

## Set Specific Goals And Objectives

In the April issue we outlined how planning can help transform organizations to what they want to be if the plan is simple and useful. To do that the plan needs to be a working document, reviewed at least quarterly and used to make owners' and managers' jobs easier and more fun.

In that issue we discussed the what, how and why of the vision statement and mission statement. In this issue we'll discuss objectives, goals and tactics.

When you sit down to write your objectives, target three to five business objectives that clearly define how you plan to accomplish your vision and mission statements.

The objectives should define the entities within your business.

Objectives are specific in nature and target what you think are the areas you will focus on to grow and maintain the business. Keep in mind that you will set quantifiable goals later.

**Many times it's** important to identify someone within the management team who is accountable for managing a particular objective. Since it's specific in nature it may also require several tactics and the help of others to accomplish.

• **As you create** objectives, make sure they support the vision and mission statements of your business. Challenge yourself to make sure you're only focusing on activi-

ties that will get everyone to the same endpoint.

• **After the objectives** of the business are established, create and set goals for each objective.

• **The goals you** create should be very specific and should always have a quantifiable number attached to them.

• **Before setting goals**, the components of your plan were conceptual and philosophical thoughts on where and how

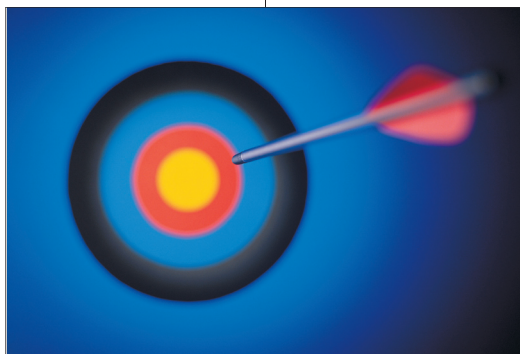
the business would be run. In actually setting goals, it is important to be specific – create concrete numbers to measure business success.

• **Assigning responsibility** to a specific person along with target dates for completion of goals is essential. Identifying a specific person to manage the goal helps foster and create ownership in the result.

• **The group should** review each objective and goal and monitor the progress toward completion. If this periodic review is completed, potential roadblocks may be uncovered early so action plans can be established quickly to overcome these obstacles.

• **Goals included can** be short term and long term. Financial goals are an example of this. The business may determine that in the short term they want to grow X%, but long term they desire greater growth.

• **Setting challenging goals** is desirable, but make sure there is a



reasonable chance of accomplishing them. Consistently setting unattainable goals will damage morale and eventually you'll lose support of the team.

• **For bigger**, more challenging goals, consider setting smaller, mini goals that when combined will achieve the greater goal that is ultimately desired. Many times mountain climbers break a climb into several small climbs so as they accomplish each climb, they can see results and be motivated to continue.

Tactics are specific actions taken to accomplish the objectives and goals and ultimately fulfill the vision and mission statements.

• **A specific set** of tactics should be established for each objective and goal that is set.

• **As with the** goals, assigning names and dates to tactics for completion is important so everyone in the organization knows their roles.

• **Periodic review** of the tactics and progress toward completion will ensure the end result is on pace to be completed. ■

### Don't Forget...

It may be necessary, depending on the business, to create the following:

- Current situation analysis.
- Competitive analysis.
- Cash flow and financial projections.
- Description of the organization.
- Management and staffing structures along with job descriptions.

This completes the basic components of a simple and useful business plan.

We've seen excellent results in organizations if the plan is developed with the entire team, including spouses, and is put to use.

In the next issue we will discuss how to use the plan. ■

Moe Russell is president of Russell Consulting Group, Panama, IA. Russell provides risk management advice to clients in 28 states. For more risk management tips, check his Web site ([www.russellconsultinggroup.net](http://www.russellconsultinggroup.net)) or call toll-free 877-333-6135.