

# Marilyn Manning and The Consulting Team's Leadership Tips



## NOTE FROM THE CONSULTING TEAM

The Consulting Team believes in the power of planning for success. This power manifests in many ways:

- Team collaboration
- Clarity of mission, vision, and values
- Focus on the “vital few” priorities
- Defined and measurable goals
- The pride of accomplishment

There is an important step that happens between defining and writing a strategic plan and activating and implementing it. This step means the difference between success or a well-written document gathering dust on the shelf.

This issue of Leadership Tips provides implementation resources and tools. Success begins with writing implementation strategies into the plan. It works by organizations leveraging their planning effort through communications that galvanize their employees to support the organization's direction and initiatives. This results in prosperity and organizational pride.

*Warm regards,*

Marilyn

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## Implementing your Strategic Plan

### *Keeping It Alive*

***“Setting a goal is not the main thing. It is deciding how you will go about achieving it and staying with that plan.”***

*~ Tom Landry*

At the end of a strategic planning process, most participants leave with great enthusiasm and excitement for the work they have accomplished. They have a firmer grasp on the future of their organization. They have developed a better appreciation for their fellow team members.

***“You recently helped the Salinas Valley Fair complete a three-year strategic plan that made a huge difference in the focus and enthusiasm of our board and staff. I’m pleased to recommend you.”***

*~ Judy Hostetler, Board President, Salinas Valley Fair*

The challenge now is to create mutual expectations and team interest when daily routines, long-standing habits, and demanding workloads kick in.

Managers have three great allies:

- **Communications**
- **Change management**
- **Collaboration**

**Communication:** This is fundamental and has two important parts. The first is identifying groups who need to hear about the plan. The second is understanding what to communicate.

Here's a typical example: An organization decides it needs a fresh direction. Maybe conditions or key personnel have changed. Maybe they have completed their last plan and want a new one. In their planning sessions they extend the vision of their future, affirm their values, and develop new priorities. The planning team creates goals and actions to support those priorities. Those actions will affect their work teams. They will also affect business partners and customers. Each affected team, partner, and customer can help the plan succeed if they are informed of the plan and their part in it.

***“Working with Marilyn and Elaine to communicate our strategic plan gave us tools to take seemingly random ideas and develop a road map. They’re both well skilled at facilitating group dialog, allowing the inclusion of divergent thoughts, and helping us shape a plan document that can be modified as we progress.”*** *~Patty Ruiz, HR Manager, Life Services Alternatives, Inc.*



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What you tell your work teams will be different from what you tell your customers or the public. You may notify your customers of an important change by mail. With your staff you need face to face interactions.

**Collaboration:** When planning employee meetings, remember the enthusiasm you felt in collaborating on the plan. Share that enthusiasm and create ways for employees to share their ideas and their concerns. See *Leadership Tips*, May 2009, “Collaboration.” Your purpose in this communication activity is twofold: to unify the organization behind the plan and to override cosmetic compliance to true buy-in and teamwork. Cosmetic compliance is a common situation, where people may agree publicly to a plan, while maintaining the status quo.

Make sure you can clearly describe your new strategies. It helps to include: what they are, why they are important, the actions required, the outcomes you expect, and what you need from your team to make it happen. Ask for their ideas on how to best implement the action steps into their work. Have roles and activities ready that they can volunteer for. Make sure there’s plenty of time for staff to raise questions and concerns. If you don’t have ready answers to their questions, offer to get back to them by a certain date. Then do it.

*“I’ve had the pleasure to work with Dr. Manning and The Consulting Team for many years on team building and strategic planning issues. I appreciate their efforts in implementing tasks, due dates, and monthly reviews. This keeps us on track addressing issues we identified in the workshop. This follow-up was key to our success.” ~ Joe Grebmeier, Chief of Police, Greenfield Police Dept.*

Repetition reinforces the organization’s commitment to its plan. Build in status updates and follow-up activities into team policies, processes, and communications. Monthly or quarterly progress reports are good ways to keep strategic priorities alive. Making them a part of employees’

## Tools of the Trade: Communicate Strategic Change

### *Communicate:*

1. Personal face-to-face communication
2. Describe how each person fits into the plan

### *Manage Change:*

3. Be sensitive to resistance
4. Emphasize benefits

### *Collaborate:*

5. Seek involvement
6. Plan follow-up activities
7. Recognize successes

goals and performance evaluations cement them into the fabric of your team’s everyday work.

