Capacity Building Solutions, Inc.

**Overview of Capacity Building Methodologies**

1. **Accountability/Ownership**
   1. *Key Driver/Theme:* There is often a misalignment between what an organization measures and what it values. As a result, there is confusion on behalf as to what should be the focus of management efforts. The goal of any accountability effort should be to first, ensure this alignment happens and second, create an environment where every manager or supervisor manages to these measures and is held accountable for achieving results. Moreover, any accountability infrastructure must involve a two-way communication stream and cannot be solely driven from the top. Staff must feel some control and ultimately ownership of their work responsibilities.
   2. *Assessment Questions:* What are the organizations goals and objectives? Are these objectives clear and understandable? Is there organizational alignment with these objectives? How is the organization performing against these goals and objectives? Who directly and indirectly influences the desired outcomes? Do they own the process? Is the process fluid or static? What is the plan for the future? Are the right people in place with the right motivations to make this happen?
   3. *Intervention:* Cull the answers from the assessment questions and generate an accountability plan for the organization. When completed every leadership and management position within the organization should have performance measures that are SMART (Specific Measurable Actionable Realistic and Time-Related).
   4. *Miscellaneous:* Where organizations get into trouble, is attempting to do this halfway and not really holding staff accountable for performance. There should be no exceptions once the process is implemented. Staff will quickly pick up on any inconsistencies and derail the process if they deem it unfair. Certainly, the organization should be vested in an individual’s success, but performance goals should be met or exceeded, not explained away.
   5. *Approach:*
      1. 1:1 interviews with senior leadership and management staff to understand existing cultural attitude towards accountability and ownership
      2. Review and assessment of existing performance management process including reconciling this with promotion and compensation decisions
      3. Review planning documents to identify short- and long-term goals and objectives; uncover implementation responsibilities for planning goals and objectives
      4. Review board minutes to assess accountability relationship between board and ED
      5. Conduct Focus group(s) with staff to solicit their feedback on accountability environment
      6. Develop accountability plan that clearly links planning objectives with internal systems including performance review process and compensation decisions
2. **Change Management**
   1. *Key Driver/Theme:* For an organization to effectively adapt to and ultimately be proactive about change, it must first build the organizational foundation for this to happen. Change management requires not only changing staff behavior, but also removing the obstacles that are in place that hinder their ability to change behavior. In addition, there must be an overriding rationale for change that is both understood and supported.
   2. *Assessment Questions*: What is the change we are trying to initiate? Do we know what success looks like? Is it clear to everyone why we need to change? Are the right people on board to support the change? What organizational barriers exist that could impede change? Are our systems/structures properly aligned with the change? Have we done enough to communicate the change initiative? What is the organization’s past track record with change? What could be done better or differently with this change initiative? How can we track our progress and momentum with change efforts? Is there real passion and/or belief in the change at critical levers within the organization?
   3. *Intervention:* A change management plan that effectively addresses the assessment questions. In addition, the application of the Change Execution History Survey to assess existing enablers and barriers to change. John Kotter’s (and other’s) writings on this topic lay out a clear roadmap on how to best make this happen.
   4. *Miscellaneous:* It may take 3-5 years to fully implement a change initiative, especially if the culture shift is significant. Many change management efforts lose momentum or declare victory too soon. For any change effort to work it truly needs to become rooted in the organization’s day-to-day work environment. Moreover, to paraphrase Jim Collins, you need to have “the right people on the bus” to ensure positive change will happen. Lastly, don’t forget to build in “quick hits (successes)” throughout the process; success breeds further success.
   5. *Approach:*
      1. Change Execution History Survey
      2. 1:1 interviews with senior management and key board members
      3. Focus group(s) with staff to probe survey results
      4. Review any past employee satisfaction or feedback data
      5. 360-degree surveys of all management level staff where appropriate
      6. Review and assess existing communication strategy
      7. Review and assess existing performance management system including recent promotion history
      8. Facilitated discussion with senior management on assessment results and plan for next steps.
      9. Create change management planning document that clearly articulates the change objectives and establishes the internal infrastructure and systems to effectively facilitate change
3. **Communications**
   1. *Key Driver/Theme:* When diagnosing organizational barriers to success the tendency is to look at functional support issues or programmatic miscalculations. However, once the consultant or in-house team begins delving into the issue, they often uncover communications as the number one issue. It is not uncommon to hear from both leadership and management that the “staff isn’t on the same page” or “our departments/programs operate as silos with very little understanding of what happens in other parts of the organization.” More often than not, this isn’t an intentional occurrence, but something that has evolved over time as the organization gets caught up in execution or growth issues.
