



Strategic IT Planning and Management

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Envision the journey, set a course to the future, and navigate in dynamic business and technology environments.

Introduction

The purpose of this Guide is to assist State HS IT staff in migrating from older to newer technologies. The documentation is a logical, step-by-step progression from planning to implementation to monitoring and mid-course adjustment. The basic premise is that a good Strategic Plan and management will help ensure the success of the HS IT projects.

By following these steps, you will create a Strategic Plan that aligns IT Division responsibilities, obligations, and technology decisions with the goals of the HS Agency. The Strategic Plan then will serve as the basis for making decisions about an appropriate Technical Architecture and the IT projects.

The [HS IT manager](#) works in a dynamic environment of multiple HS programs, each with stakeholders and users with specific and sometimes contradictory needs. [Stakeholders](#) and users can include case managers, HS Agency administrators, the State [CIO](#), the State legislature, and Federal Agencies that fund programs and related information systems. While each State organizes and manages HS programs in unique ways, there are common elements involved in planning for and implementing IT projects that are the subject of this guide.

This guide is written for staff with responsibility for strategic planning and implementation of IT projects. Issues included in the guide reflect common HS Agency concerns, including Federal rules and requirements. This provides all the principles, steps, and strategies that are applicable to IT Divisions; however, the IT Division can customize these to meet their individual needs. To customize guidance check information contained in the [Application of the IT Planning and Management Guides](#).

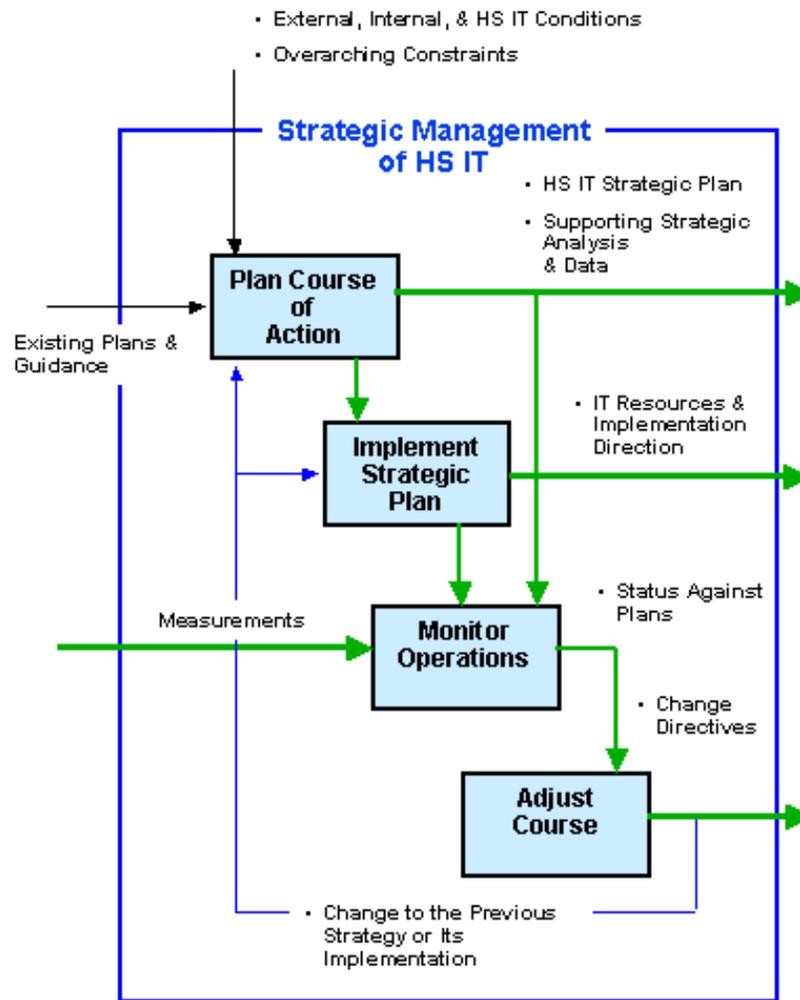
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Processes

Operations

- Consolidated Resources

This guide defines the key activities, artifacts, and roles that are necessary to create and manage the HS IT Strategic Plan. The top-level processes are shown below in the management figure and described in the following text.



The top-level processes are as follows:

1. [Plan Course of Action](#) - These steps establish the strategic planning project and create the HS IT Strategic Plan.
2. [Implement Plan](#) - These steps allocate resources and delegate authorities and responsibilities to achieve the plan.
3. [Monitor Operations](#) - These steps monitor strategic indicators for performance against the HS IT Strategic Plan.
4. [Adjust Course](#) - These steps make mid-course adjustments to the HS IT Strategic Plan and its implementation. Significant changes will require the execution of the Plan Course of Action section.

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Browse the Resources

Resources that help you create a Strategic Plan for the HS IT domain are continually being

collected and cataloged. You may review them at [Resources](#)

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The [Strategic IT Planning and Management](#) guide describes a customizable process that can be used to help position the IT organization to better serve the overall HS Agency's mission. Key principles and concepts upon which the process is based are described in this background. The first portion reviews the overall characteristics of strategic planning. The second portion investigates the central concept of alignment. Lastly, the interpretation of strategic planning within the context of the State HS Agency IT organization is reviewed.

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Characteristics of Strategic Planning

In essence, [strategic planning](#) means clarifying an organization's main purpose, aligning

its priorities and resources with that purpose, and identifying how to judge success in fulfilling that purpose. The strategic planning process therefore leads to the definition of the IT organization's mission, the formulation of IT-specific [goals](#), and the development of actions that will be implemented to meet those goals.

Strategic planning can be conducted in anticipation of, or in reaction to change outside or inside the HS Agency (the external and internal [environments](#), respectively). Change in the world outside the HS Agency can be triggered by changes in regulations or funding, the need to be in compliance with statutes, or in preparation for growth. Changes inside the HS Agency may be triggered by a redefinition of roles and responsibilities, a change in administration and program priorities, or policy and other requirement changes. The planning process itself and the strategies that result impact the whole IT organization and its relationships with other organizations within and external to the HS Agency.

Four elements are basic to any strategic planning process:

- Deals with an enterprise's interaction with its environments, necessitating a thorough and complete understanding of the entities in that environment, and the nature of the interactions.
- Addresses the allocation of significant resources, such as large amounts of capital, labor, and [capacity](#).
- Concentrates on long-term issues; however, increasingly, strategic planning also concentrates on short-term issues that have long-term consequence
- Becomes the primary responsibility of middle-to-top-level management and executive decision makers; however, the planning process engages decision makers at all levels.

In State agencies, strategic planning is typically supported by a group that includes HS Agency-level executives having influence over key HS Agency-level decisions and responsibility for the HS Agency's general direction and key results. In the process framework, the IT strategic planning activities are performed by the [Strategy Team](#), in close cooperation with the [HS Agency Decision Makers](#) and [IT Decision Makers](#).

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Strategic Versus Tactical Planning

Through strategic planning, managers establish the general view of their organization's purpose, courses of action, and allocations of resources. To implement the Strategic Plan, managers tactically plan, focusing on short-term decisions and actions, including budgeting and operational improvement. Tactical planning deals with the HS Agency's internal capability and capacity to perform and addresses resource allocation in a more detailed way concentrating on short-term decisions concerning what to do, who will do it, and how it will be done.

This level of planning is the primary responsibility of first-line or higher-level management depending on the scope of the area being managed. Strategic planning typically addresses subjective risk and uncertainty, tactical planning typically addresses risk and uncertainty that is more objective. Strategic planning is done primarily to ensure overall mission success and organizational survival; tactical planning is done primarily as a means of implementing the Strategic Plan.

Detailed tactical planning and oversight is done by the activities described in the [Planning and Managing the Technical Evolution](#) Guide.

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Organizational Levels of Strategic Planning

Organizations develop multiple levels of strategy. These are aligned toward the same basic desired results:



- **Enterprise-level plan** -- This level consists of the following two sub levels, the second of which supports the first:
 1. The commonly used business term for this level is the "corporate" level. Within the context of the [Strategic IT Planning and Management Guide](#), this is the State executive branch. The executive branch level guides the activities of the State agencies and influences the pattern of resource allocation *across* the agencies.
 2. The commonly used business term for this level is the "line of business" or "business-unit" level. This management level directs the operations and performance of a single organization that provides a particular product or service, develops responses to changing environmental conditions, and controls the pattern of resource allocation *within* that product/service area. Within the context of this guide, this is the State HS Agency.
- **Functional-level plan** -- This level of planning fleshes out strategy as it applies to a specific functional area. Within the context of the process framework, this is the State HS Agency program context, such as the TANF program. This management level creates guidelines for managing each area, determines how each area will contribute to the Enterprise-level goals and strategies, and initiates plans to support successful execution of strategy.
- **Program-and-control-level plan** -- This level of planning is responsible for developing detailed plans for carrying out the day-to-day requirements of the higher-level plans. These are the [IT Evolution Plan](#) and individual [project](#) plans. The It Evolution Plan coordinates the interdependencies between all the IT-related activities, such as projects to build new application systems or migrate portions of existing application systems. Projects are the lowest-level organizational concept, responsible for specific, IT-related development, deployment, or operation goals.

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The Product of Strategic Planning

A Strategic Plan should be viewed as an evolving tool a guide to help in developing other plans and in allocating resources. The Strategic Plan should be scrutinized and updated as often as necessary to stay current with changing circumstances that impact the IT

Division's main purpose in some way. It should be a well-articulated and doable definition of the steps necessary to accomplish the IT vision, portraying a realistic "road map" for reaching that vision.

Strategic plans must bring about the desired results--they represent the means to an end, not the end itself. Effective strategic planning helps managers to assess and mitigate uncertainty and risk. It stimulates new ideas, entrepreneurship, and novel approaches. Ineffective planning emphasizes routine activities and short-term solutions to immediate problems.

A Strategic Plan should describe the essential elements of the IT organization from the IT organization's perspective, including the following:

- Mission (purpose, duty)
- Vision (desired future state)
- Guiding principles (shared values)
- Significant goals (long-term objectives)
- General strategies and policies
- Client base (target population) and their needs
- Product/service mix (offerings such as immunization, child-care)
- Value created for clients by the organization
- Program portfolio (initiatives such as well babies, welfare-to-work)
- "What if" scenarios, risk profiles, and financial stability

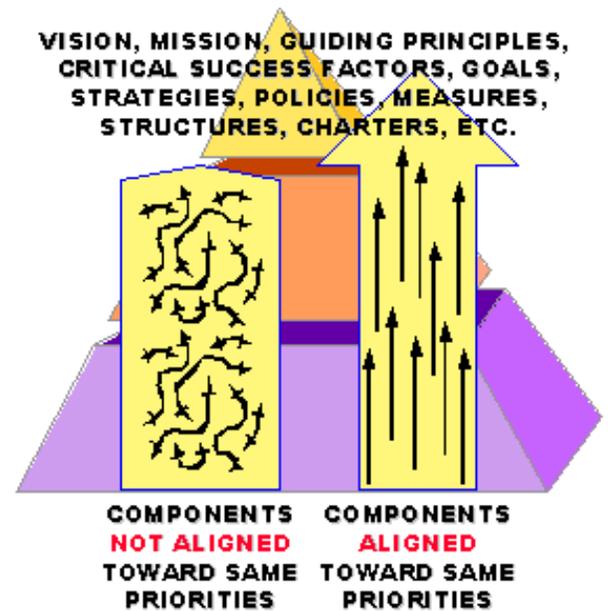
Additional items that can be provide included or referenced as the basis of the above components includes:

- Client access, service levels, and utilization history
- Legal mandates, pending legislation, compliance requirements, and implications of government restructuring
- Identify the broad [stakeholder](#) base
- Organizational fit (such as correlation, alignment)
- Executive, managerial, or staff capabilities and commitment
- Program benefits, risks, major tasks, timeframes, responsibilities, and charts for monitoring progress
- Interorganizational cooperation (alliance) and competition (rivalry) for resources
- Funding mechanisms and schedules
- Key internal/external communication and dependencies
- Facilities and sites
- Support services
- Knowledge and information management systems
- Critical linkages

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Alignment

The performance of any *system* is a function of how well its parts fit and work together--that is, how well they are *aligned*. Likewise, the HS Agency and its constituent elements can be viewed of as a complex system. If the HS Agency wants to succeed in meeting its purpose in an effective and efficient way, all its major components should be aimed toward the same targets. This means that decision makers throughout all organizational levels should prioritize their allocations of resources and efforts based on a clear understanding of a consistent HS Agency-wide strategy. This strategy begins with the IT Division's understanding of how its [vision](#), [mission](#), [guiding principles](#), [critical success factors](#), [goals](#), and [strategies](#) fit with those of other parts of the HS Agency.

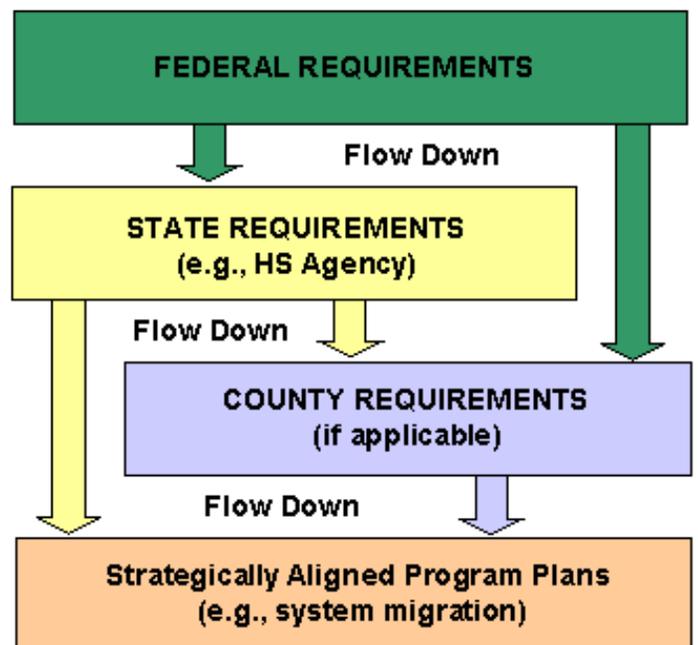


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Strategies Are Linked Hierarchically

As the organization's basic statement of purpose, scope, and goals, the Strategic Plan shapes the organization. In a hierarchy of organizations, the organization at the top shapes the essential purpose, scope, and objectives for each of the organizations beneath it. Thus, Strategic Plans are hierarchically linked, each one addressing the set of requirements delegated to it by the organization(s) above. The hierarchy assumed by the guides is in the [Roles](#) Model.

The [graphic](#) illustrates such hierarchical relationships in the public sector. IT Evolution Plans and the projects they coordinate need to align with the requirements of the State Agencies they support (and/or county agencies, as appropriate). Likewise, State (and county) HS Agency plans need to be in line with Federal mandates and budgets. Requirements at each of the levels range from, for example, statutes, executive orders, court decrees, regulations, policies, strategic and tactical plans, budgets, and standards. At the State level they can include, as appropriate, Strategic Plans for the State-wide IT department, for the State HS Agency, for other State agencies, and for the State HS IT Division. All of the organizations' plans should be pointed toward the same



general objectives.

Thus, to clearly understand the strategic requirements of the IT Division, first one must understand the strategic imperatives of the State IT Division of which it may be a part. To understand the roles and responsibilities of the HS IT Division, one must clarify the requirements that flow down from higher-level organizations. In some states, counties provide the IT support to HS Agencies, adding an additional organizational layer to consider.

Without understanding the context and the drivers of HS Agency business needs, small technology-related decisions can add up to large misdirection of technological resources and to results having little to do with the highest priority objectives of HS Agencies.

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Two-Way and Complex Linkages

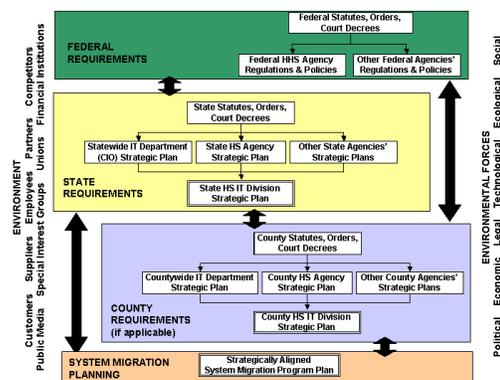
In addition to requirements being passed down the hierarchy of organizations, important information that affects those requirements also gets passed up the hierarchy. In this way, the higher-level organizations can stay apprised of what is happening "on the ground," track progress against expectations, and adjust their plans as needed. Acknowledging and incorporating such feedback enable plans to remain current and valuable.

An organization sometimes has multiple parent organizations. For instance, an IT Division might report both to the state's HS Agency and to a State-wide IT department. In such a case, the child support organization must resolve and incorporate oftentimes disparate requirements into its Strategic Plan.

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Beyond the Hierarchy

Also, an organization must incorporate requirements that are posed by other entities (noted in the [diagram](#) as Environment), for example, its own set of clients, service providers, employees, partner organizations, rival organizations, and regulating organizations (see the [Roles](#)). These specific entities may or may not be the same set with which the parent organization deals. Furthermore, external forces, such as political, economic, legal, technological, and social change, can significantly impact what an organization should incorporate into its Strategic Plan.



