

Strategic Planning: Applications and Results

William C. Ronco, Ph.D.

Too often, architects fail or fall short in their strategic planning efforts. Building on lessons learned from architects in a cross-section of organizations, a set of simple principles for successfully applying strategic planning ideas is outlined in this report.

This report opens with a review of basic strategic planning concepts and an explanation of why strategic planning is important to architects. Examples showing how several firms have applied strategic planning for their own development follow. The report ends by highlighting lessons gleaned from these case profiles and recapping strategic planning principles that architects will find useful.

For further discussion about strategic concepts and approaches, see topic 6.2, “Strategic Planning for the Design Firm,” in the 13th edition of *The Architect’s Handbook of Professional Practice*.

STRATEGIC PLANNING BASICS

The American Management Association’s *Complete Guide to Strategic Planning for Small Businesses* defines a strategic plan as a written document of intent for a company—the company’s vision of its future position and value. It is a means for planning future growth and profitability and, as such, is key to the company’s overall management process.

Strategic planning involves a structured effort to develop a long-term plan for an organization. This effort should include four different components:

1. Collecting organizational intelligence, that is, the data that defines the organization’s key strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities
2. Clarifying the organization’s vision, mission, values, and goals
3. Writing a business plan that translates the vision, mission, and goals into more specific business objectives and measures
4. Developing several specific action initiatives that implement key aspects of the strategic plan at every level of the organization

Architecture firms typically hold an annual strategic planning meeting or retreat at which they develop a plan for the year. Many follow up this effort with shorter quarterly meetings to track the progress of the action items put into place at the annual meeting.

What Strategic Planning Is and Is Not

Strategic planning differs in important ways from several similar-sounding terms. In particular, architects sometimes confuse strategic planning with “business planning,” “marketing strategy,” and “strategic thinking.”

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Business planning and marketing strategy differ from strategic planning in that each focuses on one aspect of the organization. Business planning consists of financial projections for future performance, and is usually based on past performance and best-guess thinking about the performance of markets and the economy. Marketing strategy consists of a firm's decisions about its market mix, the types of clients it wants to have, and some plans for winning work in its markets of choice.

Strategic planning often includes both financial planning and marketing strategy as part of a more comprehensive consideration of the organization. In particular, strategic planning usually includes working to refine an organization's purpose, vision, mission, and values, as well as its financial and marketing goals.

Strategic thinking, on the other hand, is an approach to problem-solving, a disciplined effort to develop long-term, creative solutions to a wide variety of challenges. Strategic thinking can be used to address design or creative issues as well as for organizational concerns.

Why Strategic Planning Is Important for Architects

Strategic planning can generate important outcomes and benefits for all kinds of organizations, but it has particularly significant potential for architects. Without strategic planning, financial pressures and everyday client demands can, de facto, define a professional practice. As a result, architects may succeed financially, but they are less likely to have the jobs or clients they want the most. Strategic planning offers a mechanism architects can use to develop a form of professional practice and organization more congruent with their personal and professional interests.

In his classic book *The Reflective Practitioner*, Donald Schon pointed out the need for all kinds of professionals to step back, reflect, and develop long-term approaches to their work. By creating the time and structure for introspection, strategic planning makes it possible for architects to design their practices much as they design their buildings, and to engage in ongoing organizational learning much as they engage in ongoing learning about design.

Beyond making the practice of architecture more personally satisfying, designing a practice with strategic planning helps sharpen a firm's brand, or identity, in the marketplace. Clients more readily recognize service provider organizations that possess a clear sense of who they are. Strategic planning can thus help architecture firms differentiate themselves from competitors who, as one large client commented, "all look pretty much alike to me."

Strategic planning can also help architects address the everyday operational issues that plague the profession: profitability, operational consistency, and stability over economic cycles. Strategic planning solidly links the vision, mission, values, and goals that architects usually like to discuss with the mundane operational concerns they often neglect. Establishment of this connection provides a purpose and focus for architects that help them address issues essential for a firm's ongoing success.