   2. *Assessment Questions*: Is everyone in our organization on the same page in terms of our mission, vision, and strategic objectives? How would the average employee define success for the organization? How do we communicate major decisions that affect the organization? How often do we meet or interact as an organization to discuss these issues? Who owns the communication process? Do the leaders of the organization consider effective communication to be a critical element of their responsibilities? Do we use multiple communication levers to get our point across? What effort do we put forth to encourage two-way communications with staff? At what level do we gear our communications? How do we accommodate the various message needs of different audiences including the board, funders, and our clients? Who are the informal communication hubs within the organization and how do we leverage their status in this regard?
   3. *Intervention:* Development of a communication plan that outlines a common approach for the organization, but both understands and encourages the need for this to be a living document in a constant state of assessment. In certain cases, the development of a cross-functional Communications team that becomes an ingrained part of the organizational infrastructure.
   4. *Miscellaneous:* Communication skills are often developed individually and over the course of a lifetime. Basic communication skills can be taught and encouraged, but there is an element of innate ability that cannot be ignored. Therefore, systems must be balanced with the proper leverage of talent to be effective. Moreover, organizational cultures can often inhibit effective communication and may foster a sense of self-interest or disinformation, which takes time to correct. To some extent, there are some quick fixes, but staff will constantly be on the lookout for inconsistencies or reversion to past behaviors. Building an effective two-way communications infrastructure takes time, discipline, and trust. Lastly, flexibility coupled with on-going assessment is key as the organization uncovers the vehicles and approaches that work best for its work environment.
   5. *Approach:*
      1. Review past communication materials focused on both internal and external audiences including the dissemination process
      2. 1:1 interviews with senior team and key staff
      3. Administer communications survey and/or focus groups
      4. Facilitated discussion with senior team regarding assessment results
      5. Create an in-house cross functional communications team to review assessment results and develop intervention strategy
      6. Identify the various communication needs of specific audiences and design an appropriate strategy
      7. Research internal best practices including current and potential communication leaders within the organization
      8. Research external best practices from multiple sectors
      9. Create a communications planning document that builds the foundations for a new organizational approach to communications that values all organizational stakeholders and constituencies
4. **Financial Management**
   1. *Key Driver/Theme:* Instead of focusing on basic accounting issues, our intervention is concerned with how financial decisions are made within the organization. Effective financial decision-making requires a decision support infrastructure that is in place to facilitate well-informed decisions across multiple constituencies. Moreover, the organization must have a strategy in place, which drives its thinking in this regard and ultimately improves the likelihood of overall financial sustainability.
   2. *Assessment Questions*: What are our financial sustainability goals and objectives? Do we have all the financial reports needed to effectively run our organization? Do we fully understand product/service unit costs? Are we managing with a profit center or cost center mindset? What have been the financial trends over the past 3-5 years? What financial criteria do we use to make new product/service decisions? Do we hold managers accountable for financial results? Have we made the appropriate investment in professional development to encourage effective financial decision-making?
   3. *Intervention:* Development of financial goals and benchmarks to effectively monitor organizational performance and creation of tools including the possibility of some training modules to better inform financial decision-making.
   4. *Miscellaneous:* It’s difficult to professionalize the financial management function within an organization without having the in-house talent to effectively steward this process. Consultants have no shortage of ideas when it comes to how to do this work better, however the reality is that most organizations staff above their in-house talent levels. Bottom line is that there are very often minimal financial management capabilities beyond basic reporting requirements; a basic foundation of knowledge must be built before expectations can be raised.
   5. *Approach:*
      1. 1:1 interviews with senior team and board treasurer
      2. Review financial reports and budget documents for last 3 years
      3. Conduct basic ratio analysis and compare to industry benchmarks where possible
      4. Review strategic and operational planning documents over past 3 years to reconcile with financial reporting documents
      5. Conduct research of external benchmarks to uncover applicable performance measures
      6. Conduct program and service analysis of all existing programs
      7. Review and assess performance management process to vett alignment with financial objectives
      8. Create financial management planning document that facilitates effective decision support and align organization behind consistent financial objectives
      9. Create financial management team that includes cross section of management and key staff.
5. **Human Resource Management**
   1. *Key Driver/Theme:* Any HR department (or individual) must deal with personnel management issues that ensure basic compliance with labor law, etc. However, moving beyond this compliance/administrative mindset to a Workplace Satisfaction mindset is what truly separates high performing organizations. The Gallup Organization has done extensive research in this regard and their Q12 Workplace survey is critical in our approach. Moreover, there are basic human resource levers that can be pulled to improve the organizational effectiveness of any organization and our focus is on these issues.