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Availability of Strategic Requirements

In a perfect world, consistent Strategic Plans are prepared at the HS Agency level and the IT Division level. At times, however, the higher-level plans are unavailable, ambiguous, outdated, or do not focus on strategic priorities. The processes for Strategic Management of HS IT describe the planning activities, information artifacts, and roles that are essential to implementing a strategically aligned Program. In situations where the higher-level Strategic Plans are not manifest, then assumptions on the types of inputs will have to be made. Feedback from the lower-level plans can be used to provide information to seed the higher-level plans.

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Applying Strategic Planning in the IT Organizational Context

The Overarching Issue

The overarching issue that must be addressed is:

How to evolve information systems and technology to best meet the State's HS responsibilities?

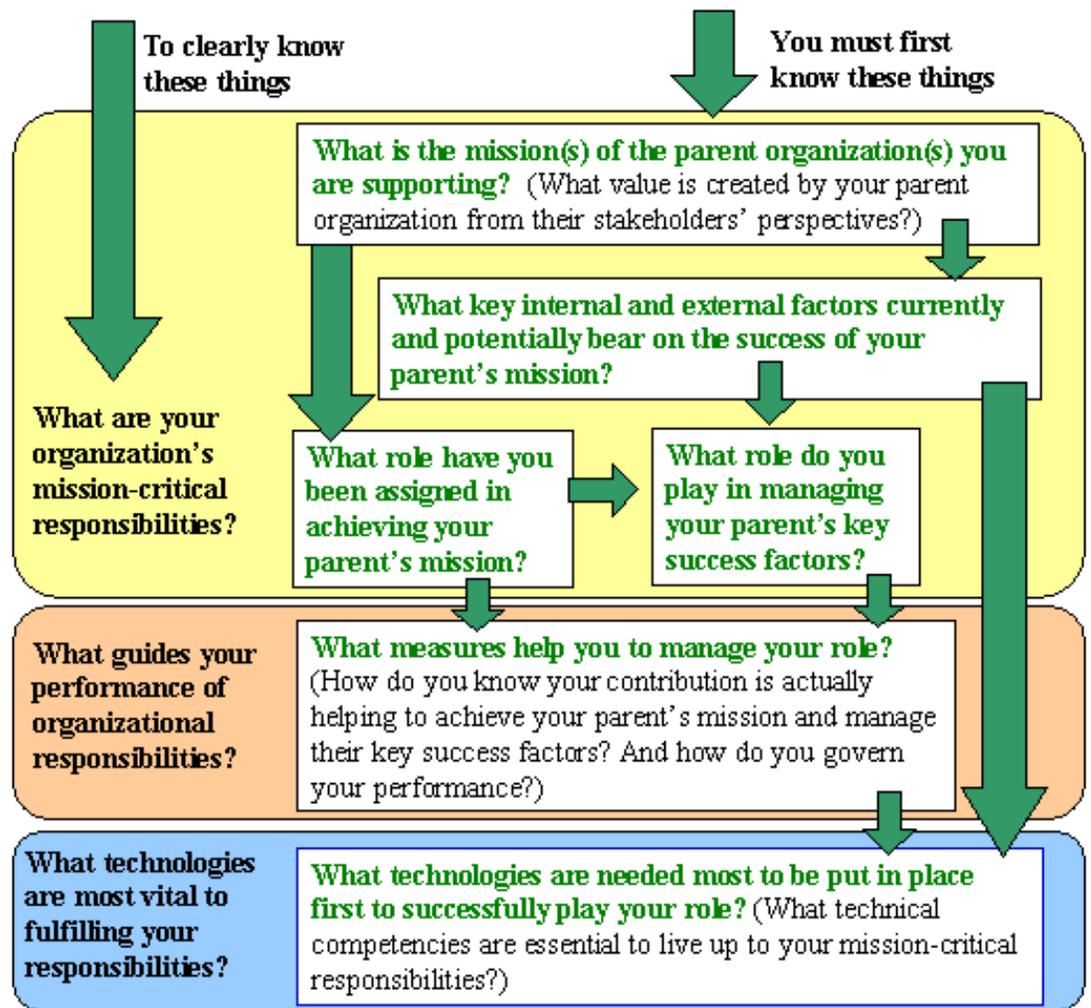
However, this question might be better restated as:

"How to **align** the IT Evolution plans with the HS Agency's [strategy](#)?"

Or simply:

"What technologies are *needed most* to be put in place *first*?"

The concept behind the approach is shown in the [issues diagram](#).



To answer this question, organizations must first clearly define three things:

1. What are the organization's mission-critical responsibilities?
2. What guides the performance of organizational responsibilities?
3. What technologies are most vital to fulfilling these responsibilities?

The challenge is that, to define the above parameters, you must first answer another set of questions:

1. What are the organization's most basic roles and corresponding set of responsibilities? In particular:
 - What is the mission of the parent organization and of other organizations that the IT organization supports? In essence, what value do these organizations create from *their stakeholders perspectives*?
 - What factors, both internal and external, are critical to the success of these parent or support organizations, both now and in the foreseeable future?
 - What roles has the IT organization been assigned by the parent organization to help achieve these missions and manage these critical success factors?
 - What factors are critical to the success of the IT organization in performing its roles?
2. What **performance measures** help to manage the IT organization's roles? That is to say, how exactly would one know whether the IT organization is meeting its responsibilities? It is necessary to gauge the degree to which the IT organization is

actually contributing toward the success of the higher-level organizations (e.g., HS Agency and/or [TANF](#)). Measures will establish the means to regulate the IT Organization's performance.

3. What technologies are *needed most* to be put in place *first to successfully play the roles assigned to IT*? Specifically, what technical [competencies](#) are essential for the IT organization to manage its own critical success factors and live up to its responsibilities?

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Addressing the Issues

Strategic Management of the HS Agency's IT results in the preparation and use of the [HS IT Strategic Plan](#). That plan is the means to align the HS IT Division responsibilities, obligations, and technology decisions with those of the HS Agency. The plan establishes a basis for the Technical Architecture and IT program-specific plans, such that they respond to HS Agency-wide needs. This enables the HS IT Division to fully support the mission of the State HS Agency. For additional perspective on the many environments of interest and the entities involved, also see the [consolidated roles](#) discussion.

The IT Planning and Management Guides therefore assume a broad context; that is, the IT Division may be responsible for technology decisions for one or more programs within the State HS Agency internal environment, as well as special relationships with others outside this context (such as other service providers). The descriptions in the guides are written to address this overarching context: the State HS Agency concerns.

The strategic planning process can lead to a deep understanding of the IT Division and its role in helping achieve HS Agency objectives. It is critical to have the appropriate individuals associated with this exploration and be able to build consensus in the chosen direction. Strategic management may touch many parts of the HS Agency, not only the IT Division, but all stakeholders. For this reason, key teams are defined to help ensure buy-in and establish the conviction to formulate and implement the strategy. These are the [Strategy Team](#), and the ultimate co-owners of the strategy, the [IT Decision Makers](#), and the [HS Agency Decision Makers](#). The activities defined in this guide are highly dependent on their commitment and leadership.

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Align the IT plans with the HS Agency's goals, determining what technologies are needed most to be put in place first.

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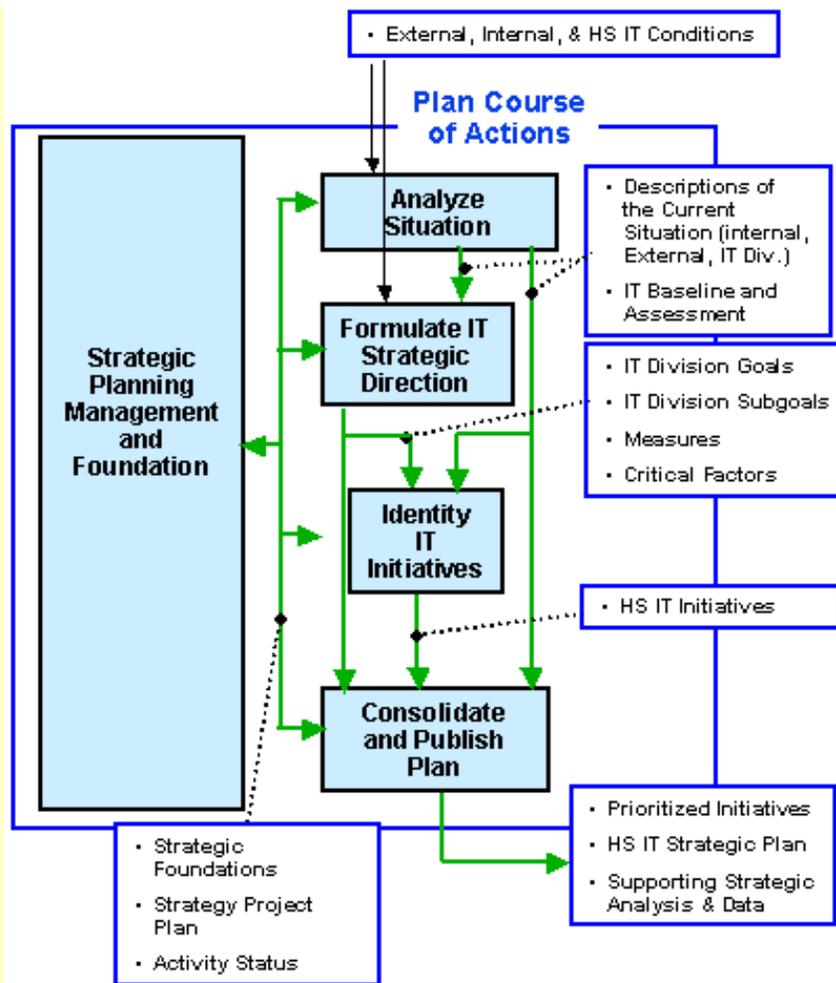
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Overview

Planning serves as a catalyst to initiate organizational as well as technological change. Following the key steps will produce an [HS IT Division Strategic Plan](#), aligned with the overall HS Agency plans and goals based on a thorough understanding of the HS Agency's external and internal environment. [Strategy Team](#) has responsibility for conducting these activities, with the [HS Agency Decision Makers](#) and [IT Decision Makers](#) having oversight and ultimate ownership of the plan. The makeup of the Strategy Team is critical to the success of this process.



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Activities

Planning involves the following key steps:

1. **Establish the Strategic Planning Foundation.** These activities establish a Strategic Plan and oversight process that shapes and guides the IT strategic planning process. A [strategy project](#) plan is established, defining key roles and responsibilities, identifying appropriate individuals to fill those roles, and providing the necessary executive leadership and resources for the project. The strategic planning activities are planned and tracked to ensure that they produce a meaningful HS IT Strategic Plan within the needed timeframe. During these activities, the key stakeholders agree on the preliminary strategic foundations, which include the IT Division's mission, vision, and guiding principles. This understanding provides the scope for the IT strategic planning activities, keeping the Strategy Team focused and results-oriented. As the strategic planning process is executed and the understanding of the situation and IT needs is refined, these strategic foundations may be adjusted.

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- Analyze the Situation**. These activities establish an understanding of three interacting environments: the world outside the HS Agency, the world inside the HS Agency, and the HS IT Division. This analysis forms the basic context for the other HS IT strategic planning activities by helping the Strategy Team, the HS Agency, and IT Decision Makers understand the current conditions, and trends in each one of these environments. As a result of this analysis, other programs and process requirements outside the IT Division's responsibilities may be identified, such as integrating multiple HS Agency needs (e.g., TANF and child care, transportation, or employment services).

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- Formulate IT Strategic Direction**. These activities describe the process for extending the [Strategic Foundations](#) to a level of detail more specific to the IT Division. These activities consider the HS Agency's and the IT Division's vision, mission, and guiding principles as the starting point. The objective is to establish more specific and measurable targets that can assist in moving the IT Division to the desired future state.

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- Identify IT Initiatives**. These activities establish the highest-level organization of actions to achieve the goals. Existing initiatives are re-examined to determine whether they align with the IT Division's strategic direction. Summary descriptions of the existing and future initiatives are produced.

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- Consolidate and Publish Plan**. The Strategy Team prioritizes each initiative and identifies the initiatives they deem most critical to the IT Division's goals. Based on the information compiled during the previous planning activities, the Strategy Team completes the Strategic Plan. The Strategy Team circulates the Strategic Plan among key stakeholders (IT Division Decision Makers and HS Agency Decision Makers). Once the key stakeholders' comments have been incorporated into the IT Division's Strategic Plan, the Strategy Team initiates the implementation, increases awareness of the plan, and promotes commitment throughout all levels of the organization.

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Background

Why strategic planning is important Strategic Planning that is consistent with organizational priorities--*prior to investing significant resources in those actions*--is crucial to getting the most value out of IT investments. For some background into strategic planning and management, read [Strategic Management Foundations](#)

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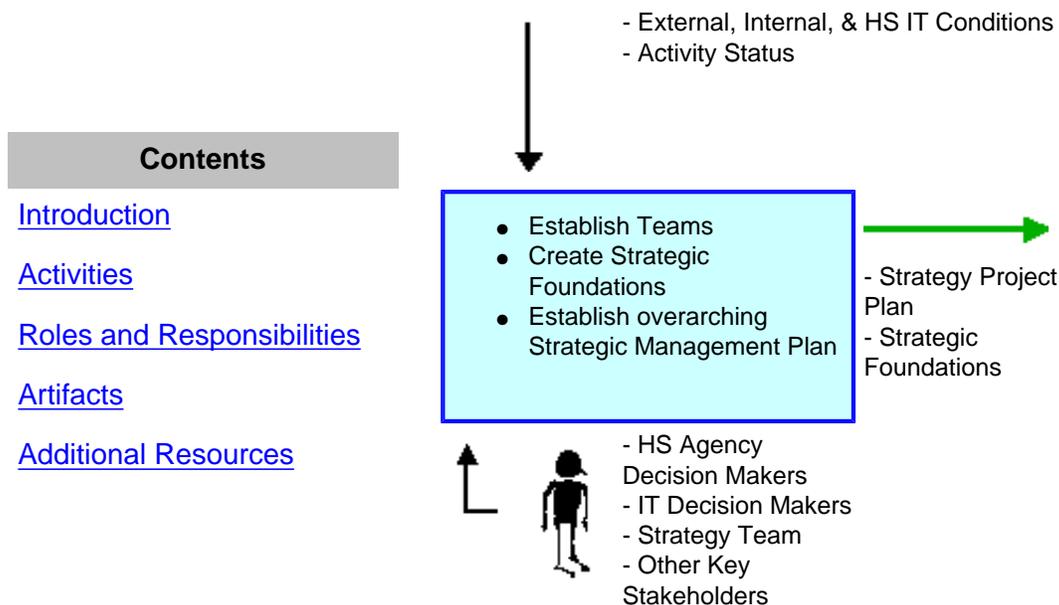


A.1. Strategic Planning Management and Foundation

A. Plan

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Form the strategy project teams, clarify the underlying purpose of the IT Division, and plan and execute the project.



Introduction

The IT Division will use strategic planning to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide the IT Division. The activities to develop the HS IT Strategic Plan are formally managed as for any other project. A [strategy project](#) is established, defining key roles and responsibilities, identifying appropriate individuals to fill those roles, and providing the necessary executive leadership and resources for the project. The strategic planning activities are planned and tracked to ensure that they produce a meaningful HS IT Strategic Plan within the needed timeframe.

In addition to establishing a disciplined strategic planning and oversight process, the key stakeholders will agree on the strategic foundations: the mission, vision, and guiding principles for the IT Division. This understanding provides the context for the IT strategic planning activities, keeping the teams focused and results-oriented. As the strategic planning process is executed and the understanding of the situation and IT needs is refined, these strategic foundations may be adjusted.

The following section can show examples for application of this information for the HS Agency you choose.

TANF Example: When identifying members of the Strategy Team it is important to include the front-line staff (associated IT staff, eligibility workers and case managers). Because they are "in-tune" with the existing systems and programs that serve clients, they serve as a good resource to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the IT systems and processes.

When establishing the foundations for strategic planning, the Strategy Team determines the IT Division's preliminary vision, mission and guiding principles. Prior to doing this activity, the Strategy Team reviews existing State plans as well as any waivers, which provide detailed information on commitments to Federal Agencies.

CSE Example: When identifying members of the Strategy Team it is important to insure that all significant groups of stakeholders are represented and that their input is received. To develop a strong strategic planning document and concept, the Strategy Team must be composed of a blend of program staff and IT staff. Those individuals that utilize the systems on a daily basis and understand the capabilities of the systems are critical members of the Strategy Team. Included in the team should be case managers, CSE managers, IT support personnel, with acute familiarity of the CSE IT application.

Establishing the foundations for strategic planning, the Strategy Team determines the IT Division's preliminary vision, mission, and guiding principles. This process will focus the future technology for the CSE organization on meeting the needs of the workers, clients, and reporting requirements.

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Activities

These activities establish the project context for the IT strategic planning activities. The organizational structures, roles, and responsibilities of key participants are defined first. The underlying strategic foundations, the mission, vision, and guiding principles, are then established. Finally, an overarching plan is created and approved. This plan provides direction and tracks progress of the members of the Strategy Team as they conduct detailed analysis and build the HS IT Strategic Plan.

The following main activities are performed:

1. [Establish Strategy Team](#) - Those that will perform the IT strategic planning activities are identified and assigned. Relationships between the Strategy Team and the other key stakeholders (e.g., HS [Agency Decision Makers](#) and [IT Decision Makers](#)) are established.

