



The Consulting Team, LLC  
Facilitating Positive Change

650-464-6024

Request A Consultation

## Leadership Tips Spring 2025

### How to Use Strategic Planning for Teambuilding

#### From Marilyn and The Consulting Team



##### Memo from Marilyn

Strategic planning is a vital leadership skill that can set you and your team on a path to success. By defining your mission and values, agreeing on priorities and objectives, engaging stakeholders, and measuring progress, you can create a robust strategic plan that drives productivity, engagement, and innovation. The most effective plans are dynamic and inclusive, reflecting the collective insights and aspirations of your entire team.

We have found that this process builds trust, team collaboration, and open communication. You can build a dynamic foundation in a day's retreat. We'll share our experiences and tips on a planning process as well as how to keep everyone engaged.

Warm regards,

Marilyn Manning, Ph.D.  
Owner, The Consulting Team  
(650) 464-6024  
[www.theconsultingteam.com](http://www.theconsultingteam.com)

P.S. Please join us on Friday, May 9, 2025 at Noon for our next complimentary 30-min. webinar: ***How Strategic Thinking is a Key Skill for All Professionals***

Email [Admin@TheConsultingTeam.com](mailto:Admin@TheConsultingTeam.com) to obtain login details. (The webinar description is found later in this edition.)

---

---

## In this edition:

1. Article: How to Use Strategic Planning for Teambuilding
  2. Complimentary May 9th webinar: ***How Strategic Thinking is a Key Skill for All Professionals***
  3. Coaching options and complimentary 30-min. coaching session offer
- 



[This Photo](#) by Unknown author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](#).

## How to Use Strategic Planning for Teambuilding

---

We recently facilitated a strategy and teambuilding session for a newly promoted leader. She decided to begin her tenure with a full day retreat. We began by setting a strategic foundation for her team. As pre-work, everyone did a SLOTS analysis, identifying strengths, limitations, opportunities, and threats and completed the DiSC style assessment. She kicked off the retreat by sharing her vision and expectations. The team fully engaged in lively discussions of their mission, values, and key priorities. They developed team agreements on how to model their values of collaboration and communication. Next they used their DiSC reports to identify all of their strengths and how to best communicate with each other. They all expressed gratitude and joy for their commitment to each other and their mission.

After completing a strategic planning process, participants are filled with enthusiasm and a clearer vision for their organization's future. They've fostered deeper connections with their teammates, as evidenced by feedback from leaders like former Board President of the Salinas Valley Fair: "TCT helped us complete a three-year strategic plan that made a huge difference in the focus and enthusiasm of our board and staff."

However, the real challenge lies ahead: maintaining that momentum once daily routines, entrenched habits, and demanding workloads set in. To navigate this challenge, focus on 3 key areas: Communication, Collaboration and Embracing Change.

### **Three Strategic Practices**

#### **Communication: Make everyone feel heard and valued**

Effective communication involves two critical components: identifying the stakeholders who need to be informed and understanding what information to convey. Consider a scenario where an organization recognizes the need for a fresh direction due to changing conditions or personnel. In planning sessions, the team redefines its vision, reaffirms its values, and establishes new priorities that lead to specific goals and actions.

#### **Tips:**

1. Engage with your team to define priorities and objectives collaboratively. This fosters a sense of ownership and commitment.
2. Involve diverse perspectives when conducting the SWOT analysis. Stakeholders from different departments and organizations can provide unique insights that may be overlooked. Consider conducting surveys or focus groups to gather feedback. This not only enhances the plan but also builds trust and transparency.
3. Create a timeline and metrics for each objective and task and set regular check-ins to monitor progress. This keeps everyone accountable and focused. Schedule regular reviews of the strategic plan to assess its relevance and adjust as needed.
4. Host workshops or meetings to discuss the plan and its implications in detail. This promotes engagement and clarifies any uncertainties. Regularly assess your metrics to gauge the effectiveness of your strategies and make data-driven decisions.
5. Celebrate milestones and successes along the way. Recognizing achievements boosts morale and reinforces commitment to the plan.

#### **Collaboration: Cultivate enthusiasm and a sense of belonging**

When planning meetings, remember the excitement generated during the strategic planning process. Foster that same enthusiasm by creating platforms for sharing ideas and concerns. This collaborative effort serves a dual purpose: unifying the organization around the plan and transforming superficial compliance into genuine buy-in and teamwork.

Cosmetic compliance can be a pitfall, where individuals publicly support a plan while privately maintaining the status quo. Clearly articulate new strategies, including their significance, required actions, expected outcomes, and what you need from your team for successful implementation. Encourage ideas on how to integrate action steps into their daily work and ensure there are opportunities to voice questions and concerns. Monthly or quarterly progress updates and discussions keep strategic priorities at the forefront.

#### **Embracing Change: Overcome resistance**

A strategic plan inherently involves change, which can often be met with resistance. Acknowledge this resistance and leverage the Change Curve model to guide the organization from "denial" to "integration and commitment."

Ongoing communication is essential for addressing resistance and motivating teams to engage in the organization's future. The Training Officer for the Monterey County

Sheriff's Department, remarked, "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."

