

Resource

Strategic Planning Terms¹

Term	Meaning	Other terms commonly used
Mission	The reason the organization exists, the starting point for strategic planning	Purpose
Vision	Description of an ideal future, either for the organization (internal vision statement) or of society (external vision statement)	Vision of success
Values	Principles the organization holds as the most important	Guiding principles
SWOT Analysis	An inventory and analysis of the organization's strengths and weaknesses and of opportunities and threats (SWOT) posed to the organization by the external environment.	Environmental scan
SOAR Analysis	An inventory and analysis of the organization's strengths, opportunities, aspirations as an organization and results that prove the organization is realizing the identified aspirations.	Strengths-based whole system approach
Strategic issues	The fundamental policy questions or critical challenges facing the organization's mandates, mission and value, product or service level and mix, clients, users or payers, cost financing, structure, processes and management. (Bryson, 2011, p. 42)	Strategic questions
Goals	Directions that the organization will pursue with respect to the strategic issues.	Strategic goals Strategic directions
Strategies	Actions that the organization intends to take to achieve its goals	
Objectives	Specific, quantifies targets that represent steps to accomplish the goals.	

¹ Adapted from Managing The Nonprofit Organization, p. 174