2. [Establish Strategic Foundations](#) - Executive leadership establishes the overall purpose of the IT Division and aligns the strategic foundation (i.e., mission, vision, and guiding principles) with the HS Agency. This initial understanding is used to provide the context for the strategic planning activities.
3. [Establish Overarching Strategic Management Plan](#) - The Strategy Team establishes the project plan so that activities can be tracked and target dates can be met.

As these activities are performed, you should collect and analyze lessons learned and provide them as feedback to improve the planning and execution of the strategic planning activities.

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Roles and Responsibilities

The key roles and their responsibilities are as follows:

- [Agency Decision Makers](#) - They establish the Strategy Team by assigning the team lead and providing the authorities and resources necessary to conduct the strategic planning activities.
- [Strategy Team](#) - This team, once established, helps in facilitating the development of the Strategic Foundations, as well as creating and tracking to the Strategic Project Plan.
- [Other Key Stakeholders](#) - These are key individuals or groups such as case managers, HS Agency administrators, the State [CIO](#), the State Legislature, Federal Agencies that fund programs and related information systems, Advocacy Groups, IT users, or others that may contribute insight into establishing the strategic foundations and the Strategic Project Plan.
- [IT Decision Makers](#) - They review and use the analysis as the basis for business decisions regarding implementation and maintenance of IT.

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Artifacts

The following information is used or produced by these activities. Templates, examples, and checklists for identifying and documenting items are available through the [Additional Resources](#) section at the end of this page. Guidance to identify external and internal conditions and overarching constraints can be found in the [Analyze the Situation](#) section.

- [External Conditions](#) - These are input to the activities, forming the basis of the understanding of the world outside the HS Agency. A cursory understanding of these conditions may be necessary to establish the Strategic Project Plan and the strategic foundations.
- [Internal Conditions](#) - These are input to the activities, forming the basis of understanding about the world inside the HS Agency. A cursory understanding of

these conditions may be necessary to establish the Strategic Project Plan and the strategic foundations.

- [HS IT Conditions](#) - These are input to the activities, forming the basis of understanding about how the IT Division operates, as well as data about the inventory of IT assets, including plans for their update. A cursory understanding of these conditions may be necessary to establish the Strategic Project Plan and the strategic foundations.
- [Activity Status](#) - This is the status of the strategy planning activities. It is periodically collected and used to track against the plans. This status is summarized and presented to the HS Agency and IT Decision Makers on a periodic or event-driven basis (such as significant cost or schedule variance).
- [Strategy Project Plan](#) - This plan is prepared by the Strategy Team and used as a basis of managing the Strategy Team activities. It is adjusted, as needed, based on activity status or changes in direction.
- [Strategic Foundations](#) - An initial statement of the HS Agency's and the IT Division's purpose (mission, vision, and guiding principles) is produced to guide establishing the scope and context for the strategy project planning activities.

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Additional Resources

Items that can be used to perform these activities are consolidated in the [Resources](#) portion of the IT Planning and Management Guides.

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Introduction

This activity establishes the roles for those that will have key responsibilities to perform the strategic planning activities: the [HS Agency Decision Makers](#), the [IT Decision Makers](#), and the [Strategy Team](#). Having the right individuals involved is necessary to establish a meaningful IT strategy and the commitment to implement it.

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Activities

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to create and authorize the Strategy Team to conduct the HS IT strategic planning activities. The team structure and other key stakeholders, such as HS Agency Decision Makers and IT Decision Makers, are also defined.

Description:

Proper makeup of the Strategy Team is essential to strategic planning activities. The first step is to form the team and ensure that they have the necessary skills, resources, and authority to meet their responsibilities to collect information and analyze the situation. Refer to the [Guidelines for Forming the Strategy Team](#) for additional insight.

The IT Division has ultimate ownership of the HS IT Strategic Plan. Both the

IT Division and HS Agency Decision Makers must provide resources and support for that plan and the actions it specifies. Some items to consider when identifying those individuals to represent the HS Agency and IT Decision Makers are:

- They should represent the HS Agency's program leadership team (e.g., the executive director or commissioner).
- They have ultimate decision authority and responsibility for overseeing the definition and use of IT within the HS Agency.
- They oversee the [Strategy Project](#), provide resources to that project, and review status
- The following types of individuals can be considered:
 - Advocate: Someone who wants change to take place.
 - Sponsors: Someone who has the power to sanction the change in the organization.
 - Change Agent: Someone who has the authority to effect the change.
 - Change Target: The individual whose behavior will be modified.
- These individuals are "visionaries" because they are focused on what could be and how to apply technology to get there. They understand the Enterprise's current difficulties but are focused on new possibilities rather than fixing existing problems.
- They are willing to work as a change agent or champion to help the HS Agency progress through the transition; these individuals understand the organization's culture. These individuals are responsible for managing any change within the business that the IT strategy may instigate, balancing business and technological change influences.
- These individual should be representative of the affected community, such as HS Agency programs, end-users, clients, caseworkers, advocacy groups, and the IT Division itself.
- They represent the major organizational entities of the IT Division.
- As a group, they understand the technology life-cycle issues that the IT Division must address.
- They have insight into IT Division-specific strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities for improvement.
- They have a good understanding of the IT development, deployment, and technical operations processes.

The Strategy Team is composed of a core team with an individual delegated as the Team Lead. In addition to this central set of individuals, an extended team of experts can be assigned, as needed.

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[A.1.b. Establish Strategic Foundations](#)

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A.1.b. Establish Strategic Foundations

- [Plan Framework](#)

- [Establish Team](#)

- Strategic Foundations

- [Management Plan](#)

Establish the IT Division's mission, vision, and guiding principles, aligned with those of the HS Agency and other organizations that the IT Division directly supports.

Contents

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[Activities](#)

1. [Review the HS Agency's Vision, Mission, Goals, and Subgoals](#)
2. [Develop the HS IT Vision Statement](#)
3. [Develop the HS IT Mission Statements](#)
4. [Develop the HS IT Guiding Principles](#)

Introduction

Strategic planning provides a framework for action that allows an organization to determine the direction for the future. Because the IT Division's primary function is to support the HS Agency, the IT Division must collaborate with the HS Agency to ensure that the IT Division's strategic goals align with the HS Agency-wide priorities. Aligning the IT Division's strategic efforts with the HS Agency provides a clear picture of where the HS Agency's programs and technology intersect with each other.

During these activities, the Strategy Team reviews the HS Agency's mission statement, vision statement, and guiding principles. This information helps create the baseline of the IT Division's mission statement, vision statement, and guiding principles. These activities assume that the strategic foundation for the HS Agency is established. If the HS Agency's current strategic foundations are not available, then they may also be created or updated. The Strategy Team drafts the IT Division's mission statement, vision statement, and guiding principles. If these already exist, then they are reviewed in light of the current situation, and statements are adjusted as appropriate. These foundations characterize the purpose and ultimate aims of the IT Division. They broadly state desired outcomes against which progress can be gauged and the ethical standards by which the IT Division makes decisions and conducts activities. These underlie the HS IT Strategic Plan.

Activities

To establish the strategic foundations, the Strategy Team will perform the following actions:

1. Review the HS Agency's Vision Statement, Mission Statement, Goals, and Subgoals

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is for the Strategy Team to review and understand the HS Agency-level strategic elements which, in turn, provide the context for the HS IT Division's Strategic Plan. This information will help the Strategy Team ensure that the IT Division strategy aligns with the strategic elements of the organizations it supports.

Description:

The HS Agency's vision statement should be a representation of the desired future state. The vision statement should inspire action and help shape the future. It should be a realistic, credible, and attractive description of the future of the organization. A vision statement is an idea so energizing that it jump-starts the future. Most importantly, it is a great hope in common....meaningful to and owned by all levels within the organization. Refer to the [Strategic Plan Template](#) for an example of an HS Agency's vision statements.

The HS Agency's mission statement describes the organization's basic purpose, explains what services will be provided, identifies the customer, and explains how the services will be provided. The mission statement should be guided from a high level. Refer to the [Strategic Plan Template](#) for examples of an HS Agency's mission statements.

The HS Agency goals define how the organization is going to achieve its vision by charting a direction but not specifying how to get there. Goals support the vision and mission statements and should complement, not conflict, with each other. Once goals are established, subgoals can be defined. Subgoals are specific targets for improved performance. Subgoals represent milestones or intermediate achievements necessary to realize the desired outcomes from the HS Agency perspective. Refer to the [Strategic Plan Template](#) for examples of an HS Agency's goals and subgoals.

2. Develop the HS IT Vision Statement

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to develop and document an initial version of the HS IT Division's vision statement. A well-articulated and understood vision helps establish the association between the technology upon which the HS Agency depends and the services that the HS IT Division provides.

Description:

The Strategy Team begins this activity by reviewing the HS Agency's vision statement. Through facilitated sessions, the Strategy Team assists the stakeholders (e.g., IT Decision Makers and HS Agency Decision Makers) envision the future for the IT Division and use of its technology products. An example of how to conduct a facilitated [vision workshop](#) is provided as a resource. The Strategy Team captures areas of agreement as well as different ideas that emerge. Brainstorming is another effective tool for generating the vision. Guidelines on establishing the vision statements are as follows:

- The vision is an idealized view of a desirable and potentially achievable future position -- where the IT Division would like to be.
- A vision statement serves as a guiding theme for the IT Division, expressing the nature of its business and the intent for its future.
- The vision should be compelling so that individuals within and outside the IT Division can identify with it.
- The vision describes what IT Division and upper-level management want to achieve, often referring to the medium- to long-term outlook and often expressed as a set of goals.
- The vision can be considered an extension of the HS Agency vision and accompanying strategies. It must be in logical agreement with where the HS Agency or other key stakeholders are going.
- The vision should represent a challenge for the IT Division, but it should be achievable.
- The vision should represent the way technology can be used to support the future business, how that technology will be developed and deployed, and its support.

Rationale or assumptions made in regard to establishing the vision statements should be captured and held within the Strategy Team as working notes. The rationale may be required to provide insight into the vision. Based on the information captured during the facilitated sessions, the Strategy Team documents the IT Division's initial vision statement. The vision is expected to put demands on both the current and emerging technology and presents opportunities for the HS Agency. Examples of an IT Division's Vision are provided in the [Strategic Plan Template](#).

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3. Develop the HS IT Division's Mission Statements

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to develop and document an initial version of the HS IT Division's mission statement. A well-articulated and understood mission makes planning easier and outcomes more predictable.

Description:

The Strategy Team begins this activity by reviewing the HS Agency's mission statement. The mission statement needs to clearly and concisely define the IT Division's basic purpose, identify the customers, and explain how the services will be provided. Through facilitated sessions, the Strategy Team leads other stakeholders, such as the IT Division Decision Makers and the HS Agency Decision Makers, through the process of discussing the IT Division's business, development and operation needs. During the course of discussion and debate, areas of consensus and differences become apparent; the Strategy Team captures areas of agreement as well as different ideas that emerge. The Strategy Team guides the team to reach consensus on the issues. Leading the stakeholders through brainstorming activities is another effective tool for generating ideas and consensus. Guidelines on how to establish the mission statements are as follows:

- The mission statements express the primary business of the IT Division, its purpose and reason for being, without which it loses its rationale for existing.
- Consider the essential function that the IT Division exists to fulfill. This can be derived from the HS IT strategic capabilities and the HS strategic IT needs, as well as a review of obligations and relationships.
- The purpose addressed in the mission statements should clearly identify the organization being supported and the nature of that support (e.g., the HS Agency and the IT provided).
- The mission statements represent the IT Division's broadest goal, describing general products, services, and HS Agency needs.
- The mission statements should include areas that the IT Division is currently pursuing and plans to pursue in the future. There is always the possibility that actions currently under way may be retired.
- The mission statements should be succinct and be no longer than a few sentences.
- The mission statements may describe the nature of the relationship of all entities the HS IT Division serves or with which it interfaces, such as major customers or providers of the IT Division's products and services.
- The mission statements should support the HS Agency's mission, vision, and strategies, as well as those of other organizations the IT Division is obligated to support.
- The mission statements should support the unique aspects of the HS IT Division's purpose.
- The mission statements must be compatible with any constraints, such as statutes or regulations.
- The mission statements should consider the many life-cycle aspects of the IT Division's purpose, such as those affecting the HS Agency business (HS services), the development and deployment of technology-based solutions (the development processes), and the operational support of those solutions once fielded (technical operations).

Rationale or assumptions made in regard to establishing the mission statements should be captured and held within the Strategy Team as working notes. The rationale may be required to provide insight into the mission. Based on the information captured during the facilitated sessions, the Strategy Team documents the IT Division's mission statement. Examples of an IT Division's mission are provided in the [Strategic Plan Template](#).

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4. Develop the HS IT Guiding Principles

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to develop and document an initial version of the HS IT Division's guiding principles. These principles help guide the decision making within the Division and the relationships between the IT Division and other HS Agency entities. In addition, these principles help establish the technical position that the IT Division will assume (for example, how aggressive the IT Division will be on investigating and pursuing emerging technologies or its tendency to be more risk adverse.) Strategies that are to be developed can be evaluated against these guiding principles to determine whether they represent the values inherent in the principles.

Description:

IT Division's guiding principles need to address both the technology aspects and the organizational culture aspects of the IT Division. The guiding principles provide a structure for communicating what is important to the individuals within the Division to guide their actions.

The cultural principles are the beliefs that the IT Division's members hold in common and put into practice. Through facilitated sessions, the Strategy Team discusses with the stakeholders (representative of all individuals in the Division - from executive management to staff) the basic beliefs that they share as an organization.

The technology guiding principles establish the foundations for technology decisions and risk taking by the IT Division. These principles are the basis for analyzing trade-offs to the adoption of standards upon which the IT Division's systems are based. Through facilitated sessions, the Strategy Team discusses characteristics of the technology produced and technology advances that make the products better. The [CIO](#), testers, architects, and developers participate in this session. Guidelines on how to establish the guiding principles are as follows:

- The guiding principles express the fundamental belief, shared values, and management style of the IT Division. These values represent what individuals in the IT Division collectively believe.
- Guiding principles can articulate the ethical standards by which the IT Division makes decisions and conducts activities. They establish the boundaries of behavior. They affect the ability of the organization to

carry out its mission.

- Guiding principles should not make broad, sweeping generalizations. They should make it possible to challenge the assumptions behind each principle. This is how new principles can be discovered and adopted as the IT Division's situation changes.
- The guiding principles should be simple and readily understandable by the IT Division and HS Agency management and staff.
- The guiding principles should conform to the HS Agency and IT Division's mission and internal and external environments, such as regulatory or technology environments within which the HS Agency and IT Division are expected to operate.
- The guiding principles will be stable for the duration of the Strategic Plan and are unlikely to change *significantly*.
- The guiding principles should address a significant concern of the HS Agency business, development, or operations. They may be related to a critical capability.
- It is not necessary to devise a long list of principles; a few well-chosen principles are more beneficial.

Rationale or assumptions made in regard to establishing the guiding principles should be captured and held within the Strategy Team as working notes. The rationale may be needed to provide insight into the principles with stakeholders. The Strategy Team documents the IT Division's guiding principles. Examples of an IT Division's guiding principles are provided in the [Strategic Plan Template](#).

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[A.1.a. Establish Strategic Management Team](#)

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[A.1.c Establish Overarching Strategic Management Plan](#)

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A.1.c Establish Overarching Strategic Management Plan

- [Plan Framework](#)

- [Establish Team](#)
- [Strategic Foundations](#)
- Management Plan

Establish and use the Strategy Project Plan to communicate and coordinate strategic planning activities and results.

Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Activities](#)

1. [Establish Strategy Project Plan](#)
2. [Track and Make Adjustments](#)

Introduction

These activities establish the project plan for the strategy project and track activities against it. Results are reviewed with those having oversight of the project, the HS Agency Decision Makers and the IT Division Makers, as needed.

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Activities

To plan and track the strategic planning project activities, the Strategy Team performs the following activities.

1. Establish Strategy Project Plan

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to prepare an overarching project plan to coordinate the management of the actions for developing the HS IT Strategic Plan. This ensures that the Strategy Team has appropriate resources and that any coordination between the Strategy Team, the HS Agency Decision Makers, IT Decision Makers, or others is addressed at the beginning of the strategy project.

Description:

In this activity, the Strategy Team produces the Strategy Project Plan for the HS IT Strategic Plan. When completing the project plan, the Strategy Team should consider the following:

- Defining the activities for which the Strategy Team is responsible. Detailed plans, such as those needed for scanning the different environments (see [Analyze the Situation](#)) may be produced as needed.
- Establishing expected start and completion periods for each activity.
- Identifying risks to successfully generating an HS IT Strategic Plan should be identified. This may include obtaining access to data sources (e.g., documents or individuals), resources, and coordination with other external groups.
- Adequately training the Strategy Team members.
- Determining necessary resources to complete each of the activities, such as special data collection or analysis tools, or access to individuals or services for specific information, such as technology watches or trends.
- Showing uncertainty in any estimates, noting critical dependencies between activities, when necessary.

Coordinate the plan, and any updates, with key stakeholders, (such as the HS Agency Decision Makers or IT Decision Makers).

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2. Track and Make Adjustments**Purpose:**

The purpose of this activity is to analyze and document the status of strategy project activities against the Strategic Project Plan, noting where the expected results deviate and making adjustments to the project plan or the performance of the activities (e.g., additional resources). Those having oversight of the strategy project receive periodic insight into this status.

