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PLAN A Advisors — Planning for nonprofits and philanthropy

↓ Services

Organizations ↓



Strategic &
Business Planning



Governance &
Leadership Development



Management &
Organizational Change



Resource Development &
Allocation

Long-range strategic
planning
Tactical business planning
Financial planning
Scaling
Mergers & acquisitions

Board assessment & development
Retreat/meeting design & facilitation
Executive coaching
Executive planning
Board succession

Organizational assessment &
development
Program development & evaluation
Diversity & gender audits
Environmental scans
Strategic partnership development

Feasibility studies
Development audits
Fundraising planning
Philanthropic visioning &
counsel

EXECUTIVE COACHING

Plan A works closely with nonprofit leaders to strengthen performance and provide objective and experience-based advice on matters including governance, staff management, planning, financial management, organizational structure and more.

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About Us

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PLAN A ADVISORS

Planning for nonprofits and philanthropy

Our Philosophy

No two organizations, no two institutions, no two foundations and no two businesses are ever exactly alike. No two planning processes should be, either.

Plan A was founded by Evan Kingsley and Adam Gaynor as a new kind of consulting practice to design and facilitate highly individualized approaches to the unique needs of our clients, their audiences, their leadership, and their financial and organizational platforms.

For nonprofits, for business and in philanthropy, limited resources and heightened accountability are the new normal. Designing effective and efficient pathways to setting and meeting compelling goals is what governing bodies, organizational leadership and funders demand.

That's why clients hire Plan A. To get it right... the first time.

VISION

We begin by asking: What are your aspirations? And we help our clients to arrive at an answer through conversations, research and exercises that build consensus around a shared vision.

PLANNING

We design and facilitate a rigorous and inclusive process to develop compelling plans built around goals, objectives and tactics that are measurable and realistic.

LEADERSHIP

We work with our clients to ensure that committed and effective professional and lay leadership is in place to successfully deliver on the promise of any planning process.

RESOURCES

Adequate capital and a means for securing it are central to plan fulfillment, so we ask tough questions and assist in developing funding plans as part of any engagement.

PARTNERSHIP

Going it alone may get you there faster, but going it together gets you farther; we believe in the value that partners bring to realizing a vision, and having impact.

For Clients Subject to Accreditation

For clients in accredited sectors (e.g. higher education, museums) subject to oversight (e.g. Middle State Commission on Higher Education, American Alliance of Museums), Plan A processes and products are expressly designed to meet accreditation requirements.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

PRINCIPALS

Evan Kingsley and Adam Gaynor formed Plan A in 2013. Together they have more than 40 years of experience in nonprofits, social enterprises, philanthropy, and organizational development across the widest range of organizations, institutions and philanthropies.



Evan M. Kingsley

Partner

Mr. Kingsley is the former President of The Whelan Group, a 30-year old firm focused on fundraising, planning and organizational development in the New York region and nationally. Among dozens of consulting assignments, Mr. Kingsley's clients have included Pratt Institute and St. Francis College; EMP Museum in Seattle and The Newark Museum; The Whitby School and Coney Island Prep; Green-Wood Cemetery and Freshkills Park Alliance; Mt. Pleasant Public Library and the Design Trust for Public Space; and Ability Beyond Disability. Mr. Kingsley joined The Whelan Group from the American Jewish Historical Society, where he was Executive Director. He was formerly a Deputy Director of the International Center of Photography in Manhattan and of Brooklyn Public Library, and President of the Brooklyn Public Library Foundation. Mr. Kingsley has managed capital projects and capital campaigns, built and trained non-profit boards, developed institutional identity and marketing initiatives, and secured major philanthropic gifts and government support. Mr. Kingsley has a B.A. in Art History from Columbia University, an M.A. in American Civilization from N.Y.U., and an M.B.A. from Baruch College in Management. He has served on numerous non-profit boards. The father of two daughters, he and his wife, Dara, live in the Usonia community in Pleasantville, NY.



