



Strategic Planning and Strategic Thinking at Your School

Presented by the
Center for Strategic Planning



On ramp - Initial Strategic Thinking

- This is what matters
- These are our assumptions about what matters
- Here are our solutions to resolving the issues around what matters



Bridge: Strategic Plan

- We know where we're going
- We've analyzed what needs to be done
- This is how we plan to do it

Off ramp - Ongoing Strategic Thinking

- We're doing what matters
- This is what our monitoring is showing
- These are the adjustments we need to make....



"The future ain't what it used to be."



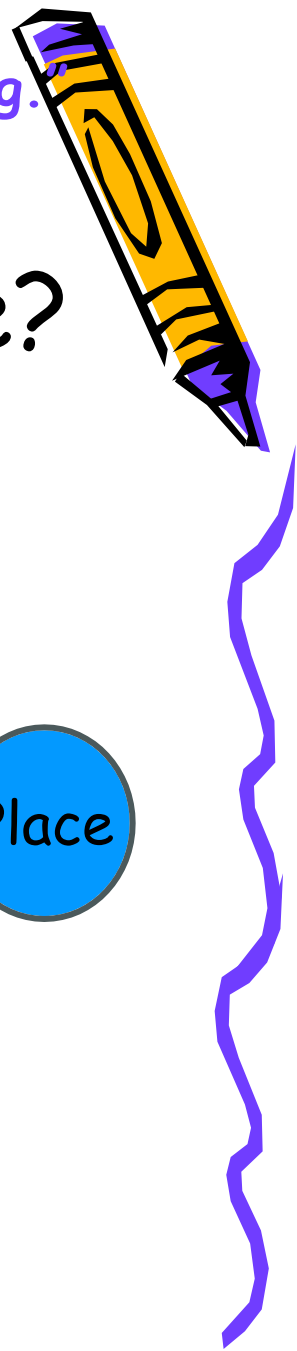
What is it?

Strategic thinking...

...is a **mindset** and a **process** to develop or re-examine the assumptions about the future upon which you have based your vision, goals, and strategies in order to **reevaluate** whether they still reflect the realities the school faces and **explore** how they may need to be **realigned** for the future

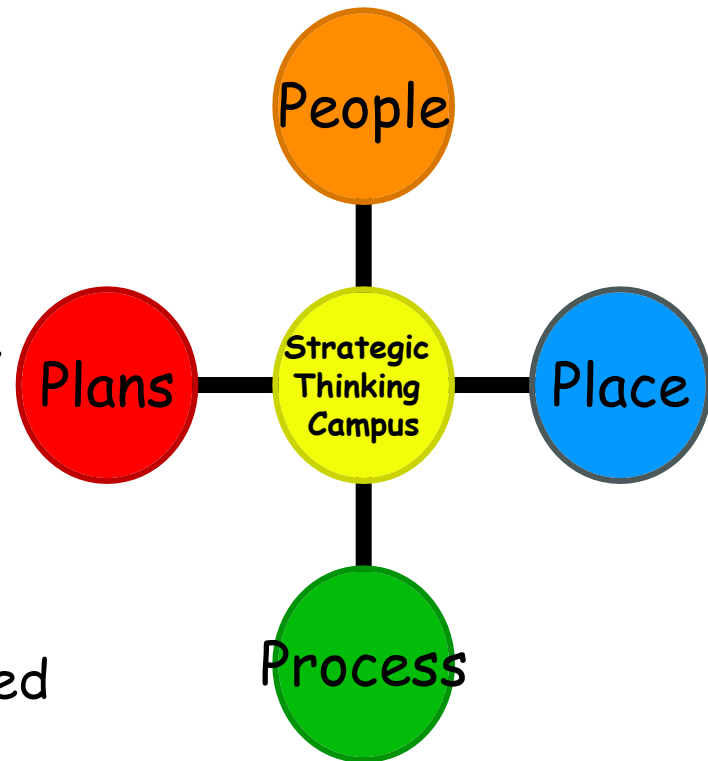


"If you don't have a bull pen, you got nothing."