Description:

The Strategy Team Lead is responsible for collecting and analyzing status against the Strategy Project Plan, making adjustments to the performance of the activities or revising the project plan. Status addresses cost, schedule, and results of the strategic activities. Some items to consider for this tracking include the following:

- Actual schedule (start/completed) compared against estimates.
- Actual costs, by appropriate categories, compared against estimates.
- Results expected from the activities compared with what was achieved (e.g., interviews with all stakeholders could not be performed as intended if they were not available).

- Risks to collecting and analyzing the essential information to determine a realistic strategy.
- Issues that may affect the Strategy Team performing their activities; must be dealt with at higher levels of HS Agency management.

Periodically, appropriate reports or briefings are provided to the HS Agency Decision Makers and IT Decision Makers on the status of the strategic planning activities. These reports summarize the overall progress and note any difficulties that those having oversight need to address (e.g., coordination with others within or external to the HS Agency).

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[A.2. Analyze the Situation](#)

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B. Implement The Strategic Plan

Enable and initiate the actions for achieving the HS IT Strategic Plan.

[I. Strategic IT Planning and Management](#)

- [Background](#)
- [A. Plan](#)
- B. Implement
- [C. Monitor](#)
- [D. Adjust](#)
- [Resources](#)

The IT strategic direction for the HS Agency was established in the HS IT Strategic Plan produced by the [Plan the Course of Action](#) activities. The Implement the Strategic Plan activities put that plan into action. This includes allocating resources and delegating authorities and responsibilities to the [Develop and Maintain the Technical Architecture](#) and [Planning and Managing the Technical Evolution](#) activities.

Implementing the plan involves the following key activities:

1. **Provide Direction and Means.** These activities provide priorities and resources as well as ongoing insight, expertise, decisions, guidance, encouragement, and administration to the HS programs/projects underway.
2. **Communicate Expectations.** These activities conveys and clarifies the expected outcomes (ends) and operational procedures and standards (means) for the HS programs/projects underway.
3. **Coordinate and Support Efforts.** This action fosters collaboration between and provides political support for the HS programs/projects underway.

By following the [Plan the Course of Action](#) activities, each State's IT Division produces a unique strategic plan. Since information needed to implement each State's strategic plan varies, this section provides high-level guidance for you to consider.

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C. Monitor Operations

- [I. Strategic IT Planning and Management](#)

- [Background](#)

- [A. Plan](#)

- [B. Implement](#)

- [C. Monitor](#)

- [D. Adjust](#)

- [Resources](#)

Monitor actual measures and results against expectations.

The Monitor Operations activities review the performance and results of the ongoing strategic activities against the HS IT Strategic Plan. Actual measures are compared with expected measures. The progress made is analyzed and the likely effects from continuing (or attempting to continue) along the planned course is assessed.

Improvement is scrutinized from various stakeholder viewpoints, including clients, workers, and management. Effort is made to recognize and understand lessons learned and weigh and recommend alternatives for corrective action.

Monitoring Operations involves the following key activities:

1. **Check Performance Results.** Expected and actual successes are compared and progress evaluated. The HS Agency should consider whether or not adjustments are needed. Measures of actual performance and results are compared with prespecified short- and long-term targets, and judgments are made concerning the significance of the differences between them. As a part of this activity, the plan should be compared against defined milestones and expectations.

This action compares measures of actual performance and results with prespecified short- and long-term target measures (see [balanced scorecard](#) for an explanation) and judges the significance of the differences between them.

2. **Assess HS Agency Impacts.** This action considers the likely effects of changes on the stakeholders, such as client and staff. The likelihood and consequences of deviations in the plan if either the projected or planned path were realized is considered.
3. **Determine Need for Correction.** The need for corrective action to either the HS IT Strategic Plan or its implementation (e.g., budgets, priorities) is determined, and the actions are prioritized.

By following the [Plan the Course of Action](#) activities, each State's IT Division produces a unique strategic plan. Since information needed to monitor to each State's strategic plan varies, this section provides high-level guidance for you to consider.

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D. Adjust Course

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By continually learning and assimilating new knowledge, the strategic management processes and the plans are constantly improving.

These activities "close the loop" of the HS IT strategic management process. They generate the feedback necessary for the organization to learn, hold onto the gains it has achieved, and continue to improve. The feedback is used to adjust the information factored and the procedures followed within the entire HS IT strategic management process. This step corrects or standardizes actions, adjusts plans or measures, and/or starts the whole HS IT strategic management process over again, as appropriate and indicated by results from the [Monitor Operation](#) activities.

Adjusting Course involves the following key activities:

1. **Continually Learn.** Development and implementation of any Strategic Plan for technology is a process driven by choices and decisions that reflect a given time and situation. As time passes and new technology evolves, better ways to use technology become apparent. This activity involves recording and including, for the next release of the plan, updates and changes that make the next year's plan even stronger. A formal process should be defined to document and record considerations for the next version of the plan.
2. **Continually Improve.** By incorporating lessons learned into the next version of the HS Agency's strategic plan, the process of strategic planning can become dependable and executable.
3. **Systematically Repeat the Process.** Develop a regimented process for strategic planning and a timeframe in which the process is repeated. In the dynamic world of HS, annual updates would seem appropriate. Define your cycle time and refine and repeat the planning process.

By following the [Plan the Course of Action](#) activities, each State's IT Division produces a unique strategic plan. Since information needed to adjust each State's strategic plan varies, this section provides high-level guidance for you to consider.

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Resources: Strategic IT Planning and Management

[I. Strategic IT Planning and Management](#)

This consolidated list of resources can be applied to perform [Strategic IT Planning and Management](#) activities. The date reflects the last time the item was changed.

Documents listed as "Nonspecific-Agency Example" have not been customized to meet the needs of any particular HS Agency, but rather can apply to all Agencies with some customization.

- [Background](#)
- [A. Plan](#)
- [B. Implement](#)
- [C. Monitor](#)
- [D. Adjust](#)
- Resources

External Environment Data Collection Plan Worksheet

To plan the collection of environmental data about the HS Agency's external entities and their interfaces, responsibilities, and dependencies 4/23/01

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

TANF Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

CSE Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

External Scanning Worksheet

To record and organize information about the HS Agency's external environment, best practices, and initiatives pertinent to the HS Agency IT 4/23/01

TANF Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

CSE Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Internal Environment Data Collection Plan Worksheet

To plan the collection of environmental data about the HS Agency's internal entities and their interfaces, responsibilities, and dependencies

4/23/01

TANF Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

CSE Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Internal Scanning Worksheet

To record and organize information about the HS Agency's internal environment to understand the nature of the relationship between the IT division and entities within the HS Agency

4/23/01

TANF Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

CSE Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

IT Division Data Collection Plan Worksheet

To plan the collection of IT Division data about the IT inventory, skills, strengths, weaknesses, and other pertinent observations

4/23/01

TANF Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

CSE Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Guidelines for Identifying Stakeholders

To identify and prioritize those having a vested interest in the strategy planning and implementation

4/23/01

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Technology Trends Scanning Worksheet

To identify significant technology or technology-related trends that may affect the strategic vision for technology use and delivery

4/23/01

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Guidelines to Baseline the Existing IT

A collection of checklists and guidelines to inventory the HS Agency IT and its use for further situation analysis and identification of IT gaps

4/23/01

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[Web Format](#)

Guidelines to Assess Existing IT Qualities

A collection of checklists and guidelines to evaluate the usage and maintenance qualities of the HS Agency IT

4/23/01

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[Web Format](#)

Balanced Scorecard Method

Overview of the balanced scorecard approach and some examples and worksheets

4/23/01

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[Web Format](#)

Template for an IT Division Strategic Plan

Provides assistance in developing the Strategic Plan

4/23/01

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Consolidated Guidelines on Typical Strategic Plan Elements

4/23/01

Provides a short list of items typically found in a Strategic Plan

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Guidelines for Forming the Technical Architecture Team

4/23/01

Guidelines on forming the Architecture Team, its authorities, and Core and extended Team member roles

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[Web Format](#)

Guidelines for Forming the Strategy Team

4/23/01

To identify individuals to serve as the Core and Extended Strategy Team members

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Sample Survey Questions to Explore the Internal and External Environments

4/25/01

A set of survey questions that can be adapted to collect insight into some typical business functions, such as intake/eligibility, case management, Federal reporting, financial, and system interfaces

TANF Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

CSE Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Vision Statement Workshop

A set of slides to help guide key stakeholders in creating a vision

10/17/01

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[MS PowerPoint 2000 Format](#)

[Web Format \(Description of Briefing Charts\)](#)

Guidelines on Brainstorming Techniques

Techniques for hold a brainstorming session

4/23/01

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Guidelines for Setting Goals

Techniques to create goals statements

4/23/01

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Guidelines on Setting Subgoals

Techniques to create subgoal statements

4/23/01

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Initiative Priority Matrix

A worksheet to gain an understanding of the IT initiatives and how they relate to the HS Agency and IT Division's strategic goals

4/23/01

TANF Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

CSE Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Consolidated Migration Guidance

A set of items to guide technology migration-oriented decisions when establishing the IT Strategic Plan

4/23/01

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[Web Format](#)

The Federal Perspective: Requirements for IT Planning

A brief overview of Federal requirements related to planning, and also developing, modifying, or replacing an information system

5/05/01

Nonspecific-Agency Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Unique Factors Worksheet

To identify unique factors affecting the HS environments

5/05/01

TANF Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

CSE Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

External Interface Strengths and Weaknesses Worksheet

To identify strengths and weaknesses affecting the external interfaces of HS environments

5/05/01

TANF Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

CSE Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Internal Interface Strengths and Weaknesses Worksheet

To identify strengths and weaknesses affecting the internal interfaces of HS environments

5/05/01

TANF Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

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CSE Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Interface Types Worksheet

To identify interfaces of the HS Environments and determine the appropriate interface types

5/05/01

TANF Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

CSE Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Reporting Worksheet

To assist in reporting HS environmental information

5/05/01

TANF Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

CSE Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Worker/Manager Satisfaction Worksheet

To help measure worker satisfaction in the HS environments

5/05/01

TANF Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

CSE Example:

[MS Word Format](#)

[Web Format](#)

Have Something to Contribute?

We are always looking for a "few good things,"... If you have something that you were looking for, or would like to contribute for others to leverage, please contact the IT Planning and Management guide team at statesystems@acf.hhs.gov

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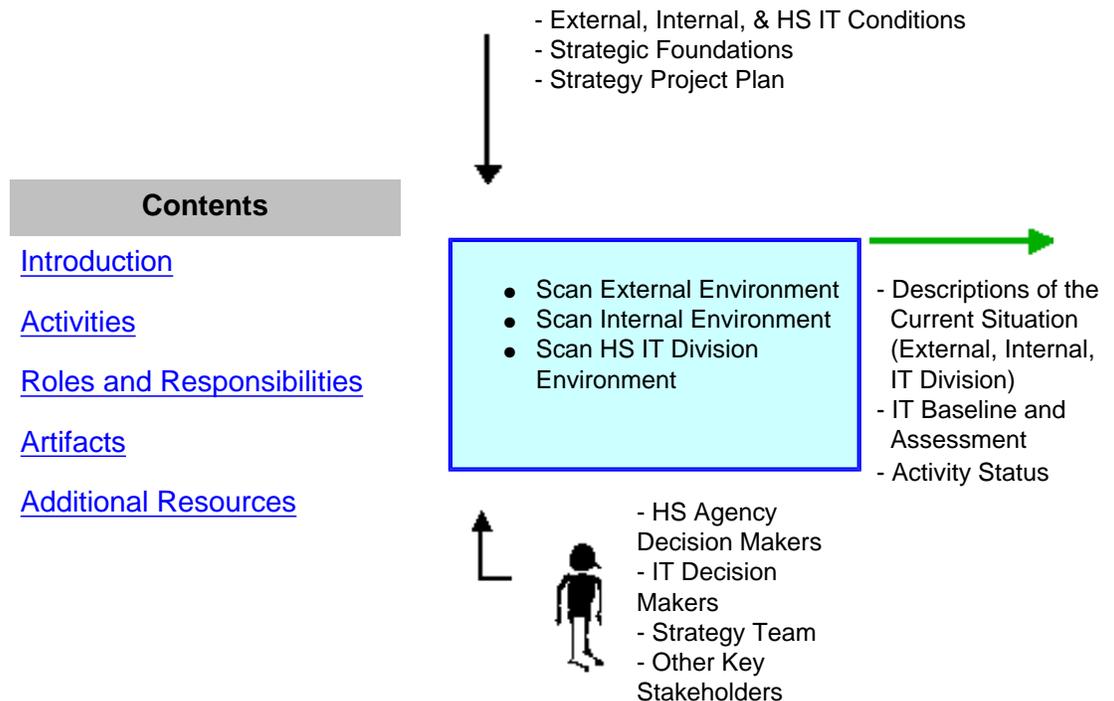
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A.2. Analyze the Situation

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Establish a clear understanding of the current internal and external environments of the State HS Agency and the factors that influence the HS IT Division's technology decisions.



Introduction

Because the HS IT Division supports the HS Agency, the [Strategy Team](#) must understand the HS Agency's ever-changing environment. The scanning activities are the first steps in understanding the complete situation and planning for the future. The scanning activities assume a broad view. The Strategy Team investigates both the IT Division and its immediate obligations and responsibilities and also the HS Agency's internal and external stakeholders (such as the Federal Agencies, technology vendors, and other entities) that influence the HS Agency. During the scanning process, the Strategy Team looks at the organization through "the eyes" of the internal and external stakeholders. Using this approach, the team can identify areas of strengths or weakness, threats that might hold the IT Division back, and opportunities for moving the IT Division forward. This information allows the IT Division to position itself for changes originating from many environments.

The following section can show examples for application of this information for the HS

Agency you choose.

TANF Example: There are many issues for the Strategy Team to consider when scanning the internal and external environments and the IT Division.

In the new TANF environment, information is held both internally and externally with other service providers; as a result, information needs are met through a complicated, changing, and far-reaching network of internal and external IT systems.

IT assists the HS Agency in serving clients effectively and efficiently. While scanning the IT Division, the Strategy Team inventories and assesses the technology that supports the TANF program by focusing on how the following issues affect the HS Agency:

- Data collection, reporting, and systems integration
- Case management and service delivery
- Resource management
- Security and confidentiality

Depending on the IT Division's responsibilities, the Strategy Team should consider other issues in addition to the issues listed above.

CSE Example: There are many issues for the Strategy Team to consider when scanning the internal and external environments and the IT Division.

In the CSE organization, large amounts of data are held both internally and externally to the organization and the IT Division. Many States utilize private contractors to gather and store information such as State new hire information. To accomplish the data collection and reporting requirements of the CSE organization, most States are involved in a dynamic and expanded network of connected IT systems.

IT assists the CSE organization in serving the clients effectively and efficiently. While scanning the IT Division, the Strategy Team inventories and assesses the technology that supports the CSE organization by focusing on how the following issues affect the CSE organization within its Agency.

- Data collection, reporting, matching, interfacing and systems integration
- Case management and related service delivery
- Resource management
- Security and confidentiality
- Financial reporting related to financial institution data match, multi-state financial institution data match, etc.
- Matching information to licensure agencies
- Federal and State reporting

- Coordination and synchronization with TANF where applicable
- Communication and coordination with the court system
- Communication and coordination with child welfare systems

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Activities

Part of strategic planning, thinking, and management is an awareness of resources and an eye to the future environment, so that an organization can successfully respond to changes in the environment.

The following main activities are performed:

1. [Scan HS Agency External Environment](#) - Identify and analyze the conditions outside the HS Agency that might require it to adapt or change its course in some way. These changes may have technology implications. Investigate how the HS Agency's technology must support Federal requirements, State requirements, or other external requirements.
2. [Scan HS Agency Internal Environment](#) - Identify and analyze the conditions inside the HS Agency that may cause it to adapt or change its course in some way. Investigate how the HS Agency's technology is currently supported or is planned to support HS Agency requirements. Include the influence of other applicable internal requirements, such as the HS Agency's mission and understanding of its values and principles.
3. [Scan HS IT Division Environment](#) - Identify and analyze the responsibilities and obligations of the HS IT Division, including an understanding of the current technology base and its qualities.

As these activities are performed, you should collect and analyze lessons learned, and provide them as feedback to improve the process.

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Roles and Responsibilities

The key roles and their responsibilities are as follows:

- [HS Agency Decision Makers](#) - They review and use the outcomes of the analysis as the basis of HS Agency-wide business decisions.
- [IT Decision Makers](#) - They review and use the analysis as the basis for business decisions regarding implementation and maintenance of IT.
- [Strategy Team](#) - They are responsible for performing these activities. They collect and analyze information and present it to the HS Agency and IT Decision Makers.

- [Other Key Stakeholders](#) - These are other key individuals or groups, such as case managers, HS Agency administrators, the State CIO, the State Legislature, and Federal Agencies, that fund programs and related information systems, advocacy groups, IT users, or others (e.g., vendors) that may contribute insight into the current situation.

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Artifacts

The following information is used or produced by these activities. Templates, examples, and checklists for identifying and documenting items are available in the [Additional Resources](#) section at the end of this page. Consider these [Sources of Strategic Information](#), if needed.