**Change:** Remember that a strategic plan spells change. Humans normally resist change. Be sensitive to this resistance, and use the Change Curve to help the organization move from “denial” to “integration and commitment.” See *Leadership Tips*, June 2009, “Traveling the Change Continuum.”

Careful and continual communication is a basic way to work through resistance and motivate work teams to contribute to the organization’s future success.

*“You set us on a course of specific actions for continuous improvement. We are still in a state of change, but now we are better equipped to manage the stress in our organization.” ~ Luther Hurt, Training Officer, Monterey County Sheriff's Dept.*

Go to [www.theconsultingteam.com/Newsletters.htm](http://www.theconsultingteam.com/Newsletters.htm) for past issues of *Leadership Tips*.

# *The Consulting Team Offers these Strategic Planning Services and Courses*

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## **Free Assessment:**

- ✓ [Strategic Planning Checkup](#)

## **Our Consulting Services:**

- ✓ Strategic Planning
- ✓ Meeting Planning and Facilitation
- ✓ Team Building
- ✓ Communications

## **Strategic Planning Related Training and Presentations:**

### ***Strategic Planning***

Strategic thinking and outcome-based planning can realign your organization or team for strategic change. Discover how to develop realistic objectives, targets, strategies, performance measures, and implementation activities. Help your team become more focused and productive by using easy to implement strategy tools.

### ***Communicating Strategic Change: Building Effective Communications Strategies***

Is your strategic plan gathering dust on the shelf? Does team resistance stall your progress? Maybe you need to communicate the plan more effectively. This course provides tools to plan strategic communication and practices to build communication skills. Learn to identify your audience and their needs, to manage and overcome resistance, and the basics of verbal and written communications needed to meet your strategic goals.

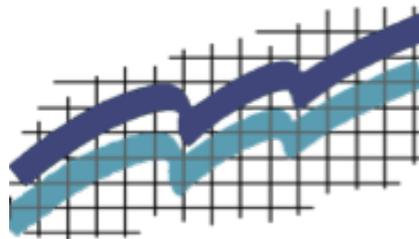
## ***Leading Change Positively***

How do you deal with the pressure of constant change? Do you have to do more with less, faster, cheaper, and better? Power is the ability to make change. Change provides the ability to create. Are you focused in creating change or are you reacting to problems? Discover how to set realistic objectives, create strategies, overcome resistance, and implement for success. Learn how to gain buy-in and motivate others to change. Identify stressors, modify negative patterns, and manage conflict and challenging situations.

## **About Leadership Tips:**

*Leadership Tips* is a periodic newsletter to help deal with the difficult issues in today's busy and hectic work environment. To see past *Leadership Tips* go to [www.theconsultingteam.com](http://www.theconsultingteam.com) and select Newsletters

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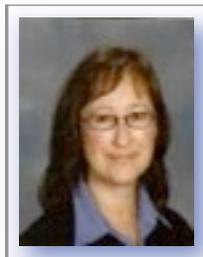
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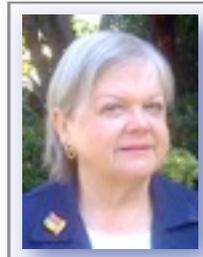
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### ***The Consulting Team Community Service***

The Consulting Team holds community service as one of its key values and commitments. Founder and CEO Marilyn Manning exemplifies this commitment. She was honored recently for her role as past president of the National Speakers Association, Northern California. She also sits on the national Chapter Leadership Council. A long time member, Dr. Manning continues to be a sought-after keynote speaker. One of her latest presentations, *Resolving Conflict: A Key Skill in Project Management to Assure both Project and Business Success*, kicked off the **2010 Project Management Institute - Silicon Valley Symposium, "Beyond Project Success – Business Success."**

Dr. Manning serves on several boards, including El Camino Hospital Foundation Board, where she is chair of their Board Development Committee. She has been a mainstay for over a decade on the Board of Trustees of the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology. She was Board Chair for three years and now serves on the Executive Committee.

Marilyn is active on the civic level, too. She is the chair of Planned Giving for the Los Altos Community Foundation and is on the Executive Board of Green Town, Los Altos.