

STEP 4

WRITE THE STRATEGIC PLAN

OVERVIEW

The strategic plan is the definitive record of specific commitments the organization is making to its board, patients, donors, and partners. It needs to be both ambitious and be able to realize near-term wins. It also needs to be sufficiently clear and compelling to be sent externally to mobilize your stakeholders around your plan. Finally – it needs to be focused (for instance, 3 pillars works well) to be effective.

This section details the criteria and structure for a robust strategic plan document. Without a well structured and accessible document the plan will lack the specificity necessary to drive an operational plan and miss the evidence required to compel funding and organizational commitment.

Three Key Success Factors

1

A comprehensive and logical structure

The structure of the document should clearly explain how the strategic pillars (three pillars works well to ensure focus) explicitly connect your mission, goals, and objectives to delivery programs.

The (downloadable) Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation case example illustrates some key components of that structure. Note that in the MMRF parlance the ‘pillars’ are called ‘strategic initiatives’.

2

A 1-2 page executive summary

This is a vital component of any strategic plan. Each pillar must specifically address a particular critical white space in the ecosystem and be supported by a clear rationale of why your organization is uniquely positioned to address the gap.

From a process perspective the discipline of synthesizing the plan into summary form helps excise any extraneous thinking and highlights the core rationale.

From a communications perspective - the summary forms the base content for external communications and becomes an anchor for consistency across the organization including CEO messages, development, and marketing.

Three Key Success Factors continued

3

A clear 'story'

The craft in writing the plan involves weaving the hypotheses that were shaped and revealed in the KOL interviews into clear, actionable, and measurable programs.

One approach to systemizing this art is to think through what are the three key 'needles you can move' – and for each – what are the three key 'levers to deploy.'

For instance - in a hypothetical (but increasingly plausible) case where the research showed that the biopharma pipeline is stalled due to a scarcity of genomic profiling – then an example of an ambitious 'needle to move' would be to make sequencing routine.

In this pillar of 'democratizing sequencing' the programmatic levers might be to:

Create a precompetitive partnership to source funding

Develop a CLIA grade panel

Systemize data collection in a registry

Admittedly – this would be a massive undertaking – but the point is that sketching out three pillars each with three programs and rigorously following the logic of what specific actions would be and how they would be measured will quickly form the core of the story and create an executable, measurable plan.