- [External Conditions](#) - These are input to the activities, forming the basis of the understanding of the world outside the HS Agency. These items may indicate current conditions as well as trends that may affect the HS Agency and how it may choose to provide future services (e.g., vendor product plans or e-government initiatives). The Strategy Team is looking for items that indicate the current conditions and likely changes that can affect how the HS Agency will define and deliver HS services. This includes looking at HS Agency partners and other external information systems with which the HS Agency may interoperate.
- [Internal Conditions](#) - These are input to the activities, forming the basis of understanding about the world inside the HS Agency.
- [HS IT Conditions](#) - These are input to the activities, forming the basis of understanding about how the IT Division operates, as well as data about the inventory of IT assets, including plans for their update. These inputs also include the various HS Agency models (e.g., process or logical data models) and plans (e.g., current system development or upgrade plans). These conditions are reviewed and their meaning interpreted by these activities.
- [Descriptions of the Current Situation](#) This summarizes the most important characteristics of the current environment and IT conditions. It identifies trends, significant forces, and other factors about the state of the current situation and serves as a building block for the other strategic planning activities.
- [IT Baseline and Assessment](#) This is an output containing the summary description of the current IT assets and an assessment of their qualities.
- [Activity Status](#) - The status of these activities is periodically collected and provided to the Strategy Team Lead to assess progress against the Strategy Project Plan.
- [Strategy Project Plan](#) - This plan is used to establish the management structure for these activities.
- [Strategic Foundations](#) - This is used to guide establishing the scope and context for these activities.

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Additional Resources

Items that can be used to perform these activities are consolidated in the [Resources](#) portion of this guide.

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A.2.a. Scan HS Agency External Environment

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By analyzing the HS Agency's external environment, the Strategy Team develops insight into the external factors that influence the IT Division.

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1. [Plan Collection of HS Agency External Environment Information](#)
2. [Collect and Analyze HS Agency External Environment Information](#)

Introduction

These activities deal with the [State HS Agency's](#) external environment, the world outside the State HS Agency. This environment includes external entities such as Federal and State agencies, locally elected officials, community-based organizations, contractors, and technology vendors. When scanning the external environment, consider both the current and future situation. This includes potential changes coming from external sources, such as Federal and State initiatives that can affect HS Agency operations. This also includes technology innovations that may impact the IT Division in the short or long term, such as [ASP](#) or peer-to-peer architectures. This outside world continually poses new challenges and opportunities to the IT Division's ability to support the HS Agency across all of its programs.

Scanning the environment outside the State HS Agency involves researching a variety of information sources in an attempt to spot emerging trends and conditions that may eventually impact the IT Division's operations and strategic plans. This scanning process is by nature broad-ranging and mind-stretching -- an effort to identify and interpret prominent events and patterns. Scanning is conducted on an ongoing basis, formally and/or informally, primarily by the Strategy Team. The team reviews the results of the analysis with both the [HS Agency Decision Makers](#) and [IT Decision Makers](#).

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Activities

To scan the external environment, the Strategy Team performs the following activities:

1. Plan Collection of HS Agency External Environment Information

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to prepare a plan for collecting impact data from the external environment, and document this information in the [External Environment Data Collection Plan Worksheet](#). This plan serves as a guide through the subsequent collection and analysis activities.

Description:

In this activity, the Strategy Team determines what type of information is needed and the basic documents to review, such as contractor business processes, legal mandates, and predictions of political and IT-industry changes. The Strategy Team considers any key influences and IT interfaces between the HS Agency and entities in the external environment. These interactions may have significant impact on the success of the HS Agency. For example, consider the following:

- What are the key services that the HS Agency provides? Are they external, and how are they accessed?
- For essential systems, what are the key external interfaces and the vendor's technology plans?
- Are the political priorities of a new administrative and legislative branch understood? How are they currently changing?
- Is there impending Federal or State legislation that could alter significantly the way the HS Agency operates?
- Is there impending Federal or State legislation that could alter significantly the information that the HS Agency must provide, such as new or different reporting requirements?
- Are there potential changes to the operations of other Federal, interstate, intrastate, or county agencies or other partners that will impact the way the HS Agency obtains, processes, or exchanges information with these other entities?
- Which external information systems interface with the HS Agency currently or in the future, and what information is or will be exchanged?

Next, the Strategy Team, categorizes the impact these factors may have as near or long term. Consider these [Sources of Strategic Information](#), if needed.

Once the Strategy Team considers the key influences and determines what type of information is needed, they complete the following:

- Identifies all the key external stakeholders (those who can provide reliable information on the current and future state of the external environment)
- Schedules interview meetings with the external stakeholders

- Requests that stakeholders provide any readily available documentation for the Strategy Team to review prior to the meeting

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2. Collect and Analyze HS Agency External Environment Information

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to collect, categorize, and analyze the data according to the [collection plan](#) created above, revising the collection plan as necessary. Prioritize any conclusions and, when appropriate, communicate them to the HS Agency Decision Makers and IT Decision Makers through briefings or other means. The [External Interface Strengths and Weaknesses Worksheet](#) helps the Strategy Team determine actions needed to modify or update existing interfaces. The [External Scanning Worksheet](#) provides insight into collecting, organizing, and analyzing this information.

Description:

External entities (such as stakeholders, advocacy groups, and the legislative branch) can affect the HS Agency directly and indirectly. Identify the types of outside forces and areas of strengths and weaknesses in order to understand how they affect the HS Agency. Information about external forces generally can be categorized as follows:

- **Political forces.** This includes political agendas of chief executives and legislators and changes in political parties such as Governor, Legislature, Local Officials, and Federal Government.
- **Legal forces.** This includes requirements and influences such as Federal and State statutes, executive orders, court decrees, HS Agency rules and regulations, and any impending legislation.
- **Economic forces.** This includes the overall State economy, the possibility of increasing or decreasing funding, changes in computer equipment or network infrastructure costs, outsourcing costs, vendor economic health, and other economic issues that the HS Agency should consider.
- **Social forces.** This may include the influences of client advocacy groups or interactions with faith-based providers.
- **Technological forces.** This includes influences such as product life spans (e.g., rate of obsolescence, computer processor, and memory growth), standards, and interoperability considerations. Opportunities might include a new standard that facilitates interagency interoperability, such as [XML](#) or peer-to-peer networking. Threats might include a changing standard that hastens the obsolescence of a critical application or a vendor's product market share.

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By analyzing the HS Agency's internal factors, the Strategy Team develops insight into the internal entities that influence the HS IT Division.

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1. [Plan Collection of HS Agency Internal Environment Data](#)
2. [Collect and Analyze HS Agency Internal Environment Information](#)

Introduction

These activities deal with the world inside the [State HS Agency](#). This is the immediate environment in which the the [HS IT Division](#) operates. This analysis includes an understanding of the HS Agency's key competencies and influences, which affect the HS Agency's ability to set and follow its direction and to operate effectively, efficiently, and innovatively. This may include its shared values, organizational structures and infrastructures, social and technical systems (including interfaces), managerial style, staff commitment, skills base, and strategy consistency.

Scanning the environment inside the HS Agency involves examining the functioning and health of the HS Agency as a whole. The scan involves researching a variety of information sources in an attempt to spot emerging trends and conditions that can affect the IT Division's operations and strategic plans.

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Activities

To scan the internal environment, the Strategy Team performs the following activities:

1. Plan Collection of HS Agency Internal Environment Data

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to plan for collecting impact data from the HS Agency internal environment, document the information in the [Internal Environment Data Collection Plan Worksheet](#). [Sample Survey Questions](#) to explore the internal and external environments serve as guides for the [TANF](#) and [CSE](#) programs; these sample questions can be modified to any specific program. This plan serves as a guide through the subsequent collection and analysis activities.

Description:

In this activity, the Strategy Team determines the type and depth of information needed, and the basic documents to review, such as the HS Agency's business processes. The strategy team considers the key influences and any IT interfaces between the HS Agency and the stakeholders in the internal environment. These items may have significant impact on the success of the HS Agency. Some factors to consider include the following:

- Existing HS Agency plans and agreements with Federal Agencies
- HS Agency budgets and sources of funding and funding rules
- HS Agency organizational structures: How the HS Agency is structured, where decisions are made or initiated, and how the HS programs are managed (e.g., state-administered or county-administered)
- Current HS Agency strategies, as well as strategic and tactical plans
- Staff competencies and staffing plans: IT skills that current HS Agency program staff possess (e.g., computer literacy), which may indicate user training or other change management issues to be addressed when technology changes
- Operations: The facilities or locations where services are provided and the types of equipment used by the HS staff
- Technical infrastructure that may be needed to enable communications and coordination across the HS Agency or with other stakeholders (e.g., interoperability)
- Existing business processes (formally documented as well as informal conventions and work flows), see [example survey questions](#)
- Union agreements
- Recommended enhancements or improvements to the quality of HS program from the client, advocacy groups or the HS Agency's perspective

Categorize the impact these factors may have as near or long term.

Once the Strategy Team considers the key influences and determines what type of information is needed, they complete the following actions.

- Identifies all the key internal stakeholders (those who can provide reliable information on the current and future state of the internal environment)
- Schedules interview meetings with the internal stakeholders

- Requests that stakeholders provide any readily available documentation for the Strategy Team to review prior to the meeting

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2. Collect and Analyze HS Agency Internal Environment Information

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to collect, categorize, and analyze the data according to the [collection plan](#) created in the activity above, revising the plan as necessary. Prioritize any conclusions and, when appropriate, communicate them to the HS Agency Decision Makers and IT Decision Makers through briefings or other means. The [Internal Scanning Worksheet](#) provides insight into collecting, organizing, and analyzing this information. The Strategy Team may use the [Worker/Management Satisfaction Worksheet](#) to determine case manager's and supervisor's perceptions of interfaces. The [Interface Strengths and Weaknesses Worksheet](#) assists the Strategy Teams in determining actions needed to modify or update existing interfaces. Identify and describe interfaces between key internal entities and the HS Agency.

Description:

Forces within the HS Agency, such as HS programs and HS Agency priorities, can affect the IT Division directly and/or indirectly. The understanding gained through this activity may indicate that additional coordination and communication may be needed between the HS program staff and HS IT staff in order to construct and rapidly implement changing HS program requirements.

Organize and analyze the information to identify areas of strength and weakness with regard to the HS Agency's ability to perform its responsibilities and respond to external changes. Identify and reach a consensus on the types of internal forces and how they impact the IT Division. Information about these forces generally can be categorized into the following groups:

- **Political forces.** This includes priorities, for example, of various HS programs or leadership changes.
- **Economic forces.** This includes the HS Agency budgeting process, HS IT budgets, [ROI](#) calculations, individual HS program budgets, and other financial considerations.
- **Organizational forces.** This includes current and future HS organizational structures and responsibilities, services that each organization offers, business process and work flows, and HS Agency policies and procedures.
- **Technological Forces.** This includes how technology supports case managers and front-line staff needs and their level of experience and comfort with existing and new technology (PC application versus dumb

terminals).

Consider these [Sources of Strategic Information](#), if needed.

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A.2.c. Scan IT Division Environment

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By analyzing the IT Division, its obligations and responsibilities, as well as the current IT inventory, the Strategy Team develops insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the HS IT Division and IT deployment.

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Introduction

These activities deal with the world inside the HS IT Division and its relationship to the entities within the HS Agency, as well as those in the HS Agency's external environment. The focus is on the IT Division's current and planned responsibilities, obligations, and key interfaces within the HS Agency and other external entities. This analysis generates an understanding of the HS IT Division's competencies, which affect its ability to rapidly and effectively respond to the changing needs of the HS Agency.

Scanning the environment of the IT Division includes compiling an inventory of the technology either currently deployed or under development and preparing an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the IT Division. The Strategy Team should also determine the strengths and weaknesses of the key interfaces. This is the IT baseline.

At the end of this process, the Strategy Team understands the current technology baseline, and how the IT Division operates and how it interacts with the other internal or external entities.

Activities

To scan the IT Division's environment, the Strategy Team performs the following activities:

1. Plan Collection of IT Division Internal Environment Data

Purpose:

Formulate a plan to collect the following data:

- HS IT Division's internal environment, such as organizational structures, roles, responsibilities, obligations, and interfaces
- IT baseline and its general qualities

Document this information in the [IT Division Data Collection Plan Worksheet](#).

This plan will guide the two subsequent activities collection and base-lining activities.

Description:

This activity focuses on developing a plan for of the IT Division's internal environment and its responsibilities, obligations, and interfaces with other entities. It is necessary to determine the types of information is needed and whether the Strategy Team has access to the information.

Characterizing the current state of the IT Division requires establishing sub-teams of the Strategy Team. These sub-teams compile information on the major technology elements and their overall qualities. This includes investigating the HS programs and other organizational entities, applications used, data sources and platforms used, and network structure.

In addition, the baseline activities may include collecting and organizing information about security/integrity, legal issues, privacy, system development, vendor support, outsourcing, or other issues critical to the HS Agency mission and its use of technology.

Once the Strategy Team determines what is needed, they complete the following actions:

- Identifies all of the key stakeholders (those who can provide reliable information on the current and future state of the IT Division)
- Schedules interview meetings with the key stakeholders
- Requests that stakeholders provide any readily available documentation for the Strategy Team to review prior to the meeting

2. Collect and Analyze the IT Division's Environment Information

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to collect, categorize, and analyze the data according to the [collection plan](#) created in the activity above, revising the plan as necessary. Prioritize any conclusions and, when appropriate, communicate them to the HS Agency Decision Makers and IT Decision Makers through briefings or other means. The [Technology Trends Scanning Worksheet](#) provides insight into collecting, organizing, and analyzing this information.

Description:

HS programs require a number of interface entities to work together in partnership to promote the economic self-sufficiency and security of their clients. In order to meet current and expanded needs of the agency, the Strategy Team needs to categorize and assess the various types of interfaces. The [Interface Type Worksheet](#) provides insight into collecting and analyzing this information.

While assessing the interfaces, the Strategy Team needs to determine which interfaces are missing or collect inaccurate information. The [Reporting Worksheet](#) provides a document to determine which interfaces need updating or replacing.

The IT Division may have unique factors that may impact the HS Agency's interfaces. The [Unique and Critical Factors Worksheet](#) serves as a tool to collect this information.

Identify and prioritize the primary duties and obligations to support the HS Agency's mission and vision. Note dependencies between the IT Division and entities in the HS Agency or its external environment. This includes Federal or State lawmakers, elected officials, HS programs, regulators, and other HS Agency internal and external stakeholders (for example, all reporting obligations related to programs and Federal Agencies). The Strategy Team looks for discontinuities or misalignments between responsibilities, obligations, and current IT Division capabilities.

The IT Division may have unique characteristics that affect the IT delivery processes, which should be noted. This includes processes to develop and deploy the technology elements (e.g., applications, platforms, networking, and data sources), as well as processes used to operate these elements once they are deployed (e.g., network, security, data or user administration, and help desk). In addition, organizational structure, decision making, staffing profiles, resources (e.g., development platforms and tools) should also be examined. The following factors representing the HS Agency need to be considered:

- **HS operations.** This assessment determines whether the IT staff operating and maintaining the HS program systems is able to perform its responsibilities effectively and efficiently and whether IT

enhancements could dramatically increase the overall productivity of the HS Agency.

- **Technology development and deployment.** This assessment determines whether the IT group is able to perform its responsibilities effectively and efficiently. This includes the ability to develop and deploy applications that meet HS Agency needs when the HS Agency needs them, in a cost-effective manner (e.g., on time, within cost, and with the desired functionality).

Many of the critical responsibilities of technology may be mandated by either Federal or State requirements. The plans and aspirations of elected officials in the State or other political concerns may have a direct impact on the HS IT Division. Some States have centralized Chief Information Offices that serve to standardize and constrain Agencies within their responsibilities. These constraints should be considered.

The items collected and analyzed establish the list of IT Division responsibilities and obligations and their relative priorities.

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3. Baseline and Assess the IT Inventory

Purpose:

Collect, categorize, and assess an inventory of the IT assets (products or process), creating a baseline. Prioritize any conclusions and, when appropriate, communicate them to the HS Agency Decision Makers and IT Decision Makers through briefings or other means. The [Guidelines to Baseline the IT](#) and [Guidelines to Assess Current IT Qualities](#) provide additional insight into collecting, organizing, and analyzing this information.

Description:

These activities may begin once the scope for the [Analyze the Situation](#) activities is determined. Sub-teams to the Strategy Team may be formed to collect and compile the information. One way to obtain information is to survey key stakeholders throughout or external to the HS Agency. To ensure that individuals respond and provide this information in a timely fashion, it is helpful if the sub-teams receive public support from the Strategy Team, the IT Decision Makers, and the HS [Agency Decision Makers](#).

The information collected should be at a summary level, sufficient to contrast the current state of the HS Agency technology with immediate- and long-term needs. This is intended to be a quick-look, detailed information can be added later.

Two types of IT base-lining and assessment activities are performed:

1. Inventory Activities

These activities collect and organize data about the HS Agency and its business functions, the work that is performed, the applications that support this work, and the technology in use (e.g., applications, platforms, networking, and data sources). The checklists noted in [Guidelines to Baseline the IT](#) can guide this effort.

The emphasis is on speed and accuracy versus precision or completeness. The characterization should reflect the general state of the HS Agency IT Division, allowing for a more detailed understanding later if necessary. If the organization has recently undergone a Y2K review and assessment, some of this information may be readily available. It should be reviewed and updated as appropriate to ensure its accuracy.