THE CASE PROFILES

The case profiles in this report reflect a cross-section of practice settings so readers can see how strategic planning works in a variety of situations. Each reader may derive the greatest value from the cases that most resemble his or her own situation. However,

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useful insight for practically any practice setting can be gleaned from all the examples. The following practice environments are profiled:

- A large national, multi-office firm that focuses on mission-critical buildings
- A midsized regional, two-office firm with a rich history that focuses on educational and institutional clients
- A midsized regional firm that mixes architecture practice with landscape architecture and regional planning
- A small rural practice that mixes architecture with construction
- A facility and construction department in a major urban hospital

Each person interviewed for these profiles has studied and applied strategic planning. To develop the profiles, each was asked the following questions:

1. What kinds of strategic planning efforts has your firm engaged in (e.g. retreats, development of goal statements, client surveys, internal initiatives)
2. What have been the most important results and outcomes of your strategic planning efforts?
3. What aspects of your strategic planning efforts were not as effective as you would have liked, and what might you do differently next time?
4. What advice about strategic planning would you give to other A&E organizations?

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Profile 1: EYP Mission Critical Facilities[®], Inc.

EYP Mission Critical Facilities (EYP MCF) evolved out of Einhorn Yaffee Prescott, Architecture & Engineering, a thirty-year-old firm based in Albany, New York. EYP MCF specializes in designing, testing, and commissioning technically sophisticated critical facilities that must remain operational all day, every day. Now in its fourth year, EYP/MCF has more than 200 employees. The firm is headquartered in New York City and has offices in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Chicago, and Albany, Middletown, and White Plains, New York. Steven Einhorn, chairman and president, furnished the following information about his company's use of strategic planning:

What kinds of strategic planning efforts has your firm engaged in?

We started Einhorn Yaffee Prescott in 1972. From the very beginning, we were always thinking about the types of clients we wanted to have, clients that would help grow the firm. We went to potential clients and asked them what they valued. For the first couple of years that was our strategic plan: relationship building to land the clients we wanted. We started a strategic planning group early in our history, however, got into a routine of annual meetings and quarterly reviews. We thought it was more efficient to have a group working to formulate the issues and bring them back to the leadership. Beyond the annual meetings, strategic planning has always been a part of our management style. We have always talked about who are we and where are we going.

What were the results of your strategic planning efforts?

Every two to three years we found ourselves facing some kind of big decision, opening a new office or entering a new market. Just a few years ago, we split off a major portion of

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the company to form EYP Mission Critical Facilities, Inc. The strategic planning we did in the formal retreats and the ongoing dialogue has helped us make smart decisions.

Also, our strategic planning work has always been very motivating for people throughout the organization. It's a much richer environment to work in when you know where your firm is going and when the firm shares that information openly and honestly.

What aspects of strategic planning were more difficult and challenging?

The biggest lesson learned for us has been that some very talented people who want to be on a strategic planning committee don't have the long-term interest to work really effectively with the process. You have to get people who are really committed to the strategic planning process over the long term; it's difficult to have people come in and out of it.

Based on your experience, what advice would you give others?

Strategic planning is something that has to be ingrained into your culture; it can't be something you just do at meetings and retreats. We integrate strategic planning into your whole organization. We have our strategic planning meetings at the same time as our board of director meetings so the two are always connected. We always share information from the meetings with staff immediately. The strategic planning group also participates in a monthly conference call. However, it's important for the staff to see that strategic planning is not some momentous, time-consuming thing it's just part of the way we do business.

Profile 2: Holabird & Root

This historic 125-year-old firm has a staff of sixty people and offices in Chicago and Rochester, Minnesota. Holabird & Root focuses on work with academic, government, and fine arts and other cultural clients. Jim Miller, IBD, associate principal, provided the following responses:

What kinds of strategic planning efforts has your firm engaged in?

About six months ago, we formed a group that constitutes a broad cross-section of employees and began to discuss our strengths and weaknesses and our markets. We began to discuss who we are. At about the same time, the partnership group also met began meeting. We started discussing what our vision, mission, and values should be for the next two years. We chose that time frame to keep our work an active document.

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I initiated the strategic planning work. About two years ago, in my marketing work, I was asking the firm these sorts of questions: What are we trying to get? Where are we trying to go? Should I be cold-calling McDonald's down the street, or is there a direction here? Intuitively, we all knew the direction of the firm, but it was important to get it on paper. The people in the firm need to know what's fresh, and we need to be better business stewards. Instead of asking, "Do we need work?", we were asking, "What kind of work do we need?"

What were the results of your strategic planning efforts?

