



District
Management
Group

MANAGER'S TOOLKIT

Is Your Strategic Plan Up to Today's Challenges?

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DMC Manager's Toolkit

Is your strategic plan up to today's challenges?

While virtually all districts have a strategic plan, some strategic plans provide a clear vision and detailed objectives that drive action throughout the district on a day-to-day basis. Other strategic plans, by contrast, are well-crafted documents that sit on the shelf.

Rate your performance

- 25 and over:** Congratulations! You have a stellar strategic plan
- 16 to 24:** You are well on your way to having a strong strategic plan
- 8 to 15:** With a little more effort, the strategic plan can be made more powerful
- 7 or below:** The strategic plan may need more refinement



Take the following test and see how your strategic plan rates.

QUESTIONS

RATE YOUR RESPONSE

The strategic plan should serve as a useful guiding document that determines district operations on a consistent basis.

How often do you use it in your leadership meetings?

- 5 = Every week
- 4 = Regularly
- 3 = Quarterly
- 2 = Occasionally
- 1 = Almost never

Does your plan articulate a short list of priorities (ideally fewer than 5)?

- 5 = Fewer than 6 priorities
- 4 = Fewer than 10 priorities
- 3 = More than 10
- 2 = More than 15
- 1 = More than I can remember

Does the plan articulate goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART)?

- 5 = Yes, definitely
- 4 = Goals may not meet all these criteria, but are well-defined
- 3 = Goals are somewhat defined
- 2 = Goals are not very clear
- 1 = Goals are not defined in any of these ways

Does the plan include specific actions/priorities for district functions besides academics, e.g. finance, operations, human capital, etc.?

- 5 = Every function understands their role in realizing the strategic plan
- 4 = Most functions are included in the strategic plan
- 3 = Some functions are included
- 2 = Few functions are included
- 1 = Specific actions are not defined, except in academics

Is there a balance of both leading (predictive) and lagging (backwards-looking) measures in defining SMART goals?

- 5 = Yes, definitely
- 4 = Both types of measures are tracked to some degree
- 3 = Few leading measures are used
- 2 = Only lagging measures are used
- 1 = Don't know

Has there been an articulation of how implementation will be handled? In other words, do you have specific departments, people, and tasks identified?

- 5 = Yes, everything is clearly defined
- 4 = Many departments have clear definition
- 3 = Some tasks are defined
- 2 = Very little is defined
- 1 = Nothing is specified

TOTAL