Possible sources of technology inventory information are the AIS configuration management records, purchasing / procurement, and other facility inventory lists. This may help identify the IT resources that are in use, where they reside, and their maintenance histories. Because the HS Agency environment is constantly changing, it is important for the Strategy Team to record not only what is installed but also what will be installed or retired.

Estimates or actual costs for infrastructure required to support an application may be broken down into categories such as miscellaneous equipment, platform infrastructure, applications, and maintenance. Units may be normalized to full-time equivalent staff rather than dollars. Licensing and other agreements necessary to support the platform should be included.

2. Assessment Activities

As the data is collected, it can be analyzed to determine how well the existing business processes, information, and technology infrastructure work together. This helps to determine which parts are worth building on and which parts should be retired. This analysis may take the form of matrices and general heuristics, such as using values of low/high or useful/not useful. The focus of the analysis is to highlight the most pressing concerns to ensure that any migration planning will address the areas needing improvement. Not every system in the Enterprise may have to be migrated, and not every system will be migrated at the same time.

Surveys of individuals that interact with the technology can be used, as noted in the [Guidelines to Assess Current IT Qualities](#). Three general sub-environments can be assessed:

1. **Business use.** This includes individuals who represent the use of the IT to deliver HS Agency services (e.g., management, end users, and clients)
2. **Developer use.** This includes individuals who represent

the developers of the technology, such as programmers, analysts, technical management, quality assurance, testing, or configuration management functions.

3. **Operation use.** This includes individuals who operate and administer the technology in the operational environment, such as computer operators, data, user, security, and network administrators.

The inventory and assessment information can be summarized and relayed to the HS Agency Decision Makers and IT Decision Makers through briefings or other means.

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[A.3. Formulate IT Strategic Direction](#)

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A.3. Formulate IT Strategic Direction

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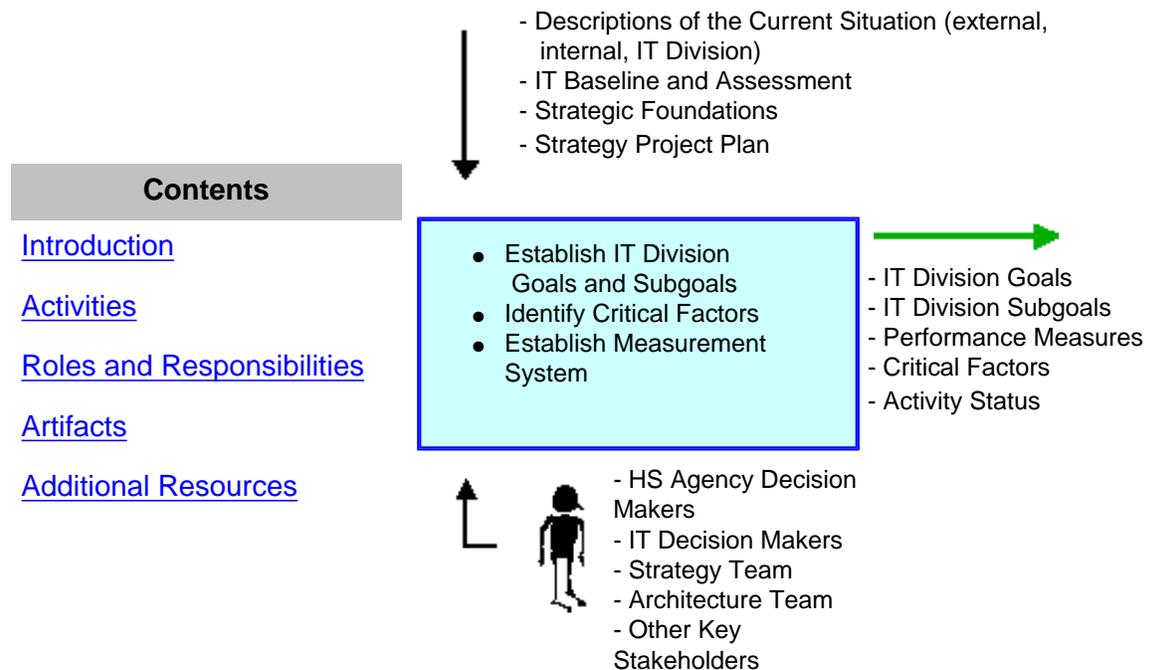
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- [Identify Measures](#)

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Establish the IT Division's goals and subgoals; identify the critical factors and the objective measures that indicate progress.



Introduction

These activities describe the process for extending the [Strategic Foundations](#) to a level of detail more specific to the IT Division. It considers the HS Agency-level vision and mission as well as the IT Division's vision, mission, and guiding principles as the starting point. The objective is to establish more specific and measurable targets that can assist in moving the IT Division to the desired future state.

Strategic planning provides a framework for action that is embedded in the mindsets of the IT organization and its employees. It enables the HS Agency's leaders to unleash the energy of the organization behind a shared vision and a shared belief that the vision can be fulfilled.

In the simplest terms, a Strategic Plan can help improve performance. A Strategic Plan has the potential to not only refocus members' sense of purpose, but also to stimulate future-oriented thinking based on a shared sense of mission. Collaboration among members of an organization is more effective when everyone is working with the same set of assumptions and toward the same goals

Especially in times of limited financial resources, a strategic direction of mission, goals, subgoals, measures, and critical factors can be used to prioritize the allocation of personnel and funds. It can help an IT organization think through the difficult choices necessitated by restricted budgets. However, budgetary limitations are not the only challenge that organizations must meet.

HS organizations and their IT departments today must cope with changes in business operations, legislature mandates, and other items considered during the [analysis of the situation](#). An organized strategic direction allows HS Agencies to deal with them in a coordinated way, by addressing discrete issues as part of a progression toward a total solution. This approach allows the organization to influence its environment and create its future, rather than simply react to it.

The following section can show examples for application of this information for the HS Agency you choose.

TANF Example: In setting goals, subgoals, critical factors, or measures, complex relationships between the business and the technology need to be considered. For example, to meet TANF's 5-year lifetime limit affects record retention, the purging and archiving of information in databases, and ultimately the size of the database. When establishing goals to meet these new requirements, it must be recognized that the life of this data is now the life of the individual, not just the life of the current case in the TANF system. After completing the activities in the [Analyze the Situation](#), the Strategy Team should have a better understanding of internal and external factors required and the strengths and weaknesses of current automation system. This information is the baseline when identifying IT Division goals.

- Information on diversion activities and expenditures becomes important with the expanded life cycle of services. It is not just people who receive cash grants that must be considered "clients"; those who come for assistance but never open a grant are also important to understand in this new system.
- Information on post-placement activities and upward mobility of clients becomes important with the expanded life cycle of services. Clients who no longer receive cash assistance may still be receiving transitional benefits (such as medical assistance or child care subsidies) for an extended period. Even clients who are not receiving transitional benefits may still be at risk of returning to the caseload. Information that leads to an understanding of how and when clients move toward self-sufficiency, what services are critical to this journey, and what happens to those who go off the caseload is necessary in the new TANF environment.

CSE Example: In setting goals, subgoals, critical factors, or measures, complex relationships between the business and technology need to be considered. For example, the Child Support Program requires a number of entities (such as employers, credit bureaus, financial institutions, and other state agencies) to work together in partnership to promote stability, health, safety, and economic security for children in need of support. When establishing goals to meet the current and expanded interface needs of CSE, the ability and capacity of the existing IT environment must be understood. After completing the activities in the Analyze the Situation activity, the Strategy Team should have a better understanding of internal and external factors required and the strengths and weaknesses of the current automated system. This information is the baseline when identifying IT Division goals.

- More digital information will be created with these expanded interfaces. The data must be stored, incorporated into a database, and/or communicated to other entities. This activity must be accomplished in a timely manner and must be understood in order to plan for the appropriate storage infrastructure (such as what data must be online and what can be offline).
- The vast number of interfaces requires understanding of a number of different modes of data transmission, communication protocols, and data formats. Examples include:
 - Connect:Direct for interfacing with the Federal Case Registry and the National Directory of New Hires
 - The Child Support Enforcement Network (CSENet) for interstate communications
 - Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)/Electronic Data Interchange for acceptance and disbursements of support payments
 - Cash Concentration and Disbursement Plus (CCD+) and Corporate Trade Exchange (CTX) National Automated Clearinghouse Association (NACHA) for processing income withholdings

Information that leads to an understanding of the current IT capabilities in these areas is critical in establishing the IT Strategic Plan (such as identifying staffing needs and prioritizing needs so that choices can be made if necessary).

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Activities

To formulate the IT strategic direction, perform the following activities:

1. [Establish IT Division Goals and Subgoals](#) - The IT Division must establish the broad areas of endeavor that must be addressed if the IT Division is to make progress toward its vision. Strategic goals are the first steps in transforming the vision into action. For each strategic goal one or more subgoals are defined.
2. [Identify Critical Factors](#) - An organization needs to identify those actions that need to occur in order for it to achieve its goals. These actions are collectively known as critical factors. These factors have overarching applicability to the entire set of goals. They provide IT management with a “heads up” for things that must be considered to successfully achieve the strategic direction.
3. [Establish Measurement System](#) - In order to know whether or not the strategic direction is being successfully attained, you must establish measures for each of the subgoals. The measures give the IT Division an objective means to know whether or not the subgoals and the related goals and mission are being achieved and make timely adjustments.

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Roles and Responsibilities

The key roles and responsibilities for these activities are as follows:

- [HS Agency Decision Makers](#). These individuals may participate directly or indirectly in reviewing and generating the strategic direction. They have critical insight into the HS Agency mission and vision for technology use.
- [IT Decision Makers](#). These individuals may participate directly or indirectly in reviewing and generating the strategic direction. Workshops (such as brainstorming sessions) can be held to gather insight into the Strategic Plan elements. This increases ownership of the elements. These individuals have critical insight into what may be a feasible strategy to pursue or realistically implement.
- [Strategy Team](#). These individuals lead the effort to generate the strategic direction. They are the primary authors of the HS IT Strategic Plan. They work closely with the HS Agency or IT Decision Makers to ensure that all viewpoints are taken into consideration. The [team facilitator](#) has responsibility to ensure that all stakeholders with a vested interest in the direction can support its elements. This requires careful consideration for stakeholder concerns, expressing the strategic goals, subgoals, measures, and critical factors so all can support them. This promotes buy-in across the HS Agency.
- [Architecture Team](#). These individuals may participate in setting the technology-oriented goals, subgoals, measures, or critical factors, by contributing an understanding of current or emerging technologies and practices.
- [Other Key Stakeholders](#). This includes groups or individuals that can provide additional insight into the elements of the strategic direction, such as critical factors or feasibility of implementing a strategy.

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Artifacts

The following artifacts are used or produced by these activities. Templates, examples, and checklists for identifying and documenting items are available in the [Additional Resources](#) section.

- [Descriptions of the Current Situation](#). The Strategy Team uses these descriptions as a basis for identifying, understanding and prioritizing the HS Agency's and IT Division's current situation. Descriptions include information pertaining to the following:
 - [External conditions](#)
 - [Internal conditions](#)
 - [HS IT conditions](#)The descriptions may be updated by the team, as necessary.
- [IT Baseline and Assessment](#). This input contributes an understanding of current IT assets and a subjective assessment of their qualities. This understanding is used as the basis for identifying current and needed technical capabilities, such as the need to [migrate](#). This information may be refined during this activity to add specific insight to the goals or subgoals that are identified.
- [Strategic Foundations](#) - These foundations are used to guide establishing the scope and context for these activities.
- [Strategy Project Plan](#) - This plan is used to establish the management structure for these activities.
- [Activity Status](#) - The status of these activities is periodically collected and provided to the Strategy Team Lead to assess progress against the Strategy Project Plan.
- [IT Division Goals](#) - A few, essential areas in which the IT Division must achieve and the accompanying rationale are listed.
- [IT Division Subgoals](#) - The subgoals and rationale for them is recorded.
- [IT Performance Measures](#) - The specific measures, the goals they relate to, and the rationale for the values is recorded to establish the basis for managing progress.
- [Critical Factors](#) - These and the rationale for why they are critical is recorded (e.g., likelihood of occurrence and/or impact they could have).

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Additional Resources

Items that can be used to perform these activities are consolidated in the [Resources](#) portion of this guide.

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A.3.a. Identify Goals and Sub-goals

Identify the most important accomplishments and the measurable steps to achieving them.

- [IT Strategic Direction](#)

- Identify Goals and Sub-goals
- [Identify Critical Factors](#)
- [Identify Measures](#)

Contents

- [Introduction](#)

- [Activities](#)

1. [Identify IT Goals.](#)
2. [Identify the Related Subgoals](#)

Introduction

These activities provide the steps needed to further detail the [Strategic Foundation](#) into actionable and measurable strategic objects. The activities are accomplished through facilitated sessions with the IT Division's management staff.

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Activities

To develop the IT Division goals and subgoals, the Strategy Team performs the following activities:

1. Identify Strategic IT Goals

Purpose:

The HS Agency's vision and mission and the IT Division's vision, mission, and guiding principles provide a foundation for the future. That foundation must be described in more tangible terms in order for the IT Division to achieve results. To accomplish this, more specific targets are needed. These targets are called goals.

Description:

A goal is a broad area of endeavor that must be addressed if the HS Agency is to make progress toward its vision. Goals are the first steps in transforming the vision into action.

Strategic goals:

- Define the "targets" or accomplishments the IT Division plans to achieve in the future
- Should be few in number, typically five; ten at maximum for an organization with a broad mission
- Are the first steps in the "road map" for transforming the vision into action

The approach for identifying the goals is to conduct one or more facilitated sessions with IT management or key stakeholders. The Strategy Team facilitator leads the group through a series of [group sessions](#) that culminate in an identification of goals for the organization. While engaging in discussion at the goal level, the Strategy Team should reflect on the [Strategic Framework](#) as well as the analysis of the current situation. They should consider the future of the current technology assets. Consult the [consolidated guidance](#) on migration provided in the [resources](#). An understanding of innovations or service delivery trends that other states have taken, such as those cataloged in the [State Systems Profiles](#) database, may help stimulate ideas for generating goals.

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2. Identify the Related Subgoals

Purpose:

While goals accomplish a more detailed picture of the desired future state, they may still be at a level too high to measure. It is necessary to decompose each goal into more specific targets which are called Subgoals.

Description:

The subgoals establish what is to be achieved over a specific period of time--generally 1 to 3 years--in order to move toward the IT Division's mission and vision. These are the highest priority targets that need to be addressed. Subgoals flow logically from goals, and each subgoal can be linked to at least one goal.

Subgoals:

- Allow logical subdivision into action plans, responsibility assignments, timetables, and accountability targets
- Specify outcomes that describe what success would look like when the

objective is reached

- Are measurable and therefore provide a management tool to track progress

Because there is a relationship between goals and subgoals, it will be more direct to define them at the same time. Therefore, subgoals should be established during the same facilitated session that is conducted to identify the goals. Once a set of goals is drafted, the Strategy Team and key stakeholders will examine each goal and will determine the individual or incremental steps necessary to achieve the goal. Each goal and their related subgoals should be recorded along with any rationale. These goals and subgoals will later be included prominently in the [IT Division's Strategic Plan](#).

Some items to consider when establishing the subgoals:

- New services, such as assisting the families to achieve and maintain self-sufficiency by providing automated services directly to the client (e.g., access to a list of child care providers or transportation routes to a specific place of employment)
- Improvements in current operations, such as increasing efficiencies, reducing the cost of ownership, streamlining data collection or reporting processes, improving the ability to scale, or removing redundant data stores
- Retiring obsolete services or systems, such as technology that is no longer supported or business processes that no longer add value and are no longer viable

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Use the following example business, development, and operational areas to seed the brainstorming, if necessary:

Business-Oriented Capabilities Considerations:

- Interfaces, such as those that provide needed information to external entities (e.g., [customers](#), [partners](#), and [other State Agencies](#)); and the qualities of the interfaces (e.g., data accuracy, response time, and automatic or manual exchange of information); and how interfaces increase the efficiency or effectiveness (e.g., allow the caseworkers to update the client information online).
- Opportunities for improvement, such as improving workflow, applying technology (e.g., wireless networking and use of hand-held Internet-accessible devices).
- New functionality to enhance the capabilities of case workers, such as data integration (e.g., integrating access to [FAMIS](#), [CSE](#), and [SACWIS](#) data for the case manager).
- An understanding of innovations or service delivery trends in other states have taken, such as those cataloged in the [State System Profiles](#) database. This may provide an indication of service delivery expectations.
- New functionality, such as decision support tools that will help caseworkers to select and prioritize client services (e.g., determine whether a client needs job training or substance abuse treatment).
- Satisfying constraints, such as data that must be reported to Federal

Agencies, including data consolidated from many outside entities (such as information obtained from out-sourced employment workshops).

- Reaffirmation of current directions and future plans, including the need and direction of current business processes, noting areas that may change and the conditions for change.
- Changing interactions between business entities, having an impact on how the HS Agency may provide services, such as acquisitions, mergers (e.g., new bank buying the [EBT](#) vendor), or redefinition of internal State roles and responsibilities.