As a result of our strategic plan effort, we balanced the work more effectively among our practice areas. It got us to look more carefully at how we can protect ourselves. Instead of

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70 percent of our work being in academics, we now have a more evenly balanced spread of project types. We have made a more proactive marketing effort as a result of the strategic planning.

Doing the strategic planning work made it easier for us to market and do business development work. Opening the doors was easy once we were clear about what we wanted. What was hard was saying no. We are more thoughtful and selective in our proposal efforts. Two years ago we were sending out more than 130–140 proposals a year. Our hit rate was low, so there was lots of wasted effort. Because of the strategic planning, we send out fewer proposals but achieve a much higher hit rate.

In six months time, we have almost doubled our fees. With a little effort from a bunch of us, just by talking we have almost doubled our business. I think that's a really positive lesson.

What aspects of the strategic planning work have been difficult or challenging?

For me personally, this has gone slowly I would have liked it to happen more quickly.

Based on your own experience, what advice do you have for other architects?

We have a group considering what the firm should focus on next. It's been very useful to get a good mix of different kinds of people in that group, and to include some project architects. I took a seminar on strategic planning at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. That provided good information to get me started. My other advice is to "do it." We have everybody on the same page, but it would have been useful to do it earlier. I certainly wouldn't wait 124 years to do this again.

Profile 3: Saratoga Associates

More than thirty-five years old, this multidisciplinary firm provides landscape architecture, architecture, planning, and engineering services in the northeastern United States. It has approximately 50 employees in Saratoga Springs, New York; New York City, and Boston. Michael Rudden, executive vice president, was interviewed for this report.

What kinds of strategic planning efforts has your firm engaged in?

We broke our efforts into steps over several years. First, we did a millennium plan for the financial restructuring, resulting in a wider equity distribution and renewed commitment from the principals. It was important to settle the financial restructuring and corporate bylaws issues of owner transition first, and to do that well. Then we worked on the visioning process. We developed five key goals—affirm characteristics common to all of us, recognize and capture future marketing opportunities, ensure leadership succession, create a culture for professional and personal satisfaction, and develop an implementation plan. In the third phase, we brought an organizational consultant on board. Our work with him helped us understand who we are as individuals and a firm and what our clients think of us. It also helped us identify key evaluation criteria for pursuing and completing projects in terms of client success, professional satisfaction, and profitability. This work included strategy sessions, client and employee surveys, 360-degree surveys of our leaders, action plans, and a phased implementation plan. The last step was retaining

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specialized consultants to assist us in solidifying our brand and position in the industry and developing a marketing identity to support this.

What were the results of your strategic planning efforts?

Our strategic planning produced a shared vision of what the firm could be and empowered us to strive to achieve this. Our decision making now is much more structured, inclusive, and transparent, with little second-guessing. The benefit is an organization that is moving forward in a focused, committed manner. The decision tree is clear. People who hadn't worked together before are now rowing in the same direction. Our new "one firm" approach is helping us harness skills and insights across a variety of practice areas in three offices. Two benefits result from this collaboration. The first is a much higher level of professional satisfaction among the firm's principals and employees, and the second is outcomes of consistently higher quality.

What aspects of strategic planning were difficult or challenging?

Our initial challenge was to gain leadership support for undertaking a strategic planning effort, followed by a firmwide commitment to continue. Operationally, the hardest things were juggling the time and resources needed for the effort with the day-to-day running of the business, and communicating a consistent message to a variety of consultants. From a professional practice perspective the key challenge was developing a consensus across a broad range of interests. The biggest disappointment was that, despite an extensive process to select the right Web site designer, we chose the wrong person and had to change designers midstream.

Based on your experience, what advice do you have for other architects?

The first thing we learned is you have to have total support from the top. Strategic planning has to be a grassroots effort, but it must be allowed to grow. We could not have done it if one or two key people at the top had opposed it.

We also learned the importance of clearly defining roles and responsibilities when working with multiple outside strategic planning and implementation consultants. This is necessary for both the consultants and the staff members carrying out your internal review and decision-making process. We also advise that firms look for consultants who quickly "get" what you are about and can challenge your core assumptions.

I also believe we had to work in the sequence we followed (beginning with ownership issues, followed by visioning, then branding and identity system design and implementation). Despite the time and resources required, if we hadn't made the effort to do our homework upfront, we could have had a fatal flaw in the process. We still would have gotten something out of it, but not as much and it would not have been as rewarding in the long run. As a result of our strategic planning efforts, I think we're on our way to becoming a better firm.

