**COMMUNITY SERVICE 105 CREATING YOUR OWN COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT**

**FROM THE DESK OF THE DEAN**

**MISSION, STRATEGY, IMPLEMENTATION**

**TOPIC 2**

**Building A Strategic Plan**

Whenever you set off across new territory you’ll want to consult a map, otherwise you’ll get lost.

Stepping forward into the unknown (also known as ‘the future’) is what non-profits do every day.

And what do they need to make sure they don’t get lost? A strategy, of course, which some may also call a roadmap.

Whether you’re looking to set new non-profit priorities, outline plans for growth, determine a social impact roadmap or plan your investment decisions, you’ll need a strategy. Coming to the realization that your organization needs one is easy. Actually creating a strategy is a little trickier.

**Gather the facts**

To know where you’re heading, you have to know where you are right now. So before you start looking ahead, you should review your reasons for developing the non-profit., Look at each area of the non-profit (staffing, marketing, finance and many others) and determine what needs to be created from scratch or borrowed from outside sources.

There are many tools and techniques available to help with this process, such as **SWOT (**which we will use together) Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats analysis.

You should look internally or at your competitors strengths and weaknesses. And for the opportunities and threats you should look at external factors. A great framework for looking at external factors is P**ESTLE** (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental). So, for your big idea or plan you would ask: what threats and opportunities could arise under each category?

The most important part of this process is involving the right people to make sure you’re collecting the most relevant information.

**Develop a vision statement**

This statement should describe the future direction of the non-profit and its aims in the medium to long term. It’s about describing the organization’s purpose and values. Non-profit gurus have debated long and hard about what comes first – the vision, or the mission statement. But, in practice, you could develop both at the same time.

**Develop a mission statement**

Like the vision statement, this defines the organization’s purpose, but it also outlines its primary objectives. This focuses on what needs done in the short term to realize the long term vision. So, for the vision statement, you may want to answer the question: “Where do we want to be in 5 years?”. For the mission statement, you’ll want to ask the questions:

* What do we do?
* How do we do it?
* Whom do we do it for?
* What value do we bring?

**Identify strategic objectives**

At this stage, the aim is to develop a set of high-level objectives for all areas of the non-profit. They need to highlight the priorities and inform the plans that will ensure delivery of the non-profit’s vision and mission.

By taking a look back at the SWOT and PESTLE analysis, you can incorporate any identified strengths and weaknesses into your objectives.

Crucially, your objectives must be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-related). Your objectives must also include factors such as KPI’s, resource allocation and budget requirements.

**Tactical Plans**

Now is the time to put some meat on the bones of your strategy by translating the strategic objectives into more detailed short-term plans. These plans will contain actions for departments and functions in your organization. You may even want to include suppliers.

You’re now focusing on measurable results and communicating to stakeholders what they need to do and when. You can even think of these tactical plans as short sprints to execute the strategy in practice.

**Performance Management**

All the planning and hard work may have been done, but it’s vital to continually review all objectives and action plans to make sure you’re still on track to achieve that overall goal. Managing and monitoring a whole strategy is a complex task, which is why many the board of directors, managers and employees are looking to alternative methods of handling strategies. Creating, managing and reviewing a strategy requires you to capture the relevant information, break down large chunks of information, plan, prioritize, capture the relevant information and have a clear strategic vision.

**DISCUSSION QUESTION 1**

See the **SWOT** below as a guide and start writing down and thinking of answers you may have for each category.

**Strengths:** What is your team really good at? What do you offer people that others can’t or don’t?

**Weaknesses:** What are some things that your team is not very good at, that others do much better?

**Opportunities:** What are some areas that your organization could thrive in that it isn’t currently taking advantage of?

**Threats:** What are some external factors—competitors, consumer demand, economic conditions—that could make it more difficult for your team to succeed?

You’ll notice that the first two letters focus on things that you have some control over internally, while the last two focus on external, environmental conditions that your organization will have to respond to.

**DISCUSSION QUESTION 2**

The **PESTLE** below will give you some ideas of what you should be writing down and why. **Start writing down and thinking of answers you may have for each category.**

**Political**

Every organization operates within some kind of political environment. The question is how does that political environment affect the non-profit itself? This category, you’ll find information about everything from international relations (which can affect an organization’s ability to do business across borders) to political instability (which can severely thwart an organization).

**Economic**

Similarly, every organization is exposed to the economies of the markets in which it operates. The beauty of PESTLE analysis is that you can consider factors as broad or as specific as you like. For the economic factors affecting a non-profit, you can discuss the international economy, national economies, or even regional economies.

**Sociocultural**

An important part of any business is the consumer. The sociocultural column of PESTLE analysis allows you to explore how trends in society and culture- which ultimately trends your participants and it affects your non-profit. For example, if a business sells just one specific product, how is the consumer approach to that product changing?

**Technological**

Non-profits are becoming increasingly technological, hence the importance of the T in PESTLE analysis. This is your chance to explore any of the technological factors affecting the non-profit including both technological constraints and advancements. This may refer to access to technology within a given region or the development of new technologies within an industry.

**Legal**

If you’re familiar with PEST analysis, you might have noticed that PESTLE analysis is the same thing — just with an added L and E. Of course, the L in PESTLE analysis refers to legal factors Often, these legal factors have some overlap with political factors — but not always. Examples of topics that might be discussed in this category include trade laws, labor laws, and intellectual property laws, and how each affects a business.

**Environmental**

A category of growing importance is the environmental one. Many businesses, especially those in primary industry, have some kind of impact on the environment This part of PESTLE analysis is about knowing what that impact is, what effects that might have, and how businesses can improve in this department.

Simply put, PESTLE analysis is about filling out a brief profile about an organization for each of these categories. As long as you know what to put in each category (which we hope we explained well enough above), then it’s just a question of sourcing your data

**DISCUSSION QUESTION 3 – SET UP CALL WITH THE DEAN**

**Please have your questions and assignments available to discuss in a 15-30 minute block.**