   2. *Assessment Questions:* Are we comfortable that we are complying with basic labor law? Is there a point person to handle personnel inquiries and what is their level of experience and training? Do we currently manage our staff as valuable assets that can be leveraged or positions that need to be slotted? Are we happy with the level of talent being recruited into the agency? What is our approach to employee retention and succession planning? Do we provide staff with the education and training they need to be successful at their jobs? Does our performance management process align with strategic objectives and values? Is our compensation system considered equitable by staff? Are we using compensation as a strategic lever to reward performance? Do we have an effective communications infrastructure? Do we regularly measure employee satisfaction and if yes, then how do we act on this information?
   3. *Intervention:* Administration of workplace survey and focus groups to solicit employee feedback. Development of HR Committee/team to establish HR priorities. Development of formal HR plan to address five organizational levers: hiring and succession planning; education and training; performance management; compensation, benefits & rewards; and communications
   4. *Miscellaneous:* The HR function has been significantly elevated in status in the for-profit sector as it has begun to appreciate the impact HR has on the bottom line. Non-profits often underinvest in this area and struggle to see the same bottom line connection. The trick is to move beyond this mindset and clearly tie HR efforts to bottom line performance accountability where possible.
   5. *Approach:*
      1. Review and assess HR policies and procedures manual
      2. Audit existing personnel management responsibilities and assess whether there are outsourcing opportunities
      3. Review and assess approach to five organizational infrastructure levers: 1) hiring and succession planning; 2) education and training; 3) performance management; 4) compensation, benefits & rewards; and 5) communications strategy
      4. Review past employee satisfaction or feedback data that pertain to the workplace environment
      5. Administer workplace survey to gauge current employee opinions if no effort has been made in this regard within the last 6 months
         1. Create scorecard for all personnel with supervisory responsibility
      6. Conduct focus group(s) with staff to further probe workplace issues
      7. Establish internal supervisor/management best practices and facilitate dialogue amongst supervisors on how they can best learn from each other
      8. Create staff HR committee as an on-going vehicle to provide feedback on workplace issues
      9. Create HR plan that builds on assessment process and sets clear short- and long-term goals and objective
6. **Knowledge Management**
   1. *Key Driver/Theme:* The capture and dissemination of institutional knowledge is a constant challenge for both for profit and non-profit organizations. Knowledge management should be about leveraging this knowledge to increase organizational performance both internally and externally. The Digital Nervous System concept pioneered by Bill Gates, is an effective way to structure knowledge management thinking and practices.
   2. *Assessment Questions:* Do we understand our knowledge needs (both internal management and external market driven)? Do we know what knowledge currently exists within the organization? How do we address knowledge gaps? How do we currently capture institutional and staff knowledge? How do we ensure that knowledge is effectively disseminated throughout the organization? Do we value knowledge management as a catalyst for enhanced organizational performance? What barriers and enables exist to enhancing our knowledge management process? Do we use our internal knowledge to establish and promote internal best practice thinking?
   3. *Intervention:* Develop a knowledge management plan using the Gates’ Digital Nervous System model as a catalyst to audit existing practices and identify impending needs in the following areas: basic operations; business reflexes; strategic thinking; and customer interaction.
   4. *Miscellaneous:* Ultimately any effective knowledge management process will require an on-going investment in technology and training. There are of course low-tech solutions, but they aren’t feasible or advisable in the long term. Contrary to popular belief, a basic knowledge management technology driven architecture is not that expensive and can be built leveraging standard business software applications. Lastly, it is also important to spend the time necessary to convince staff of the benefits of spending their time of this type of activity; all persons responsible for populating the knowledge architecture must see the value-added benefit to themselves and their departments.