Profile 4: Williams & Frehsee

The firm's practice includes both architecture and construction, focusing on housing, historic preservation, and health care. The firm comprises seven architects, five people working in construction, and two administrative staff members. The office is in

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Brattleboro, Vermont. Jim Williams, AIA, a principal of Williams & Frehsee, talked about the firm's experiences with strategic planning.

What kinds of strategic planning efforts has your firm engaged in?

The big thing we've done is introduce a strategic planning, long-term focus into our regular meeting process. We've always had a weekly partners meeting to address the typical management issues, but those meetings never really addressed more long-term concerns. We found there were choices we needed to make about the direction in which we wanted to take the firm and how we wanted it to grow. About six months ago, we started designating one of our partners meetings to focus on longer term, strategic issues. Now, we're planning to do a more formal kind of retreat, maybe a few months from now, to dig into some of the choices we're facing with even more attention.

What were the results of your strategic planning efforts?

We've had good results. Because we've clearly set the time aside for it, our strategic planning has enabled us to resolve issues that had been lingering for some time, issues we really needed to address. In particular, it has helped us clarify our thinking about how we want to balance our work in architecture with our work in construction. We decided we want so stay focused on design-build. Because we have a clearer sense of the projects we really want, we've been able to say "no" to projects we know we shouldn't take on. In addition, it's easier to get the projects we want because we're more focused on them.

What aspects of your strategic planning work have been more difficult or challenging?

First off, it's been a personal, professional challenge for me. Except for taking a seminar, I have no training for this. I've had to push to keep talking about strategic planning because some short-term item always seems to soak up all our attention. It's been challenging to do the follow-up work, as well. The whole process takes awhile, and we don't always operate with a long enough time frame to appreciate the need for longer-term thinking.

What advice do you have for others?

My advice is, don't be intimidated by the idea of strategic planning. Jump in. Dedicate a small amount of time. Develop a plan; try it. You're constantly building your firm. If you don't do some planning, you'll always be reactive, not in control of your own future. Strategic planning doesn't have to be this big mysterious thing. Just by putting some effort into it, you'll succeed with at least some parts of it. After that, you'll see that the process picks up its own momentum.

Profile 5: Massachusetts General Hospital, Planning and Construction Department

The third oldest hospital in the United States and oldest hospital in New England, Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) consistently ranks as one of the nation's best hospitals. MGH has 899 beds and treats 43,000 inpatients and 1.4 million outpatients annually. With nearly 16,000 employees, it is the largest nongovernment employer in Boston. The hospital's Planning and Construction Department was established in 1950

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and presently has a staff of 26, including nine architects. David Hanitchak, director of planning and construction, spoke about the department's use of strategic planning.

What kinds of strategic planning have you done?

We've had a lot of discussions asking, where are we? where are we going? Senior managers in the department participated in these discussions along with most of the staff. As a consulting group within the hospital, it's important for us to know our goals. There's a concern among people in our department as well as others in the hospital about what we're doing and whether it really works for the hospital. It would be possible for us to define ourselves in a lot of different ways, but we have tried to choose those that are most productive for our position in the institution.

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What were the results of your strategic planning work?

From our initial planning efforts, we fostered better relationships with our internal clients. I think we have client satisfaction pretty well pegged, and this is not an easy task. We're shifting how we serve people, explicitly trying to build partnerships, while at the same time also becoming more challenging to clients. We work more now with clients to help them solve their needs, including helping to resolve issues that arise between services with conflicting agendas.

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Our work with strategic planning has also led us to focus on our relationships with other service and operational departments in the hospital, including Environmental Services, Buildings and Grounds, and IS/Communications. We've put a lot of effort into building better relationships with Finance, and that has helped better integrate us into the capital budget process, which is central to hospital decision making.

Departments in any organization tend to relate to each other in ways that are political, doing favors for each other and so on. Our work with strategic planning has helped us to be more professional in the organizational environment and, as a result, to do a better job. Working closely with a client necessarily brings up operational issues. Many of the projects we grapple with cannot be resolved through conventional design and space solutions, and better relationships allow us to help resolve bottlenecks in the process and provide a more comprehensive solution. This makes us more valuable to the immediate client and supports the strategic goals of the hospital as well.

What aspects of your strategic planning have been more difficult or challenging?

