

Strategic Planning

A multi-year plan, often referred to as Strategic Plan is developed the world over, to guide organizations in purposeful activities focused on their goals and objects. It is important for aquatic sport clubs to take the time to develop a Strategic Plan in order to understand, communicate and work towards their future. Strategic Plans can influence the staff hired, the programs run and the partnerships a club forms, among many other day to day decisions.

Aquatic sport clubs can use the following template to aid them in developing a strategic plan. The template includes the main components of the plan, a description of each component and the background materials required for planning. The development of a Strategic Plan is best supported by finding a volunteer who has knowledge of the strategic planning process and who is able to objectively facilitate its development.

For more information on creating a Strategic Plan, please review the Aquatic Sport Council's "Community Planning Guide".

Strategic Plan Component	Description
Vision Statement	A vision statement describes how the club would like to be viewed within the next five years.
Mission Statement	A mission statement describes what the club does, for whom and how it goes about its undertaking.
Guiding Principles	Guiding Principles are developed to give direction to the club as it goes about its work. Guiding principles may centre around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a continuum of aquatic sport development • Embracing the concept of sport for life • Strengthening families and community through aquatic sport • Ensuring adequate facilities and facility time at an affordable price
Analysis of Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities (internal and external to the aquatic club)	A planning team or an open session with interested club members would serve to capture member's thoughts on the strengths and challenges that the club is facing. Potential challenges might centre on sustainability, club membership, marketing and promotion, sport development, etc.
Development of Key Result Areas and Goals	Key result areas capture the major themes and operational elements of the club. Key results might centre around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance and Volunteers • Fiscal Sustainability • Program and Athlete Development • Communications

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	A goal statement should be developed to support each key result area indicating what needs to be achieved over time.
Developing and Prioritizing Actions	Actions would be developed that would ensure that each goal can be met. Actions should be simply stated, realistic, measurable and timely, and work toward achieving the vision over time.
Mapping Actions and Needed Resources Over 5 Years	Actions should be prioritized and mapped out over the course of 3-5 years. Any resources needed (human, fiscal and physical) should be identified at this point. Implementation of the plan would involve assigning the actions to various positions within the club or to willing and competent volunteers.
Plan Evaluation, Review and Performance Measures	<p>The executive and the membership should take time to review the effectiveness of the plan on an annual basis and report out the status of the plan to the full membership and stakeholders. Performance measures will demonstrate and quantify the effectiveness of the club's operations and demonstrate to external funders the successes that have been achieved. Six simple performance measures can be used to determine the effectiveness of the club's operations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Growth of membership year over year as well as pet up demand 2. Retention of members year over year 3. Pool time required as per pool time provided 4. Volunteer hours year over year 5. Satisfaction of the athletes and membership 6. Performance at competitions