End?

How much time is available during the planning period for planning?

Are there any special periods of down time when nothing is likely to happen?

Involvement

What internal and external stakeholders need to be involved in the process?

How would we build commitment among them to the results?

How would we encourage and allow for the emergence of leadership in the process?

Process

What kind of planning fits best with the culture of this institution?

What kind of planning fits best with the institution' s industry and its best practices?

How and when will decision making take place, and who will be involved?

Synergies

What planning work has already been done that we can build upon?

What parallel planning processes, if any, might we want to integrate?

What events or processes are already set with which we'll want to piggyback?

Resources

How much time is available?

How much money is available?

What internal and external resources can we utilize?