

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS AND STRUCTURE

PLAN TO SUCCEED!

“Efforts and courage are not enough without purpose and direction.” – JFK.

Govern by Your Strategic Plan

You work in a complex environment under constant pressure and demands. Without the purpose and direction provided by a strategic plan your energy goes into managing short-term issues. A strategic plan gives you the ability to focus on important long-term goals and measure your success in achieving them.

Designed with BC First Nations

At CFNC we have spent years on the ground developing a strategic planning process and structure specifically for First Nations in British Columbia. While the circumstances and needs of every First Nation are unique, our approach has proven successful and adaptable. It is designed as much to create strong working relationships between Council, executive, staff and the community as to guide your nation on its road to independence.

Fully Funded by INAC

Development and implementation of your strategic plan is eligible for federal funding that covers 100% of the cost. We will prepare the required grant applications and follow-up directly with the funding agencies. *Your strategic plan costs you nothing.*

Focus on Independence Through Capacity Building

Our approach, in accordance with CFNC’s philosophy of building capacity in our clients, is to teach our clients how to use this planning process and structure as we facilitate the creation of their first iterations of the plans. This helps to generate commitment, self-sufficiency and the ability to adapt plans over years to the needs of the nation.

Leadership Grounded in Community Values

You are responsible to lead your community in meeting its challenges and moving it forward. A strategic plan draws its priorities from your community and translates them into action items for you and your leadership team. It also gives you the tools to report back to the community on the priorities that are meaningful to them.

A Set of Living Documents Used Every Day

An effective strategic planning process requires time and commitment. However, if it is done properly, once the strategic planning structure is in place it becomes how your nation carries out its business. Success comes through setting goals and having everyone understanding and contributing to achieving those goals. That is the fundamental philosophy of the CFNC approach to strategic planning.

Embedding Traditional Values

We have had great success working with BC First Nations to embed traditional values into our strategic planning process and structure. More than just lip service to these values, your nation can build these plans around your traditional understandings and practices. This is a powerful way not only to give added meaning and legitimacy to your plans, but also to protect and strengthen your culture.



Our Approach

Below is a brief outline of the strategic planning system and structure that we have developed over many years of working with First Nations in British Columbia. What you won't see directly here is how this process and structure can be adapted to meet the specific needs -- political, administrative, cultural -- of your nation. That is where you and your community come in!

1. Government Strategic Plan

The first step is to create a draft strategic plan. This is initiated through a membership meeting at which the only agenda item is "Strategic Priorities for Council 20XX-20XX". This meeting needs to be carefully planned and run in order to keep discussion focused and extract information about what is important to the community. This meeting is essential to the legitimacy of both your plan and your Council in the community.

The next step is a Council strategic planning retreat. Again, this retreat needs to be carefully structured and facilitated with the goal of producing a relatively high-level document that defines Council's priorities and can be shared with the membership. At the same time, this meeting needs to be detailed enough to produce the basis of an Operational Plan. This is the document by which both Council itself and the membership assess the performance of Council.

2. Operational Service Plan

The Operational Plan is a more detailed, administrative plan that takes the priorities of the Strategic Plan and operationalizes them. It is developed in another retreat involving the Council and the Executive Director. This document, based on the Strategic Plan, establishes the priorities for the Band Administration in a more detailed and focused way and includes annual goals and measures. This is the document by which Council assesses the performance of the Executive Director. This plan often feeds back into the Strategic Plan.

3. Department Business Plans

Next are the Department Plans, which set out the implementation strategies for the goals identified in the Operational Plan relevant to each department. It is developed in another retreat involving the Executive Director and department heads ("Executive"). This document, based on the Operational Plan, establishes the priorities for each department in a more detailed and focused way and includes annual goals and measures. This is the document by which the Executive Director assesses the performance of the Executive.

4. Employee Plans

Within departments, the Executive work with their staff to create Employee Plans, which link the role and activities of each staff member directly through the Department and Operational Plans to the priorities of the Strategic Plan. This provides every staff member with a clear understanding of how their work contributes to the overall priorities of the nation. These plans can also be used for the Executive to assess the performance of individual employees. (Employee Plans are much more sophisticated and involved than the other three plans described above and are usually developed over a number of years.)



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5. Budget

Department Plans are the basis for developing a budget. The Executive create Department Budgets based on these plans. They are then rolled up into the Operational Budget at a retreat involving the Executive Director and the Executive. This Budget is then brought to Council by the Executive Director for review, modification and final approval. Finally, the budget is presented to the membership at a special membership meeting along with the completed Strategic Plan.

6. Annual Review

Each of these plans and the budget are reviewed annually through a process similar to that described above. Each year is an opportunity for the community to hear what has been accomplished over the past 12 months and provide input to the priorities for the coming year. It is an opportunity for Council, Executive and staff to celebrate their successes and identify areas for improvement. It is also an opportunity to update and improve each of the plans. These activities provide the foundation for a culture of celebration and continuous improvement.

Interested?

We would love to hear your thoughts about our strategic planning process and structure and discuss whether it could be right for your nation. Please email us to set up a call. We look forward to talking with you!

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