   5. *Approach:* 
      1. Review and assess existing knowledge management processes, especially as they pertain to the categories espoused in the Digital Nervous System model
      2. Conduct 1:1 interviews with senior and management level staff to uncover knowledge gaps
      3. Administer survey of staff to further assess knowledge needs
      4. Research best practice approaches in both the nonprofit and for-profit sectors to identify models applicable to client situation
         1. Technology and non-technology driven
      5. If necessary, conduct educational workshops on the value of knowledge management
      6. Prioritize knowledge capture priorities and develop learning management system; strive for “big hit” value items
      7. Create a knowledge management plan with both short- and long-term objectives
7. **Leadership Development**
   1. *Key Driver/Theme:* Some great leaders are simply born that way, but most have innate abilities that first, must be identified and then second, cultivated. Leadership is different from management and often requires different skills and talents. However, many organizations assume that good manager can naturally evolve into a leadership role by simply assuming increasing leadership responsibilities. In smaller organizations this can be especially troublesome as the line between management and leadership roles are often blurry. Unfortunately, most organizations often underinvest in leadership issues such as succession planning and executive professional development. As a result, leaders are ill prepared to assume their roles and end up getting mired in tactical management issues rather than forging the requisite leadership agenda for the organization.
   2. *Assessment Questions:* How is the CEO/President/Executive Director role defined in the organization? How is the organization structured in terms of senior team responsibilities? Is there a leadership team or reliance on only a few individuals? What are the characteristics the organization is looking for in its leaders? Has the leadership team communicated a clear and consistent vision/mission/direction for staff including defining both short- and long-term success? How does the organization hold its leaders accountable for being effective in their role(s)? Is leadership behavior consistent with its rhetoric? How does our current leadership team stack up against the needs of the organization? What is the plan to bridge any potential leadership gaps? How does the organization approach professional development at the leadership level? Does our leadership team work collaboratively or is there a silo mentality? Is there constructive conflict and trust at the leadership level? What are the future leadership needs? Who are the future leaders that exist within the organization and what is the best plan for their growth and development?
   3. *Intervention:* A leadership development strategy document that assesses the existing leadership needs of the organization including bridging any existing gaps, supporting the needs of existing leaders and cultivating the talents of future leaders. Moreover, the plan will need to develop clear leadership performance measures (including board measures) and institute a 360-degree feedback mechanism to gauge progress against these expectations. There are multiple resources that inform our thinking on this topic, but Pat Lencioni, Jack Welch and Jim Collins are significant influences.
   4. *Miscellaneous*: Starting with the senior leader, the leadership team needs to be ready for this type of self-examination and potentially moving out of their comfort zone to step up their performance.
   5. *Approach*:
      1. Review strategic planning documents and board minutes over 3-year period and reconcile this with actual performance outcomes
      2. Review minutes of senior team meetings over 3-year period
      3. Conduct 1:1 interviews with leadership team and key board members
      4. Administer 360-degree survey tool where staff evaluates leadership performance both collectively and individually
      5. Facilitate dialogue with leadership team on leadership issues including strengths and weaknesses of existing team
         1. If warranted, conduct team evaluation survey with senior team members
      6. Review and assess existing professional development program including opportunities leveraged by senior leadership team over past three years
      7. Review and assess promotions and hiring of management and leadership staff over past three years including reconciling these decisions against performance evaluations
      8. Create leadership development plan with clear long- and short-term objectives to enhance leadership environment
8. **Management (Talent) Development**
   1. *Key Driver/Theme:* Similar to the logic behind leadership development, not all staff are naturally poised to be good managers. In fact, there are often line-staff who perform at extremely high levels that struggle when given supervisory or management responsibilities. All organizations should clearly define the required management competencies and expectations of the organization. Once these standards are in place, training protocols can established, and performance management tools implemented that track performance and ultimately screen existing staff for their management potential. The work of Peter Drucker has greatly informed our thinking on this topic.
   2. *Assessment Questions:* Does the organization understand the fundamental differences between management and leadership? How do we identify a management need within our organization? How do we identify management talent from within our organization to meet this need? What criteria do we use when recruiting managers from outside the organization? What do we expect of our management level staff in terms of their job performance and do these expectations evolve over time? Do we generally have clear measures of accountability for our management staff? What training do we provide for new and existing managers to ensure their success? How much non-programmatic training do we provide our managers? What is the career progression track for a management talent within our organization? What are the characteristics of managers who seem to thrive or fail in our organization?
