

## THREE CRITICAL GUIDELINES TO IMPROVE YOUR STRATEGIC PLAN

If we (Performance Solutions Technology) were consulting with you today, and looking at your Strategic Plan, we would be emphasizing three important constructs that dramatically improve the ability of your Strategic Plan to deliver business results. They take it from being a plan, to something you can put into place and execute... all year long. Let's go over what we emphasize:

1. **The Strategic Plan is about "must have" growth - nothing else.** Bottom line, all of your strategic goals should be about growth, example: Growing sales, growing people's effectiveness, growing internal efficiencies. Growth is what we are after; not mission statements, not organizational philosophy, not politically correct statements (to insure every group has a line item in the Strategic Plan) - just growth. And not just any growth. Not just nice-to-have growth, "wouldn't it be nice/good/we really should" growth - you want to keep your Strategic Plan very lean and mean, and limit it to just the areas that are mandatory for growing your business this year.
2. **Any initiative supporting a growth goal has to stand the test.** What test? It has to stand the test of the following question, "Is that (initiative) really required to reach the strategic goal?" If the initiative is not critical to reaching your strategic goal, don't keep it in your plan. Keep your plan light and focused, you want to carry and drive this through-out the year. Sacrifice or trade comprehensive descriptions for targeted, punchy sentence stubs. All non-critical initiatives should be in your Operations section, not your Strategic Plan.

Note: Don't fill up your Strategic Plan with multiple layers of initiatives, they should all be in your Operations area and linked to your Strategic Plan using the right click Strategic Plan option in a strategic management software tool like ManagePro.

3. **If a goal isn't measured, isn't linked, it doesn't belong in your strategic plan.** If you haven't figured out a meaningful way to measure each strategic goal and supporting initiative - it doesn't belong in your plan. If you're not tracking it via your scorecard, don't keep it. If it's not worth the time to measure and track, it doesn't belong in your Strategic Plan. In a similar fashion, if your strategic goals and initiatives don't link to goals and projects in your business operations, they will typically be unsupported in the day-to-day work process and shouldn't be in your Strategic Plan. It's that simple, and the measurement and linking test is one of the best for predicting what you will actually execute through the year.

Conclusion: To construct a strategic plan that can really empower your entire organization, focus on three areas:

- **Growth**
- **Brief – only the absolutely essential**
- **Measured**

The author of this series, Rodney Brim, is CEO of Performance Solutions Technology (PST). PST develops and assists organizations in deploying performance

management software solutions, and presents these guidelines based upon our work with 1,000's of companies to help ensure your success in the pursuit of performance management. Performance Solutions Technology is found on the web at <http://www.PerformanceSolutionsTech.com>