Adam Gaynor

Partner

Mr. Gaynor, formerly a consultant at The Whelan Group, has conducted multiple consulting assignments for organizations including Pratt Institute and Mercy College; Westover School and Tapestry Charter School; UJA-Federation of New York, The Jewish Education Project and the Jewish Federation of Greater Middlesex County; and the Franciscan Brothers of Brooklyn and the YM-YWHA of Washington Heights and Inwood. Prior to joining The Whelan Group, Mr. Gaynor was Executive Director of The Curriculum Initiative, a national program that has worked with over 240 prominent independent schools. He has served in a range of non-profit leadership positions including Assistant Director of the Bronfman Center at NYU, social work consultant with The Educational Alliance on school-based programs, Program Director at the Jewish Agency's Department of Education in Jerusalem, and Director of Multicultural Affairs at Bates College. Mr. Gaynor is completing a Ph.D. in Education and Jewish Studies at NYU, holds an M.S. in Social Work from Columbia University, an M.A. in Jewish Studies from the Jewish Theological Seminary, and a B.A. in Women's Studies from Bates College. In addition to his professional responsibilities, he was a Scholar-in-Residence at NYU School of Law in 2011-12. He lives in Park Slope, Brooklyn, with his wife, Emily, and two children.

Library

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Plan A recognizes that while every nonprofit is unique, there are core challenges faced by any organization considering a transformation. Our resource center features selected articles, blog posts, and links to great material that can help you make smart decisions, and lead your organization to greater impact.

Filter by Type : [Articles](#) | [Publications](#) | [News and Events](#)

Continuing Education: Enhanced Revenue at a Time of Spiraling Costs?

From 1995 to 2005, college tuition spiraled upward by 36% at private schools and 51% at public schools; and costs continue to rise. At the same time, from 2005 - 2016, the growth of the adult population in higher education will increase by 20.5%, compared to 6% for traditional undergraduate students (under age 25). We believe that expanding and imagining new models of continuing and professional education will provide the critical revenue colleges need to slow the rising costs of undergraduate tuition and invest in other areas of an institution. This article provides a great overview of the field:

[Continuing Higher Education in America: A Profile](#)

Fundraising for Social Enterprises

In this article, written for UJA-Federation of New York's "Power Your Mission" Conference, Theresa Schieber and Plan A's Adam Gaynor address the critical role of traditional philanthropy in generating capital to launch and expand non-traditional revenue centers for non-profit organizations large and small.

[Raising Impact Capital: Designing a Fundraising Strategy for Your Social Enterprise](#)

New York State Passes the "Nonprofit Revitalization Act"

15% of New York State's workforce is employed in the non-profit sector, and New York City is home to some of the nation's largest and oldest charities, but the State had not updated its laws governing the sector in over forty years. After an exhaustive study by the Charities Bureau, the State Legislature passed a reform bill that streamlines several management processes while strengthening nonprofit governance provisions. Read on for a summary of the bill.

[Summary of the Provisions of the Nonprofit Revitalization Act](#)

The Brooklyn "Tech Triangle" and the Borough's Cultural Institutions

The Brooklyn Navy Yard, Downtown, and DUMBO have exploded in the past few years with over 525 start-ups employing over 10,000 tech and creative professionals. NYU's investment in the Polytechnic Institute and Cornell/Technion's emerging campus on Roosevelt Island are additional harbingers of growth. All of these developments point to new opportunities for Brooklyn's artists, designers, and cultural institutions to expand their audiences and strategic partnerships. Read on for more about New York's creative economy:

[Designing New York's Future](#)

The Case for Gender Audits in the Jewish Communal Sector

"In the same year that the Jewish press has re-exposed gross inequalities in favor of men in the Jewish professional sector, there has been a growing movement by Jewish educators to attract and retain teen boys, whom many fear are dropping out of Jewish education at a higher rate than girls. In short, despite the fact that men dominate communal decision making, we are afraid that boys are disaffected!"
Read more by Plan A's Adam Gaynor...

["Pursuing Gender Equality: A Few Concrete Steps"](#)

Financial Management Resources for Nonprofits

Many non-profit leaders come to the task without academic or professional training in financial management, an area of increasing importance to funders, both private and public. To help close this gap, The Wallace Foundation recently launched a website dedicated to providing free financial management resources and templates to non-profit organizations.

