

Executive Service Corps' Strategic Planning Practice

Over 40 Years of Proven Success



The Executive Service Corps (ESC) is the nation's premier nonprofit consultancy. ESC is a nonprofit organization with the mission to help make other nonprofits successful. To achieve our mission, we provide consulting, coaching, and professional services to over 150 nonprofit organizations helping 1.2 million people each year.



Get Ready

Assess

Create mission, vision, values

Define strategic issues

Develop goals & actions

Implement the plan

Our Proven Strategic Planning Process

For over 40 years, ESC has facilitated strategic plans for hundreds of nonprofits. During that time, we have crafted a six-step process that provides you with the tools to identify and implement key strategies that will position your nonprofit for success.

- **Get Ready:** Even before contracting with ESC, our consultants research your nonprofit through public information. We follow up by meeting with your key leaders, to identify your readiness for strategic planning. We reach agreement on your board's goals and expected outcomes for this critical project.
- **Assess the Situation:** Our consultants perform an extensive review of organizational documents, interview board members, critical stakeholders, and, when appropriate, survey members and/or clients. We then compare the data with industry benchmarks, and provide feedback using our **Eight Essential Elements of Nonprofit EffectivenessSM**. Our assessment covers Leadership, Governance, Programs and Services, Support Operations, Financial Management, Fund Development, Communications and Marketing, and the External Environment.
- **Create Mission/Vision/Values:** We facilitate the development or revision of your organization's strategic purpose and direction.
- **Define Strategic Issues:** Our consultants facilitate identification of the key strategic issues facing your organization by identifying gaps and challenges that must be addressed to fulfill your nonprofit's mission.
- **Develop Goals and Actions:** At a one-day retreat, Board members and other invited stakeholders are introduced to the Mission/Vision/Values and strategic issues facing your organization. Our consultants then facilitate workgroups to develop goals and action plans to address the strategic issues in the next one to three-year time period.
- **Implement:** At the conclusion of the planning process, we present a collaborative, comprehensive strategic plan for acceptance and implementation by your board and staff. At least one of our consultants will continue to monitor and mentor your leaders following acceptance, providing guidance during the implementation process.

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ESC Responsibilities in the Strategic Planning Process

An experienced Engagement Manager will be assigned to guide your organization through our six-step process. Depending upon the project size, a team of three or more consultants will work with the Engagement Manager.

With over 200 consultants, we can offer diverse teams that include experts in your subject area, including finance, governance, human and volunteer resource management, marketing, and fund development.

At the end of the project, we will present a project report to the Board and a consultant will stay in communication with the Executive Champion as a resource during the implementation phase. Strategic Planning projects generally take about six months to complete from the initial planning meeting.

Executive Service Corps is the nation's premier nonprofit consultancy. Your mission is our mission.



Your Nonprofit's Responsibilities

ESC prides itself on using a collaborative approach with its clients which helps client organizations accept ownership of their strategic plan. To achieve collaboration, we expect you to:

1. Appoint an Executive Champion who will serve as chair of the organization's planning committee. This can be the Board Chair, Executive Director, chair of the planning committee, or another respected leader. The Champion will be the primary contact with the consultants throughout the project, and will coordinate meetings and arrangements, communicate on project activities with the board and staff, and otherwise lead the project for you.
2. Appoint a planning committee consisting of board members and, if appropriate, staff members. The team will meet with the consultants periodically to guide the project, develop and propose the mission/vision/values, and be the workgroup facilitators.
3. Provide requested documents and access to board and staff members, and facilitate distribution of survey invitations.
4. Make necessary arrangements for all committee meetings and the retreat.
5. Recognize that plan implementation is your responsibility. An ESC consultant will maintain contact with key leaders of the project to provide encouragement, answer questions, and serve as a mentor for facilitation. An add-on contract can be established for implementation services, if so requested.

The Executive Service Corps looks forward to working with your organization to help you achieve your mission while we achieve our mission of "making nonprofits successful."