   3. *Intervention:* A management development plan that audits existing management needs and matches them against existing talent and/or identifies the support needs/challenges of given managerial roles. In addition, training protocols will be established for current, new, and future management levels. Moreover, specific management focused evaluation tools and measures will be established to gauge performance.
   4. *Miscellaneous:* The key with this intervention is to clarify the difference between management and leadership. Management is much more of a “nuts and bolts” responsibility that deals with tactical day-to day issues and is very bottom line driven. The problem many small businesses and non-profits have is that existing managers may be ill suited for this type of role but assume the responsibility for compensation or status reasons.
   5. *Approach:*
      1. Review and assessment of existing organizational structure and management positions within the organization
      2. Review and assessment of each management position and job description within the organization?
      3. Review and assessment of overall management needs of the organization including values, experience, and skills to identify existing strengths and gaps within the organization
      4. Review and assessment of existing performance management process as it pertains to management level personnel
         1. Assess characteristics of who thrives and who fails within existing culture
      5. Review and assessment of the existing hiring and succession planning practices of the organization including professional development opportunities available for existing and future managers and supervisors
      6. Conduct a 360-degree survey of all management level personnel and/or workplace survey to solicit feedback on management performance
      7. Facilitated discussion with management level staff on assessment finding
      8. Where appropriate conduct basic training management development workshops for existing managers and supervisors
      9. Create a management development plan for the organization with both short- and long-term goals and objectives
9. **Marketing Management**
   1. *Key Driver/Theme*: Marketing begins and ends with the customer value proposition whether its clients, partner, funders, public policy officials, and other stakeholder groups. Moreover, an organization needs to know where it is currently positioned relative to its competition and clarify and strengthen its positioning where appropriate. Lastly, marketing involves clearly understanding what your organization is best at and leveraging this information to grow your impact and differentiate itself in a smart fashion. We use the work of Philip Kotler and Peter Drucker to inform our approach to this topic.
   2. *Assessment Questions:* Who are our customer(s)? What is our value proposition(s)? How are our customer groups segmented? How do we target these customer segments? How good are we at delivering on these value propositions? What makes us relevant to these customer groups? Can we demonstrate the efficacy/value of our products/programs/services? How do customers access our product and is this the best distribution strategy? How often do we conduct customer satisfaction surveys or focus groups, and do we proactively and positively act on this information? Who are our competitors? How are they positioned? How can we best compete against our competition? What market opportunities exist in the short term? What are some long-term opportunities? What is our biggest market threat? Do we understand the economics of our marketplace and can leverage this to our benefit?
   3. *Intervention:* A comprehensive marketing plan that addresses the above listed questions in detail and best positions the organization for smart growth.
   4. *Miscellaneous:* Marketing investments can be a hard sell in the current economic environment. The reason is that most organizations get caught up in a short-sighted opportunity cost mindset and stick to tactical business development strategies. While these economic concerns may be invalid, the key is to take a more proactive long-term view of their market situation. All marketing investments should be continually tracked and evaluated to monitor their ROI. In addition, in any highly competitive and fragmented marketplace, it is important to position your organization wisely to ensure long-term sustainability.
   5. *Approach:*
      1. Review and assessment of any marketing materials or market research conducted over the past 3-5 years including customer satisfaction measurement tool
         1. In the absence of any useful customer feedback data, it may be necessary to design and administer a survey tool to collect some baseline data
      2. Review and assess development plan/activities of the organization including past performance over a 3-5-year time period
      3. Conduct 1:1 interviews with key Board members, leadership, management and program staff
      4. Facilitate a dialogue around SWOT assessment
      5. Conduct stakeholder satisfaction survey with representatives from constituencies who either directly or indirectly benefit the organization
      6. Create a cross-functional marketing team to assess marketing efforts on an on-going basis
      7. Review the relevancy and efficacy of existing programs and services relative to competing alternatives in the marketplace
      8. Review and assess the economics of the marketplace to uncover potential leverage opportunities
      9. Create a marketing plan that best positions the organization to take advantage of current industry dynamics while also factoring in future opportunities and market changes
10. **Organizational Structure/Decision Making**
    1. *Key Driver/Theme*: Most organizations, when asked, can produce a Table of Organization or some high-level document that outlines roles and responsibilities. However, when pressed on the real-world application of this document (s) it becomes apparent that there are some cracks in the foundation regarding the day-to-day utility of the thinking behind it. In fact, some organizations view this as a box they need to check off or hurdle to cross to accommodate the needs of external audiences rather than facilitate effective organizational outcomes. Other organizations see some benefit to the process but revisit the model so infrequently that end up being designed for yesterday rather than positioned for today and tomorrow. To paraphrase Jack Welch, “organizations are perfectly designed for the results they get.” Lastly, it is rare that the model trickles down beyond the senior management levels and when it does, there isn’t ample attention paid to the details of roles, responsibilities and ultimate accountability for decision making. Therefore, instead of creating a culture of true empowerment, what transpires is an environment where confusion is offset by personal relationships and lobbying. As a result, risk aversion becomes the norm creating an unhealthy dependency on senior leadership.