Based here in the hospital, we live in a different context than A/E firms, but some things are similar. We do have clients, but they're internal and all connected, which makes us more exposed to client opinion than an a/e firm because their clients are around them all the time. Also, we have to link whatever we do to institutional goals, and that can be complicated and sometimes unpredictable; the pace of the building development process itself is a lot slower than that of the volatile health care environment.

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Some of the exercises we tried for strategic planning were difficult to manage. Strong personalities took them over and drew us away from the planning process. People don't have much time, so sometimes their tolerance for trying new things is limited.

What advice about strategic planning do you have for others?

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Try it, it's important to do, especially in an institutional setting. If working on the big issues about who you are is too difficult, shift your focus to smaller initiatives. Once we achieved general agreement about who we are, we had success with some of the smaller-scale initiatives that help us achieve our mission.

LESSONS LEARNED

All of the individuals interviewed in the case profiles were enthusiastic about the value of strategic planning, recommending that other architects “not be intimidated” by the process, and urging that others try strategic planning in their own situations. Drawing on the “lessons learned” implicit in the examples, it seems that successful strategic planning *requires* the following:

- **An intentional, organized effort.** Strategic planning is not something that can be fit into ongoing weekly staff or business meetings. The case profiles illustrate the need to block out time to work on strategic planning. In all cases, it took a distinct effort to address longer-term issues.
- **Group participation.** In most of all the cases one person initiated the effort, but a larger working group carried it forward. The case profiles illustrate the importance of getting the right people committed to and involved in the process.
- **Senior management support.** Strategic planning need not start with senior managers. However, in all the case profiles, it was essential to enlist senior management support in order to ensure the strategic planning effort succeeded fully.
- **Receptiveness to fresh insights.** All the case profiles used strategic planning to address immediate concerns. Some of the most productive results of strategic planning, however, came from participants’ willingness to work with new insights that arose during the process.

Beyond expected results and outcomes, strategic planning may produce a number of other, possibly unexpected side benefits:

- **Clarification of firm mission and focus.** Strategic planning helps a firm define the nature of the organization and the type of architecture it practices. This can validate the ability of the strategic planning process to yield a form of practice most congruent with an architect’s values and interests.
- **Strengthening of client relationships.** The process helps firms more clearly identify who their clients of choice are, and helps them understand how to build stronger partnerships.
- **Resolution of difficult issues.** The strategic planning process helps firms address difficult issues. It is as if the process offers a method and the time for people to address issues they have been avoiding.

PRINCIPLES ESPECIALLY USEFUL FOR ARCHITECTS

Several strategic planning principles help extend the lessons learned and other insights generated from the case profiles. Three ideas (all excerpted from recent works in the *Harvard Business Review*) are especially useful for architecture firms: the meaning of the

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word “strategy,” the notion of “the balanced scorecard,” and the concept of a “catalytic mechanism.”

Meaning of Strategic Planning

Andrew Campbell and Marcus Alexander’s work to define the term “strategy” more clearly is helpful for architects. They note that, “The answer to developing a good strategy is not new planning processes or better-designed plans. The answer lies in managers understanding two fundamental points: the benefits of having a well-defined purpose, and the importance of discovering, understanding, documenting, and exploiting insights about how to create more value than other companies do.”

Campbell and Alexander might say that the firms in the case profiles used only half the potential of strategic planning—the half that enables organizations to clarify their purpose. This focus on purpose is good, they might say, pointing out that many people fail to develop this aspect of strategic planning because they use the term to describe decisions about which markets to enter.

On the other hand, Campbell might point out, all of the firms profiled could get more value from their strategic planning efforts. In particular, they could work to improve their internal processes and procedures, strengthen their design quality, and build methods for working more collaboratively with clients.

Defining strategy as creating value is especially meaningful to architects. This means that strategic planning has the potential to help them give something back to clients, enhance the architectural process, and add to the architects’ practice knowledge base. It also asks architects to do more work, examine their processes, and find real improvements to make.

Balanced Scorecard

The notion of a “balanced scorecard” provides a framework for strategic planning that is especially useful for architects because it includes a balance of both internal issues, such as profitability and efficiency, and external concerns, such as client satisfaction and the development of new markets. This dual focus is useful because some architects focus strategic planning solely on internal or external issues, and it is important to pay attention to both.