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Development Processes and Technology-Related Considerations:

- Technology trends or vendor roadmaps that describe emerging technology (e.g., peer-to-peer and distributed component-based) and technology that is becoming obsolete (e.g., COBOL). Consider including price/performance trends for technology-related devices or applications (e.g., the move to [ASPs](#)), and also consider finding staff with the skills and knowledge to develop systems using these technologies.
- Contractor business trends such as privatization, mergers and acquisitions (e.g., new bank buying the HS Agency's existing [EBT](#) vendor).
- Backlogs of change requests, indicating the capability to satisfy maintenance needs ([corrective](#), [perfective](#), or [adaptive](#)) effectively and efficiently.
- Time to respond to a business need .
- Technology, methods, tools, and other resources for developing and maintaining applications (e.g., programming languages and packaging techniques that allow for modular applications, such as the use of [components](#)).
- Ability to stay within project estimates (cost, schedule, and quality).

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Technical Operations Processes and Technology-Related Considerations:

- Understanding of the level of support, such as the number of support personnel, their skills, and knowledge required to keep the applications and underlying infrastructure operating
- Technologies, methods, and tools used to operate and administer the systems
- Costs to operate and maintain the applications and infrastructure (e.g., cost per seat to maintain a desktop)
- Response time to user requests (e.g., help desk for technical issues)
- Privacy, confidentiality, and systems security (e.g., passwords that control access to the data)
- Batch processing real-time access, such as the need to take the computing facilities offline to process caseworker inputs for monthly benefits (e.g., food stamp coupons, Medicaid cards or TANF checks, and EBT cards)
- Availability of trained operators and administrators

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[A.3. Formulate IT Strategic Direction](#)

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A.3.b. Identify Critical Factors

Identify the factors that are critical for achieving the IT Division's vision.

- [IT Strategic Direction](#)

- [Identify Goals and Sub-goals](#)
- Identify Critical Factors
- [Identify Measures](#)

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1. [Determine Critical Factors](#)

Introduction

The IT Division must identify those actions that need to occur in order to enable it to achieve its goals. These actions are collectively known as critical factors. Many of these critical factors are not necessarily in the direct control of the IT Division and must be brought to management's attention in the Strategic Plan. The critical factors can become significant risks to the IT Division accomplishing the stated goals.

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Activities

To identify the critical factors, the Strategy Team performs the following activities:

1. Determine Critical Factors

Purpose:

To develop an agreed upon list of the most essential factors to be managed.

Description:

As part of the same facilitated session that identified the [goals and subgoals](#), the attendees identify the factors that they deem most critical to the successful implementation of any initiatives to achieve the goals. Although

each goal and subgoal should be examined, it is appropriate to establish one single list of critical factors rather than associate them with each individual goal or subgoal in the final plan. This accounts for any interaction that the factors may have with one another.

Some items the attendees may consider as part of the overall brainstorming sessions are:

- Critical Factors represent the variables or conditions that significantly affect achieving the goals. Because this is subjective, the rationale (i.e. impact) of not successfully managing the factor may be used to solicit whether it is important enough to focus on.
- Critical factors should be kept to a few well chosen ones; long lists begin to divert attention.
- Critical factors can include those within the control of the IT Division, as well as some that the IT Division may not be able to control (e.g., advocacy groups, demographics, regulations, and technological advances). The level of control or influence should be indicated as appropriate to help management assign the proper organizational responsibility for managing, or minimally, tracking these factors to provide early insight. Consider whether the IT Division has the authorities, capital structure (e.g., facilities and equipment), or other mechanisms to deal with the Critical Factors.
- Some discussion on the root cause of the Critical Factor may be necessary to help management begin to understand how to effectively deal with it, such as whether it:
 - Originates within legislation, regulation, or court order
 - Also affects the HS Agency's vision and mission
 - Has a positive or negative political and or economic impact, such as losing TANF funding due to program performance constraints
 - Reflects key policy and investment decisions
 - Affects key users or providers of information and their perceived importance of accessing or providing that information

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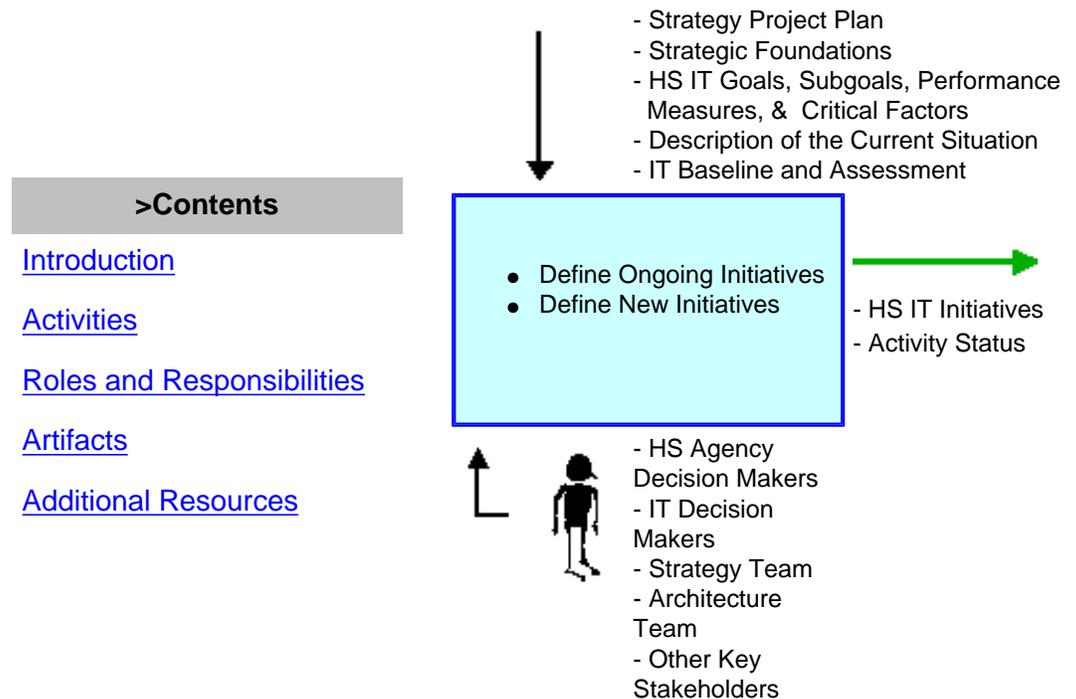


A.4. Identify IT Initiatives

Adjust the existing initiatives and establish new ones to meet the strategic goals of the IT Division.

• [A. Plan](#)

- [Plan Framework](#)
- [Analyze Situation](#)
- [IT Strategic Direction](#)
- Identify IT Initiatives
 - [Define Ongoing Initiatives](#)
 - [Define New Initiatives](#)
- [Publish](#)



Introduction

These activities establish the highest-level organization of actions to achieve the goals. Existing initiatives are reexamined to determine whether they fit with the IT Division's strategic direction. Summary description of the existing and future initiatives are produced. With these initiatives defined, priorities can be assigned in later steps and detailed planning begun.

Documentation of the ongoing and future initiatives will become the basis for establishing the projects that will be resourced by the IT Division. During the [analysis of the current situation](#), a quick look into the existing initiatives was gained. The details of the existing initiatives are reviewed, such as their purpose and management and technical accomplishments against project plans. An assessment is made of how they align with IT Division's strategic direction. This assessment aids both the HS Agency and IT Decision Makers in reaffirming the current direction of these ongoing initiatives or helps to define any changes that need to be made to them. One consideration is changes in the

underlying technology (e.g., the need to migrate to a new technology).

The type of information that can be recorded for each initiative is described in the [Template for an IT Division Strategic Plan](#), available in the [Resources](#). An extended list of items follows:

- Initiative name.
- Who the initiative supports organizationally, e.g., applicable programs (e.g., unified intake might address child care, food stamps, child welfare, Medicaid, and TANF programs).
- Description (a few paragraphs, including the overall purpose or major accomplishment expected).
- How it is consistent (or inconsistent) with HS Agency's strategic direction (e.g., the goals or subgoals it furthers and how).
- How it is consistent (or inconsistent) with IT Division's strategic direction (e.g., the goals or subgoals it furthers and how).
- Other impacts (e.g., funding streams, other things that influence the decisions on continuing or starting the initiative).
- Time frames (such as when it started, current life cycle phase, scheduled performance against planned, whether existing initiative is being examined).
- Priority - categorization using a criteria based on both the HS Agency and IT Division's strategic direction (e.g., affinity with the goals it supports).
- The identification of initiative must be inclusive. The inventory of initiatives should include the following types:
 - For existing systems/functions
 - Research and Development
 - Infrastructure
 - Other types of initiatives, such as
 - Employee development and training
 - Vendor/partner strategic relationships
 - The above list does not include all possible categories. The project must use their own judgment in determining the categories of initiatives to document.

The following section can show examples for application of this information for the HS Agency you choose.

TANF Example: In addition to the specific programs that the HS Agency administers, the HS Agency is also responsible for supporting initiatives that provide services to families. The Strategy Team needs to identify both ongoing and new initiatives and determine whether the IT Division supports these initiatives. Examples include:

- Building a "common front end" to legacy systems with a central client index to other systems like SACWIS, Child Support Enforcement, and FAMIS.
- Supportive services such as transportation provided to families who are employed.
- Short-term benefits that address a specific crisis or episode of need and that are not intended to meet an ongoing or recurrent need.
- Services such as counseling and employment services that do not provide basic income support.

CSE Example: The CSE organization has the responsibility for continuation of current processes as well as often expanding information sharing with other programs such as child welfare. The Strategy Team needs to identify both ongoing as well as anticipated initiatives and determine whether the IT Division will need to make changes to support this initiative. Examples may include:

- Establishment of a web enabled process to access legacy data
- Online access by clients and others of information
- Online access by other agencies utilizing web technologies
- Establishing “common front end” or “central client index” in conjunction with other HS systems

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Activities

To define the ongoing and new initiatives, perform the following activities:

1. [Define Ongoing Initiatives](#). Collect and organize information about the existing initiative and how they may be changed.
2. [Define New Initiatives](#). Create and organize information about new initiatives that should be considered.

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Roles and Responsibilities

The key roles and their responsibilities for these activities are as follows:

- [HS Agency Decision Makers](#). These individuals may participate directly or indirectly in reviewing and generating the initiatives. They have critical insight into the HS Agency mission and vision for technology use.
- [IT Decision Makers](#). These individuals should be direct participants in reviewing and generating the initiatives. Workshops (such as brainstorming sessions) can be held to gather insight. These individuals have critical insight into what may be feasible to do or change.
- [Strategy Team](#). These individuals lead the effort to collect and organize the appropriate detailed information about the initiatives. They are the primary authors of the initiative descriptions, drawing on the expertise of the HS Agency and IT Decision Makers and other key stakeholders. This team ensures that the HS Agency and IT Division's strategic direction is appropriately covered. The [team](#)

[facilitator](#) has responsibility to ensure that all stakeholders with a vested interest in the plan can support the initiatives. This requires careful consideration for stakeholder concerns, expressing the initiatives to adequately address their concerns. This promotes buy-in across the HS Agency and within the IT Division.

- [Architecture Team](#). These individuals may participate in setting the technology-oriented aspects of the initiatives by contributing an understanding of current or emerging technologies and practices. They may provide an understanding of how migration of technology to other platforms can be achieved.
- [Other Key Stakeholders](#). This includes groups or individuals that can provide additional insight into the status of current or future initiatives, such as HS program or project management or staff, consultants, or even vendors when considering their technology roadmaps.

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Artifacts

The following information is used or produced by these activities; templates, examples, and checklists for identifying and documenting items are available through the [resources](#) at the end of this page:

- [Strategy Project Plan](#) - This plan is used to establish the management structure for these activities.
- [Strategic Foundations](#) - These are used to help in assessing the existing and new initiatives, such as providing the context to understanding the intention of the all the goals.
- [HS IT Goals](#), [Subgoal](#), [Performance Measures](#), and [Critical Factors](#) - These are the strategic elements upon which the existing and new initiatives are assessed.
- [HS IT Strategic Plan](#). This is the main product of these activities. It consolidates and relates the essential strategic information that will guide the IT Division's immediate and long-term decisions. This plan is reviewed and approved by all the significant stakeholders.
- [HS Strategic IT Capabilities](#). This is a key input into these activities. It is used to understand what is expected of the HS Agency. The goals and strategies will address achieving these capabilities.
- [Descriptions of the Current Situation](#). This input is used by the Strategy Team, as necessary, to understand the existing environment for the HS Agency and IT Division, including any needs and capabilities. These descriptions include information pertaining to the following:
 - [External Conditions](#)
 - [Internal Conditions](#) /a>
 - [HS IT Conditions](#)
- [IT Baseline and Assessment](#). This input contributes to an understanding of the current IT assets and a subjective assessment of their qualities. Decisions on the immediate and long-term future of these assets is made as part of the overall strategy.
- [HS IT Initiatives](#) - The completed descriptions of all the initiatives and associated rationale is produced.
- [Activity Status](#) - The status of these activities is periodically collected and provided to the Strategy Team Lead to assess progress against the Strategy Project Plan.

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Additional Resources

Items that can be used to perform these activities are consolidated in the [Resources](#) portion of this guide.

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[A.4.a Define Ongoing Initiatives](#)

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A.4.a Define Ongoing Initiatives

Review the existing initiatives and adjust to meet the IT Goals

- [Identify IT Initiatives](#)

- Define Ongoing Initiatives

- [Define New Initiatives](#)

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1. [Identify Ongoing Initiatives](#)
2. [Describe and Assess Ongoing Initiatives](#)

Introduction

As the IT Division defines its strategic direction (goals, subgoals, and critical factors) a course of action must be established. Actions already underway in the HS Agency may not fully align with the strategic direction, and should be reviewed and adjusted as necessary.

During the [analysis of the situation](#) a quick look was made into the existing technology in use and projects underway. These activities take a more thorough accounting and examine the details, leading to an understanding of the purpose and the technical and management accomplishments against plans. An assessment is made of how the existing initiatives align with the new IT Division's strategic direction. This assessment aids both the HS Agency and IT Division's decision makers to reaffirm current direction and initiate any changes that need to be made.

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Activities

To define and adjust the ongoing initiatives, the Strategy Team performs the following activities:

1. Identify On-going Initiatives

Purpose:

This activity ensures that the entire set of ongoing initiatives is considered.

Description:

A thorough review of the [IT Baseline and Assessment](#) must be conducted to identify all of the on-going initiatives that are currently underway within the IT Division. While most of the on-going initiatives may be maintenance or development oriented, other categories must also be inventoried (see [Identify IT Initiatives](#)). Initiatives can be categorized by lifecycle phases or other criteria that the IT Division uses to classify projects.

A list identifying the initiatives with references to sources of information upon which they are based is developed.

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2. Describe and Assess Ongoing Initiatives

Purpose:

This activity will describe each of the ongoing initiatives and analyze them against the strategic direction, determining if any adjustments should be made.

Description:

In order to ensure a balanced analysis, each initiative is documented using a standard template (see [Identify IT Initiatives](#)). It is essential that the completion of the template includes not only the static information such as name, description, and who the initiative supports organizationally but also the items addressing consistency with the HS Agency level and IT Division level strategic direction.

After each initiative is described and its contribution to the strategic direction is understood, adjustments are considered. Adjustments to the current definition are considered and recorded for consensus among both the HS Agency and IT Division's Decision Makers. One consideration is the future of the current system. such as changes in the underlying technology (e.g., the need to migrate to a new technology to enable future growth). Decisions on each initiative can be described as follows:

- Continue as defined
- Change performance parameters - such as budget, schedule, effort
- Redefine the purpose or requirements for the initiative (e.g., technology base)
- Terminate the initiative, possibly reallocating a portion of its purpose into another existing or new initiative

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[A.4.b Define New Initiatives](#)

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A.4.b Define New Initiatives

Establish new initiatives for the IT Division

- [Identify IT Initiatives](#)

- [Define Ongoing Initiatives](#)

- Define New Initiatives

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1. [Identify Future Initiatives](#)
2. [Describe and Assess Future Initiatives](#)

Introduction

With an understanding of the HS Agency and IT Division's strategic direction, and how the [existing initiatives](#) align with it, new initiatives may need to be established. These activities establish the definition and expectations for these initiatives.

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Activities

To define the future initiatives, the Strategy Team performs the following activities:

1. Identify Future Initiatives

Purpose:

This activity ensures the development of an entire set of future initiatives.

Description:

Reviewing the [IT Baseline and Assessment](#) as well as the [ongoing initiative descriptions](#) will identify the gaps to breach in effectively reaching the goals. New initiatives will need to be defined. This may require the Strategy Team, with the aid of HS program and technical experts, to brainstorm new

directions. The teams may wish to build from the lessons learned and directions other States have taken by consulting the [State System Profiles](#) or the [Promising Practices](#) portions of the [NHSITRC](#) Web site. Many of the future initiatives may be new development or research and development in nature. These initiatives will have to be identified by considering “what” types of nontraditional projects will be necessary to initiate in order to accomplish the IT Division’s goals. Initiatives cannot only relate to the products and services that the HS IT Division provides, but also to the processes and technologies used within the IT Division to produce and operate the products and provide IT services.

The Strategy Team identifies a list of initiatives and references to sources of information upon which they are based.

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2. Describe and Assess Future Initiatives

Purpose:

This activity describes each of the identified future initiatives and analyzes them against the strategic direction to define essential characteristics of each one. Together with the ongoing initiative descriptions, it provides a consolidated “database” of all possible initiatives.