    2. *Assessment Questions:* Is there a Table of Organization that is clear about roles and responsibilities within the organization? Do our job descriptions and performance management processes link effectively with Table of Organization? Does this document accurately reflect the internal and external dynamics confronting the organization? What the average and maximum layers involved in any key decision? Which decisions are the domain of programs or departments and which decisions require collective and collaborative decision-making? Are decisions effectively integrated with implementation efforts? Does accountability ultimately rest with the decision maker? Are all staff clear regarding the decision-making roles with the organization? What general criteria do we use to empower effective decision making? Does our structure encourage risk taking, innovative behavior or hamper it? Have we identified the future leaders and managers of the organization and are we giving them the opportunity to grow into that role?
    3. *Intervention:* A thorough assessment of the existing organizational structure including the roles and responsibilities inherent to the model; clear and consistent decision-making matrix.
    4. *Miscellaneous:* It takes time to build and organizational infrastructure, so it should naturally take time to redesign it. The tendency is to jump in and begin making major changes without thinking through the ramifications of those changes including the existing vested interests within the hierarchy of the organization. Unless otherwise convinced, management and senior level staff will resist any changes they perceive as integral to their domain of responsibility. Moreover, changing the formal structure is only a small part of the battle. It’s significantly more difficult to translate the new structure into practice and senior leadership must model the new behavior and hold their direct reports accountable for modeling the behavior. In addition, existing support systems may require some reengineering to be properly aligned with the new structure. Lastly, any significant change in structure constitutes a major development within the organization and requires the requisite efforts at building staff education and buy-in.
    5. *Approach:*
       1. Review and assessment of existing Table of Organization
       2. Facilitated discussion with senior management team about existing model
       3. Conduct 1:1 interview with senior team members, key board members and targeted staff
       4. Review and assessment of existing job descriptions of senior team members including decision making authority
       5. Review of strategic planning efforts and outcomes over past 3-5 years
          1. Conduct high level SWOT Assessment (if information is not already available)
       6. Review performance appraisals of senior team members and targeted management staff
       7. Conduct skills assessment of senior management team based on including gap assessment based on current and future organizational needs
       8. Create a table of organization with clear roles and responsibilities including a well-defined organizational decision-making matrix with relevant accountability mechanisms/tools in place.
11. **Outcomes Management/Measurement**
    1. *Key Driver/Theme*: Outcomes Management is the precursor to any credible effort at building accountability within an organization. In its most basic sense, outcomes management is about tracking an organizations performance against its mission and business objectives. Of course, strategic alignment becomes a critical issue in this process. For alignment to take place there must be a clear vision and mission driving the process and a focused commitment to achieving measurable results. One approach is to use the balanced scorecard methodology created by Robert Kaplan to drive this process. We prefer not to dig deeply into specific product/program/service outcomes, but instead focus our efforts on understanding the organization wide (macro) goals and objectives and transferring this into leadership/management initiatives.
    2. *Assessment Questions:* What are the measurement objectives of the organization; what is success? How is the organization tracking the relevancy of its products/programs/services to its target client populations? How is the organization tracking the efficacy of its products/programs/services? Who owns the measurement process? Are there outside stakeholders driving the measurement process and what are their objectives? Is there clarity and consistency throughout the organization on what to measure (and value)? Are outcomes measures aligned with the vision and mission of the organization? Are outcomes measures aligned with existing management systems? Are there business-oriented measures to complement traditional mission-oriented measures? Do existing measures effectively inform the decision-making process? Are we measuring activities or outcomes? Is the measurement process driven from the top down or bottom up or is it two-way? Is the process dynamic and flexible or static and fixed? How often are measures reevaluated to ensure relevance and efficacy? What is the communications strategy in place to support the outcomes management system?