Another aspect of balance in strategic planning involves the approach to short- and long-term issues. Working on strategy can be stimulating and creative, but it also has the potential to involve people so much that they neglect other important concerns of the organization. Many architects are familiar, some too familiar, with the phenomenon of principals returning from a strategic planning retreat with a strategy that seems to be smart for the long term but inadequate for addressing real-world client or financial concerns. Working on strategic planning with a balanced scorecard approach keeps architects focused on both the present and the future.

In their classic *Harvard Business Review* article, “Using the Balanced Scorecard as a Strategic Management System,” Robert S. Kaplan and David P. Norton summarize this concept: “The balanced scorecard provides a framework for managing the implementation of strategy while also allowing the strategy itself to evolve in response to changes in the company’s competitive, market, and technological environments.”

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Catalytic Mechanism

The idea of a “catalytic mechanism” provides a way of thinking about implementing strategy that is smart, creative, and simple, three attributes that are valuable in any organization but particularly interesting and relevant for architects. Architects often struggle more with implementing strategic plans than with developing them. Catalytic mechanisms can help.

Jim Collins (author of *Good to Great*) illustrates the concept of catalytic mechanism with the case of a granite company that wanted to significantly increase its customer satisfaction levels. The company implemented a policy of “short pay,” that is, having customers pay only the portion of their invoices they consider fair. No communication is necessary, just the simple act of customers writing checks for whatever amount seems fair to them, no questions asked.

While “short pay” may not be feasible for architecture firms, other catalytic mechanisms are intriguing. In a firm with a strategy of internal advancement, principals’ salaries might be based on internal promotions. A firm committed to strong customer relationships might require its staff to work inside client organizations for a period of time. A firm that wanted to improve its quality might hire a contractor to review its working drawings.

FURTHER INSIGHTS

Strategic planning provides a valuable tool kit for architecture firms. However, success in using this tool kit depends on how architects work with four discrete issues: data, vision, planning team consensus, and full organizational implementation.

Data (client surveys, stakeholder interviews, employee surveys, 360-degree leadership surveys, market research, economic forecasts). Although sometimes upsetting to principals who like to think they are excellent leaders, 360-degree surveys of leadership effectiveness (completed anonymously by staff, clients, and stakeholders) provide information especially useful for firms serious about translating their strategic plans into everyday actions. ~~Because many architects are not interested in quantitative data they often omit this aspect of strategic planning.~~ When they do, however, strategic planning efforts inevitably fail or fall short. Trying to plan the future without a realistic understanding of the present places the planning exercise at risk. Data need not restrict or confine strategic planning. Rather, the “reality check” the data provides makes strategic planning stronger.

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Vision. Some architects get impatient with the work of clarifying their firm’s vision, purpose, values and mission. “Didn’t we do this a few years ago?” one principal complained. Updating the organization’s vision is important, though, because clients, the economy, and professional practice itself keep changing. Maintaining a current vision statement enables architects to develop their practices in the form they most desire. In a way, this is a design problem, an attempt to design a practice to meet the optimal needs of its people.

Planning team consensus. Strategic planning meetings that achieve anything less than full consensus and commitment to decisions made are doomed to produce limited results. Sometimes in strategic planning, architects put aside their interpersonal differences in order to address the best interests of the firm. But plans for the future that

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fail to take into account the conflicts and miscommunications of the present will accomplish little.

Full implementation. Most organizations struggle with this aspect of strategic planning. Getting the whole organization to buy into a strategic plan and integrate its implications into everyday work can be difficult. Architecture firms that recognize this problem address it with some degree of effectiveness by involving multiple layers and levels of the organization in the planning process and by using formal, quarterly meetings to review progress on the goals set in annual planning exercises.

The underlying problem with implementing strategic plans in most architecture firms is the absence of an effective mechanism for managing employee performance, changing employee job priorities, and aligning individual effort more closely with organizational goals. Architecture firms that have effective mechanisms for managing employee performance—usually goal-focused quarterly performance discussions with all employees rather than cumbersome annual appraisals—find it easier to implement strategic plans.

As those interviewed in the case profiles stressed, the first step in strategic planning is simply to get involved. Even when strategic planning efforts fall far short of the ideal methods and processes, the results can be positive and important. Although strategic planning need not take a great deal of time and effort, it has great potential to help architects develop the kind of practice they want and build organizations that are successful across a wide range of measures.

For More Information

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