Description:

In order to ensure balanced analysis, each initiative is documented using a standard template (see [Identify IT Initiatives](#)). It is essential that the completion of the template includes not only the static information such as name, description, and who it supports organizationally but also the items addressing consistency with the HS Agency level and IT Division level strategic direction. The completion of those items will have significant influence on the setting of priorities. For example, an initiative that has direct influence on meeting multiple HS Agency and IT Division’s goals would be considered a high priority from a strategic point of view. The team documents the initiatives and provides them to the appropriate IT staff for review and comment.

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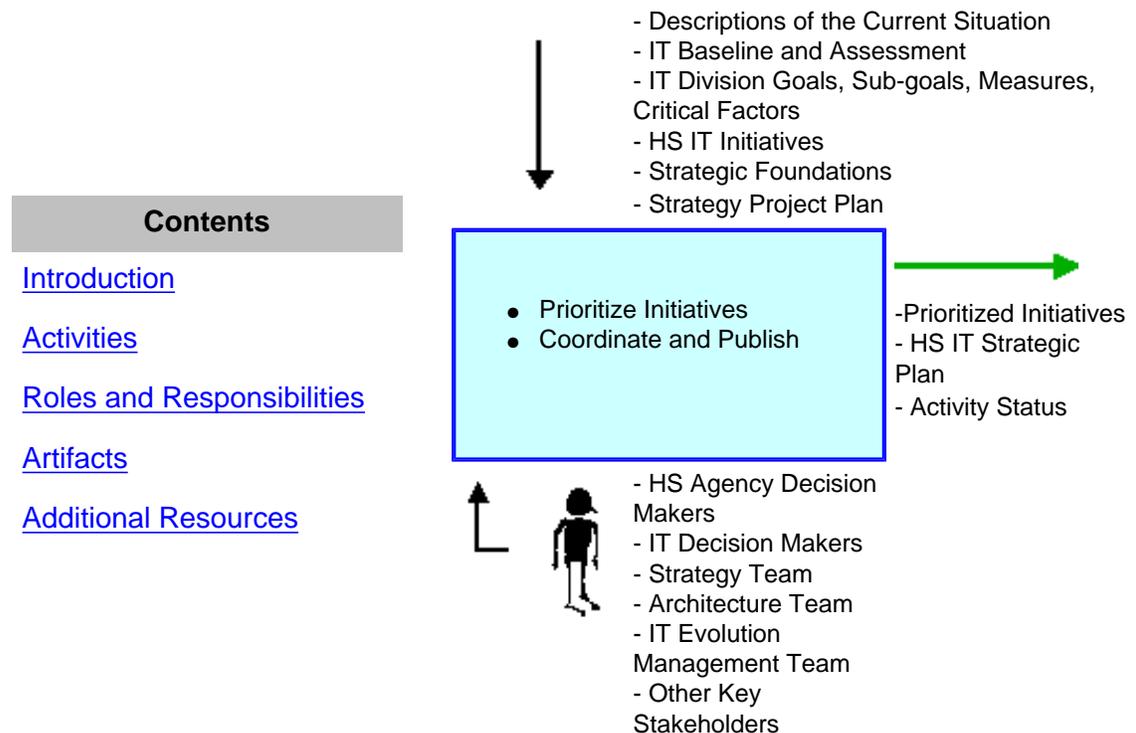


A.5. Consolidate and Publish Plan

- [A. Plan](#)

- [Plan Framework](#)
- [Analyze Situation](#)
- [IT Strategic Direction](#)
- [Identify IT Initiatives](#)
- Publish
 - [Prioritize Initiatives](#)
 - [Coordinate and Publish](#)

Prioritize which initiatives are essential to the goals and reach consensus on the IT Division's Strategic Plan.



Introduction

Once the initiatives are determined, the Strategy Team creates a framework for prioritizing initiatives and relating them to the IT Division's goals. Prioritizing initiatives allows the HS Agency Decision Makers and the IT Division Decision Makers to focus their attention and resources on initiatives essential to the IT Division.

Next, the Strategy Team creates the strategic plan and circulates it among the key stakeholders (IT Decision Makers and the HS Agency Decision makers) for comments. The Strategy Team then incorporates comments and publishes the plan.

Once the HS IT Strategic Plan is ready to be published, all those with an interest in the It Division's Strategic Plan should receive an orientation. This includes all those in the HS IT Division, as well as those in the HS Agency or other IT Divisions, as needed.

The following section can show examples for application of this information for the HS

Agency you choose.

TANF Example: Welfare Reform has provided States with an opportunity to develop and implement creative approaches to assist recipients achieve self-sufficiency. As a result there is an increased demand on the IT initiatives that support the goals of the HS Agency. Information systems must support expanded set of application in three main areas, initial assessment, including eligibility determination and case management; service planning; and program oversight. When assisting families achieve and maintain self-sufficiency the HS Agency is more effective if the HS Agency's IT system address the following issues:

- Collect information needed to identify resources, such as service providers, who can assist in moving clients to self-sufficiency
- Collect new non-financial information, such as compliance with immigration requirements, felon status, domestic violence/mental health, dependents' school attendance, probation status, and substance abuse
- Collect information necessary to determine whether appropriate progress is being made by individual clients and staff
- Collect important information necessary to assess program outcomes

CSE Example: The significant changes in welfare reform in the recent years has expanded the requirements and approaches to implement creative approaches to maximize the collections of support payments for those in need. The collection opportunities made available as a result of welfare reform changes allows the States to interface and match information with many data sources across the nation. Current systems must have the flexibility to match data or share data across many enterprises to locate absent parents, to collect support payments, as well as many other technology needs. Information systems must support an expanded set of applications in several broad areas: case management, including case initiation; locating absent parents, establishment of paternity, tax intercepts, licensure, as well as program oversight. When the technology aligns with the agency goals, the Child Support Enforcement organization is more effective in:

- Collect information needed to identify resources, such as non-custodial parents, absent parents, who can assist in moving clients to self-sufficiency
- Collect new non-financial information, such as compliance with support orders, paternity establishment, referrals from other agencies, interface with court systems.
- Collect financial resource data
- Collect information necessary to assess program outcomes and successes.

Activities

To formulate the HS IT Strategic Plan, perform the following activities:

1. [Prioritize Initiatives](#). During this activity, the Strategy Team prioritizes the initiatives by identifying the initiatives they deem most critical to the IT Division's goals.
2. [Coordinate and Publish](#). Based on the information gathered during the strategic planning process, the Strategy Team completes the first draft of the Strategic Plan. The Strategy Team circulates the strategic plan among key stakeholders (IT Division Decision Makers and HS Agency Decision Makers). Once the key stakeholders' comments have been incorporated into the IT Division's strategic plan the Strategy Team increases awareness of the plan and promotes commitment throughout all levels of the organization.

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Roles and Responsibilities

The key roles and their responsibilities for these activities are as follows:

- [HS Agency Decision Makers](#). These individuals review, make revisions and approve the final strategic plan.
- [IT Decision Makers](#). These individuals review, make revisions and approve the final strategic plan.
- [Strategy Team](#). This team prioritizes the initiatives. Once they prioritize the initiatives, the Strategy Team Lead assigns a team member the task of assembling the strategic plan. An individual with strong writing skills should be assigned to assemble the strategic plan.

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Artifacts

The information in the following list is used or produced by these activities. Templates, examples, and checklists for identifying and documenting items are available through the [Additional Resources](#) at the end of this page.

- [HS IT Strategic Measures](#). This describes the specific measures collected, as well as the collection processes. It can be published separately or as an appendix to the HS IT Strategic Plan.
- [HS IT Strategic Plan](#). This is the main input, as well as an output, of these activities.

The goals, subgoals, critical factors, and strategies are used as a basis for defining the measures. It may be necessary to clarify the HS IT Strategic Plan based on the analysis of the measures. The HS IT strategic measures may be published separately or as a part of this plan.

- [Descriptions of the Current Situation](#). The information represented by this input is required to identify current measures for establishing the measurement baseline.
- [IT Baseline and Assessment](#). The information represented by this input is required to identify the IT-related measures or measurement-gathering processes. For example, the surveys used to gain insight into the subjective qualities of the existing IT may be refined and used to measure improvements.
- [Activity Status](#). The status of these activities is collected periodically and provided to the Strategy Team Lead to assess progress against the Strategy Project Plan.
- [Strategy Project Plan](#). This plan is used to establish the management structure for these activities.

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Additional Resources

Items that can be used to perform these activities are consolidated in the [Resources](#) portion of this guide.

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A.5.a. Prioritize Initiatives

- [Publish](#)

- Prioritize Initiatives
- [Coordinate and Publish](#)

Prioritize the initiatives and determine which are most critical to the IT Division's goals.

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1. [Prioritize Initiatives](#)

Introduction

Once the initiatives are identified, the strategy team creates a framework for prioritizing initiatives. Prioritizing initiatives allows the HS Agency Decision Makers and the IT Division Decision Makers to focus their attention and resources on the goals essential to the IT Division.

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Activity

To prioritize initiatives, the Strategy Team performs the following activity:

1. Prioritize Initiatives

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to prioritize the initiatives. It is important to understand how each of the initiatives impacts the IT Division's strategic plan. In times of limited resources, prioritizing the initiatives helps the IT Division think through the difficult choices (such as allocation of personnel and funds) and allows them to focus their time and energy on the important initiatives contained in the strategic plan.

Description:

Once the initiatives are documented, the Strategy Team aligns the initiatives against the HS Agency's vision, mission, and guiding principles and the IT Division's vision, mission, goals, subgoals, guiding principles, and critical factors to determine the degree to which the initiative impacts the needs of the IT Division. Each initiative should be examined and prioritized as high, medium, or low.

Because it is unusual for the IT Division to implement all the initiatives at the same time, the strategy team needs to prioritize both the current and future initiatives. The IT Division should plan to implement the initiatives of highest importance first and then build on the confidence and success those will bring in order to implement the medium- or low-priority initiatives. The Strategy Team can use the [Initiative Priority Matrix](#) as a tool for this activity.

Rationale or assumptions made in prioritizing the initiatives should be captured and held within the strategy team as working notes. The rationale may need to be provided when providing insight into the prioritization scheme.

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[A.5.b. Coordinate and Publish](#)

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A.5.b. Coordinate and Publish

Document the strategic plan and reach consensus approval.

- [Publish](#)

- [Prioritize Initiatives](#)

- Coordinate and Publish

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- [Introduction](#)

- [Activity](#)

- 1. [Coordinate and Publish the Plan](#)

Introduction

This is the last activity in the strategic planning process. The strategy team and key stakeholders have had opportunities to provide input into the previous steps (analyze the situation, formulate the IT strategic direction, identify the IT initiatives) along the way. This activity compiles all this information and creates the IT Division's strategic plan.

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Activity

To coordinate and publish the plan, the strategy team performs the following activity:

1. Coordinate and Publish the Plan

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is create and publish the strategic plan.

Description:

During a previous activity, the strategy team created a draft version of the IT Division's mission statement, vision statement, and guiding principles. During the strategic planning process, the Strategy Team analyzed the situation (internal, external and IT Division) and identified goals, subgoals, initiatives, measures, and critical factors that support the draft version of the mission,

vision, and guiding principles.

During this activity, the strategy team compares all the data collected during the strategic planning process to the draft version of the HS IT Division's mission, vision, and guiding principles. Based on the information compiled, the mission, vision, and guiding principles may be adjusted and modified. The Strategy Team Lead designates who will draft the strategic plan. The [Model IT Strategic Plan](#) serves as a template and can be modified to fit the needs of the individual IT Division. The template may contain the following sections:

- HS Agency Business Direction
 - HS Agency Vision Statement
 - HS Agency Mission Statement
 - HS Agency Goals
- HS IT Strategic Plan
 - IT Division's Vision
 - IT Division's Mission
 - IT Guiding Principles
 - IT Division's Goals, Subgoals, and Performance Measures
- Critical Factors
- Initiatives
- Appendices
- References
- Next Steps

The Strategic Plan needs to accurately document the decisions made. This is validated by allowing the Strategy Team and key stakeholders (IT Division Decision Makers and the HS Agency Decision Makers) to review, comment, and approve the Strategic Plan. This is first time the complete plan can be looked at in context; however, the big decisions have been debated and resolved, so the revisions should be small such as revising wording or clarifying details. If a significant number of issues is raised, a meeting should be held for the Strategy Team and key stakeholders to discuss the issues and resolve any issues.

A well-prioritized and documented strategic plan will be easier to implement in the next steps.

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[B. Implement The Strategic Plan](#)

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A.3.c. Identify Measures

Establish the means to objectively determine progress against the goals.

- [IT Strategic Direction](#)

- [Identify Goals and Sub-goals](#)
- [Identify Critical Factors](#)
- Identify Measures

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1. [Identify Measures](#)
2. [Outline the Measurement Processes](#)
3. [Establish Baseline Measures and Intermediate Targets](#)

Introduction

These activities create the measurement system: identifying the specific measures to be taken, outlining the processes to collect and use this information, and establishing the initial measurement baseline and intermediate targets. This measurement system becomes the means to objectively evaluate progress against the IT Division's goals.

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Activities

To establish the measurement system, the Strategy Team performs the following activities:

1. Identify Measures

Purpose:

This activity develops and documents the measures that are to be systematically collected, relating them to the IT Division's goals.

Description:

The Strategy Team reviews the goals, subgoals, and critical factors, and

brainstorm measures that can be used. Approaches such as [GQM](#), Practical Software Measurement, or Balanced Scorecard can be used (see the [resources](#) for descriptions). Some considerations for establishing this measurement framework are as follows:

- A good measure: (1) is reliable, telling how well goals are being met; (2) shows a trend; (3) is accepted by and meaningful to workers, managers, and other key stakeholders; (4) is simple, understandable, unambiguous, logical, repeatable, timely, and sensitive; and (5) allows for the economical collection of data. In essence, a good measure is useful for making decisions within or affecting the IT Division.
- Each measure should be well defined to be easily understood. A good definition includes (1) the strategic goal and the rationale for the measure; (2) the data source and collection frequency; (3) the calculation method (including equations and definitions of terms); and (5) the graphical representation of the measure (plus perhaps the reports in which it will appear).
- Define the categories of measures to be taken and used, such as those available with the Balanced Scorecard -- customer, internal, learning, and financial. These may cover the three aspects: the use of the IT (business), production of its products and services (development and deployment), and its operation (technical operations).
- These measures can represent achievements (goals) as well as the reduction in risks that may inhibit achieving the goals. The critical factors in the strategic plan may be the sources of these risks and may need to be carefully managed.
- Identify the source of the data; understand the sensitivity of the data being collected and who will be providing it.
- Keep the number of measures to a critical few, as needed, to keep focused on the most important activities.
- Measures can be quantitative or qualitative.
- Investigate measures that the IT Division currently uses to determine whether they can still be applied to the goals, retiring them if necessary.

Rational or assumptions made in regard to establishing the measurements should be captured and held within the Strategy Team as working notes. The rationale may need to be stated when providing insight into the collection or use of the measures.

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2. Outline the Measurement Processes

Purpose:

This activity establishes how the measures will be collected, who is responsible for providing what data, and the frequency of collection. Issues such as sensitivity of data and how it will be consolidated and used across organizations are addressed. This approach ensures that the data is appropriately handled and those individuals providing it are adequately protected (e.g., county and State Agencies).

Description:

The Strategy Team establishes the process by which the measures will be collected, compiled, and used. Some guidelines on establishing this measurement collection and usage process follow:

- Many individuals within and external to the IT Division may have responsibility for providing some of these measures. These include the [IT Evolution Management Team](#) and the [Architecture Team](#), as well as county Agencies or private contractors. Their interests should be represented when defining the processes they will later have to use.
- Consider whether special tools or techniques will be needed to obtain the measures. This may represent an investment for those collecting the measures.
- Consider the frequency of data collection and that the measures can be reported in a timely manner.
- Describe policies that will be followed for access to the raw and compiled measures, how the measures will be used. Statements to protect the individuals providing the data may be necessary. This is usually needed when the collected data is subjective, such as from surveys.
- Describe when and how adjustments to the measures may be initiated.
- Those that will use the measures have the authority to take action based on these measures.

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3. Establish Baseline Measures and Intermediate Targets

Purpose:

Establish the values for the baseline set of measures (the "as is" position). Intermediate targets that may represent major decision points may be necessary. These are the intermediate plateaus, where the initiatives and their performance can be reassessed. Adjustments can be made to the plan (e.g., modifying subgoals) or the performance of the initiatives (e.g., changing the allocation of resources, time frames, technical approaches, etc).

Description:

The Strategy Team reviews the strategic plan and the measures to identify points where the strategy or its implementation could be reevaluated. The expected values of the measures for these [plateaus](#) describes a set of intermediate targets, i.e., milestones. Some guidelines to establish these targets follow:

- Use the past performance of the IT Division or others to help set reasonable expectations for the target values. Techniques such as Wide-band Delphi can help establish reasonable, objective targets.
- Note all assumptions, provide ranges, such as minimum, expected, or

maximum values, rather than a specific value, when necessary.

- Identify triggers for taking actions when actual performance deviates significantly from that expected (e.g., over or under achievement).
- Describe the next plateau and detail the measures for it, summarizing those that occur later. The plateaus should be on the order of every 4 to 6 months. This provides guidance to the Architecture and IT Evolution Management Teams on what to address next and the overall context in which to address it.

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