    3. *Intervention:* A balanced scorecard influenced methodology that establishes measures at the macro and micro levels of the organization around four measurement categories: 1) financial; 2) internal business processes 3) customer; and 4) learning & growth.
    4. *Miscellaneous:* Effective measurement takes time and is an iterative process. Moreover, it is important that the leadership team drives the process, but they must allow time for discussion and feedback from other constituencies. Identifying performance benchmarks and establishing targets is only part of the process. It is equally important that an organizational dialogue takes place to build buy-in for the measures with all pertinent stakeholders. It is also important to remember that while external benchmark comparisons are good, they aren’t always critical and internal best practices will often suffice for targeting and management purposes. Lastly, any measurement process needs to be viewed as a dynamic process that is flexible enough to be adjusted as needed to reflect the internal and external environments.
    5. *Approach:*
       1. Review and assess existing program and business outcomes measures including performance tracking over a 3-5-year time horizon
       2. Conduct 1:1 interviews with the leadership team, board officers, and key staff members
       3. If not already available, facilitate use of Balanced Scorecard influenced assessment tool with the senior management team
       4. Create a steering committee to lead outcomes management process for assessment, development, and tracking purposes
       5. Conduct research to identify relevant industry benchmarks
       6. Review and assess performance management process to gauge alignment with outcomes management process
       7. Create communication and training infrastructure to support outcomes management objectives
       8. Create outcomes management plan for the organization using a balanced scorecard influenced methodology as the foundation for the process
12. **Strategic Planning**
    1. *Key Driver/*Theme: Strategic planning is an area where many small businesses and non-profits have some level of experience, but their efforts are often fraught with a “what could be” rather than a “what is” mentality.” There is nothing wrong with lofty ambitions and goals, but they must fit the reality of the organization’s situation. It is less important that the document is a good read, then that it has clear, concise goals and objectives that are attainable and consistent with the organization’s vision and mission. Moreover, many plans don’t spend enough time on measurement or accountability and ignore the workplace ramifications of their planning efforts. We use the Michael Porter’s Five Forces Model, SWOT Analysis and Balanced Scorecard methodology to help inform our efforts.
    2. *Assessment Questions:* Why does the organization exist? What are the core organizational values? What does it hope to accomplish in both the short and long term? Who are the primary customers and what do they value? How good is the organization at delivering value to its primary customers? How can the organization do a better job of delivering value to its customer? What are the internal organizational dynamics and how can they be leveraged to the organization’s benefit? What are the external market dynamics and how can they be leveraged to the organizations benefit? What are our measures of success? How do we ensure the organization is aligned behind its success measures? Who owns the planning goals and objectives and how are they held accountable? Do we have the right human capital to execute on our planning objectives? What are the “three horizons” of our strategic planning efforts?
    3. *Intervention:* Development of a strategic plan that is actionable and measurable. Multiple tools will be used to facilitate this process.
    4. *Miscellaneous:* While most management staff are somewhat familiar with the strategic planning process, they are also cynical about its practical effectiveness. It ends up being one of the “hoops you jump through” to work for the organization or an exercise in “blue sky” thinking. The key is to ensure that the end product is useful from a hands-on management perspective and applicable to daily decision making, as well as clear about what matters and what doesn’t. Moreover, it should be seen as a rallying document that both motivates staff and clarifies organizational co-dependency around strategic performance objectives.
    5. *Approach:*
       1. Review and assess existing strategic planning document(s) and track historical performance over 3-5-year period
       2. Conduct 1:1 interviews with the senior leadership team and executive committee of the board
       3. Facilitate use of the following assessment tools: SWOT, Porter’s Five Forces Questions, and the Balanced Scorecard
       4. Where appropriate, conduct a program and service analysis using assessment results
       5. Review and assess alignment of strategic planning objectives with organizational infrastructure levers and internal systems
       6. Review and assess financial reporting documents and track historical performance over a 3-5-year period
       7. Conduct focus group(s) or retreat with staff to solicit their feedback on planning and implementation of strategic goals and objectives
       8. Conduct 1:1 interviews and/or facilitated discussions with key stakeholders to validate strategic goals and objectives
       9. Create strategic planning document that looks at all three planning horizons and positions the organization accordingly through effective organizational alignment and clear performance accountability measures.