[Resources for Nonprofit Financial Management](#)

Why Strategic Planning Doesn't Necessarily Translate to Sound Decisions

We agree with Richard Marker's analysis that strong consulting practice does more than just fix a technical problem; if conducted well, high-quality consulting addresses the role that an organization's culture plays in supporting or undermining transformative change. Read more:

[Strategy is Culture](#)

Debunking the Overhead Myth

We are thrilled that the leaders of the country's three leading sources of information on nonprofits - GuideStar, Charity Navigator, and BBB Wise Giving Alliance - have jointly issued a statement challenging the myth that the percentage a nonprofit spends on overhead (administrative and fundraising expenses) is the most important measure of the organization's impact, management, and transparency. From experience we know that at various points in the lifecycle of a nonprofit, increasing the percentage spent on overhead is critical to building the capacity to improve long-term impact. Read the letter:

[The Overhead Myth](#)

Program Evaluation: Burden or Benefit?

The Foundation Center aptly states, "More and more foundations expect to see an evaluation component in the programs they fund." In a time of limited resources, we have also seen that individual donors increasingly view their gifts as social "investments" and expect a social "return." However, many nonprofits believe that program evaluations must be rigorous, empirical studies conducted by outside evaluators. In fact, many nonprofits already have the tools to conduct their own evaluations, and with a little coaching can gather and analyze the data that will help them to evaluate their work, broadcast their success, and leverage more resources to achieve their strategic goals.

The Latest Fad: Social Impact Bonds

"The 'social impact bond,' also known as a 'pay for success' bond, is the latest – and most discussed – tool in a broader playbook philanthropists are using to blend business and charity to make a bigger difference. Sometimes known as impact investing, these approaches include providing low-interest loans to nonprofits, making equity investments in companies that tackle social problems and investing a portion of a foundation's endowment in enterprises that produce measurable benefits to society and a financial return."
Although a bold experiment, this approach is still unproven and raises a host of thorny issues. While we continue to monitor this landscape, here is a nice summary article on social impact bonds:

[Getting Back More Than a Warm Feeling](#)

What Makes a Great Strategic Plan?

Many of the strategic plans we see make great doorstops or bookends; they are fifty pages of dense text that require a doctorate to decipher! So when shopping for a consultant to facilitate your planning process, ask to see a sample plan. It should 1) be clearly stated and concise, with an aspirational but realistic vision for the next few years, 2) be easy to implement without an owner's manual, 3) incorporate a realistic and affordable evaluation framework, 4) be directly tied to financial projections, 5) identify those responsible for implementing and reporting on specific initiatives, and 6) be flexible enough to make course corrections as evaluations are completed or an organization's financial position changes. In this way, a strategic plan becomes a tactical document, rather than a pie-in-the-sky exercise that diverts everyone's time from the work at hand.

What is the Difference Between a Mission and Vision?

Put simply, a mission is the business of a nonprofit or company, and usually includes the approach that the organization employs. A vision describes the future position of the organization; what it hopes to achieve through its work after a specific period of time. Defining the vision is a core step in strategic and business planning. It provides a waypoint from which to work backward; defining a vision spurs an organization to develop plans, allocate resources, and evaluate success over time calibrated to well-defined benchmarks.

[Defining Mission, Vision, and Values](#)

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Want to learn more? We want to hear from you.

- Send us an email at info@planaadvisors.com.
- Find us and follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn.
- For media inquiries, please contact Alissa Kaplan Michaels at Michaels Communications 212-864-5374.

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Schools



Higher
Education



Arts & Culture



Faith-based



Parks &
Open Space



Human Service
& Advocacy



Community
Development



Philanthropy
& Funding

Plan A provides highly individualized planning and implementation services to nonprofits and philanthropies including strategic and business planning, governance and leadership development, counsel on management and organizational change, and impactful approaches to resource development and allocation. Plan A delivers what organizational leadership and funders demand: effective and efficient approaches to setting a compelling vision, and meeting ambitious goals in an era of rapid change and growing competition for resources. To see how your organization can benefit from the right plan, the first time, please, [Contact Us](#).

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Plan A works closely with nonprofit leaders to strengthen performance and provide objective and experience-based advice on matters including governance, staff management, planning, financial management, organizational structure and more.

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