Use personal, face-to-face communication to explain how each person fits into the plan. Be sensitive to resistance, encourage healthy venting, and emphasize the benefits of the changes. Encourage involvement, plan follow-up activities, and recognize successes.

### In Closing:

Communicate so everyone feels heard. Collaborate so all feel valued. Embrace change with honest open communication that leads to commitment. By embedding these three practices into everyday operations, you can sustain the energy and commitment generated during a strategic planning process, ultimately leading to a more successful and resilient team and organization.

Register for our next complimentary 30-minute webinar, Friday, May 9, Noon, Pacific

## FREE WEBINAR: How Strategic Thinking is a Key Skill for All Professionals



Facilitated by Senior Associate Garrett Contreras



Do you find it hard to think strategically when overwhelmed with operational issues? Discover tools to help your strategic thinking whether you are front-line or a manager.

**Friday, May 9, 2025  
Noon -12:30 PM Pacific**

Confirm your seat and receive log-in details  
when you register using the button below.

Register for our next complimentary 30-minute webinar, Friday, May 9, Noon, Pacific



## **Success Stories from The Consulting Team**

### **From Isolation to Connection: Teambuilding as a Path to Stress Reduction**

With many employees continuing to work remotely, teams are navigating a mix of retirements, new hires, and shifting workplace dynamics. Many colleagues have yet to meet their teammates in person, and the resulting isolation has led to disengagement and increased stress. Now more than ever, there is a call for intentional team building to strengthen connections and reduce stress.

Regular team meetings can be transformed into opportunities for team building. When done thoughtfully, these gatherings can promote connection, collaboration and trust, alleviating some of the workplace stress that arises from disconnection. Take our team, for example. Each quarter, one of us presents a 30-minute mini-training for our clients. The team meets a week before the presentation to preview it and provide feedback. We take turns offering candid insights, focusing first on the presenter's strengths, followed by constructive suggestions for improvement. During these sessions, everyone has a voice, feels heard, and shares a sense of ownership for the success of the upcoming training.

Upon further reflection, I realized that these meetings aren't just about preparing for presentations - they are powerful teambuilding experiences. They allow us to engage deeply with one another, transforming stress into joy and creating a profound sense of belonging.

This sense of connection and collaboration is something we can support your team in achieving, too.

## **The Role of Team Norms and Values**

As Nina Morris Collins, one of our Senior Associates, highlights, much of workplace stress stems from unclear expectations and communication breakdowns. A client recently shared that their team's performance issues weren't due to technical shortcomings but rather a lack of political acumen and alignment with team values. The manager was stressed because employees weren't behaving in ways that supported the team's success, and employees were stressed because they weren't clear on what was expected of them.

The root of the issue? A lack of clearly defined expectations and values - and the failure to communicate them effectively.

In our teambuilding sessions, we work with managers to identify the root causes of stress within their teams, often related to communication gaps or a lack of trust. These sessions focus on setting clear team norms, values, and expectations while demonstrating the skills needed to communicate them effectively.

## **Teambuilding in Action**

In one of Nina's workshops, participants used the DiSC personal profile assessment to explore their communication styles. A breakthrough came when team members recognized how their strengths - and potential irritants - affected their interactions with others. For example, "C" types (fact-focused) often struggle with "I" and "S" types, which are more relationship focused.

This understanding led the team to form agreements about how they'd interact going forward, fostering greater collaboration and reducing conflict. Just 10 days after the training, one participant texted Nina to share how the insights from the session had transformed their working relationship. More transparent communication and a deeper understanding of one another's styles made the team more collaborative and effective.

## **Building Teams That Thrive**

Teambuilding isn't only about creating harmony, it's about addressing stressors at their source and fostering a culture of clarity, trust, and collaboration. Whether through regular team check-ins, feedback sessions, or tailored workshops, these intentional efforts can help teams turn stress into connection and disengagement into engagement. If your team feels disconnected or stressed, we'd love to support you in creating an environment where everyone feels valued, empowered, and ready to collaborate. Let's build a team that thrives—together.

**Give us a call for a free brainstorming session.  
(650) 464-6024**

## COACHING

We offer coaching for managers, executives and individuals, including one-to-one career development and success coaching for executive team members and mid-managers.



In Person: Initial intake session



Virtual coaching sessions

**Areas of focus** may include setting and achieving professional development objectives, clarifying goals, gaining self-awareness, inclusive and empowering leadership, operational planning, team effectiveness, collaborative emotional intelligence, and communication skill-building. [Learn more here.](#)

**Free  
30-minute  
Coaching  
Session:**

Schedule a complimentary 30-minute 1:1 coaching session with one of our twelve senior associate coaches.

[Request A Session Here](#)

**The Consulting Team**

— FACILITATING POSITIVE CHANGE —

945 Mountain View Ave.  
Mountain View, CA 94040

[Get In Touch](#)

650-464-6024



[Admin@TheConsultingTeam.com](mailto:Admin@TheConsultingTeam.com)

The Consulting Team | 945 Mountain View Ave | Mountain View, CA 94040 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!