

Pamela Ryder Lahey
Director of Court Services
Provincial Court of Newfoundland
St. John's, Newfoundland
Canada

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND CULTURE

Organizations are much involved in strategic planning. Most if not all of the research of the strategic planning process have been about developing and implementing the strategic plan. Strategic planners, and those who employ them, have been reluctant to turn the evaluative instruments they advocate for measuring the implementation of strategies on their own work, i.e., the strategic plan and planning process. It is not known the degree to which organizations are satisfied with the impacts of the strategic plan on organizational effectiveness and culture. Such information could help managers and planners to decide whether strategic planning should be undertaken, how to improve the process if the strategic planning has already been initiated, and to justify the large amount of human, financial, and technical resources that are expended on strategic planning.

The purpose of this study is to fill the gap by developing and demonstrating the use of an evaluation instrument measuring the impact of strategic planning on organizational effectiveness and culture. The categories of the constructs to be measured in the survey were determined from the literature on the purported benefits of strategic planning. Questions were assigned to each category. The tool was pre-tested on a group of people employed as planners in the public sector. The survey was refined as a result of the pre-test and it was demonstrated in the Provincial Court of Newfoundland on judges and court staff who have had experience with the

strategic planning process. Subsequently, it was further revised as a result of the demonstration and post-survey interviews.

The final evaluation instrument has 30 questions divided into five sections: demographic information, strategic thinking and acting, better understanding of the court, teamwork and communication. Respondents are asked to agree or disagree with 24 questions on a 5-point Likert scale, as well as to provide narrative feedback in the comment section of each item. A section preceding the first four addresses demographics, which include familiarity with the plan, length of service at the court, position and how the plan was introduced. Data can be subjected to analysis of various relationships in the demographics and the answers in the four parts of the survey. A court can choose which variables to measure and subsequently include these questions in the demographic section of the survey.

The demonstration of this instrument in the Provincial Court of Newfoundland illustrates the possible benefits to court personnel and others interested in strategic planning. The survey will help focus the discussion among planners and others on the purposes of the strategic planning process and it will bring the plan back into focus. Tabulated results can give the plotted data on the table and will give a picture of how effective the strategic plan for improving organizational effectiveness and culture. The data may provide information to make changes to the plan or may lead to a decision to terminate the plan or planning process. For example, a court may discover that impact, understanding and teamwork seem to be effected by strategic planning, but communication does not. This could illustrate to that court that work needs to be done in the category of communication.

The evaluation instrument is to use and can be adapted to any court, indeed, any organization. It provides information on the impact a strategic plan has had on strategic thinking

and acting, better understanding of the court, teamwork, and communication. This evaluation instrument will be beneficial to many organizations, particularly courts, that wish to examine the impact of the strategic plan and planning process on organizational effectiveness and culture.

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