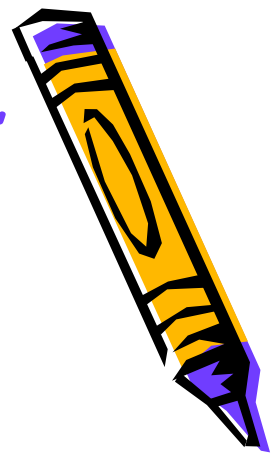
What does it look like?

- **People:** are trained to think strategically
- **Place:** ST is fostered in an atmosphere that supports and rewards strategic initiatives
- **Process:** A whole brain strategy process that harnesses and develops the strategic brainpower of the school
- **Plans:** Plans are developed, measured, evaluated and adjusted



"If the world were perfect, it wouldn't be."

What is strategy?

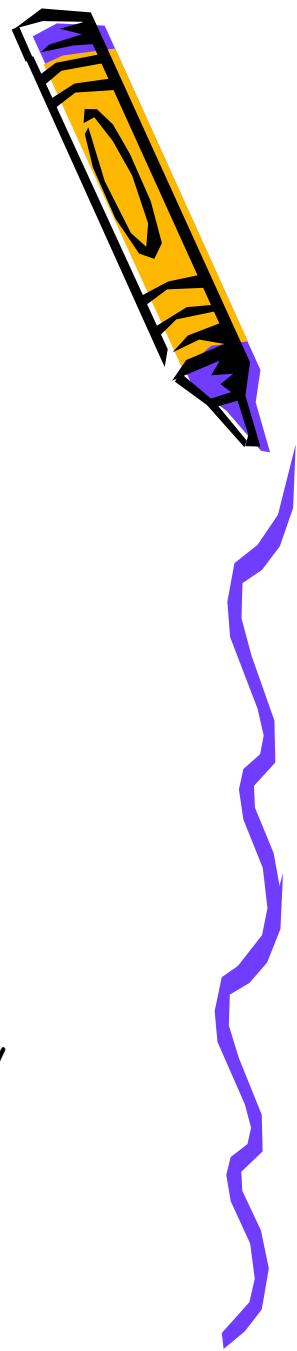
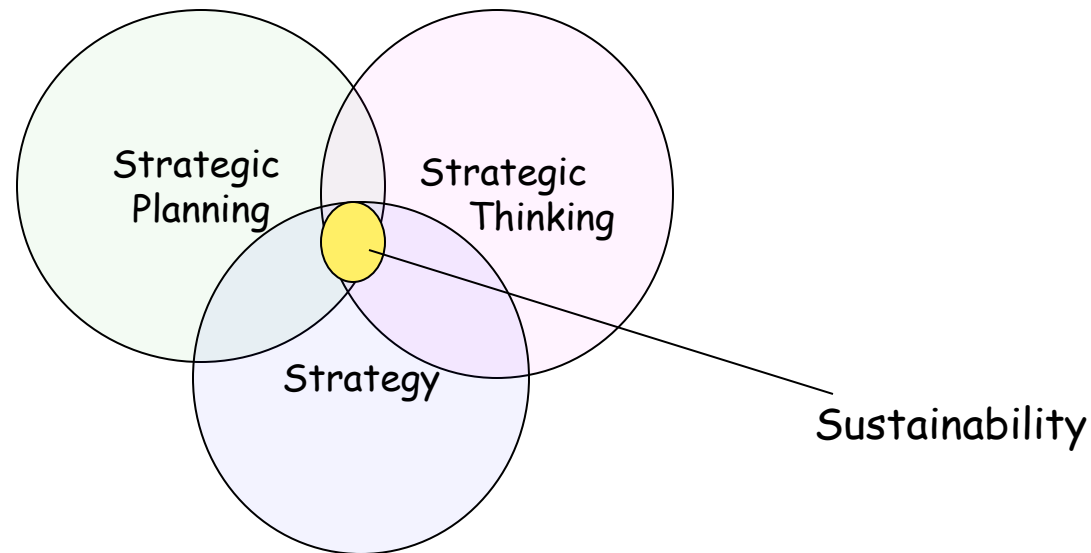


Strategy is one of those words that people use without really agreeing on a definition. If you take away all of the theory and get down to the practical issues facing school leaders, then the most useful way to understand strategy is that it is the school's approach to achieving and maintaining sustainability.



ST Mindset

Intersection of strategic planning,
strategic thinking and strategy



"Ninety percent of the game is half mental."

ST Mindset



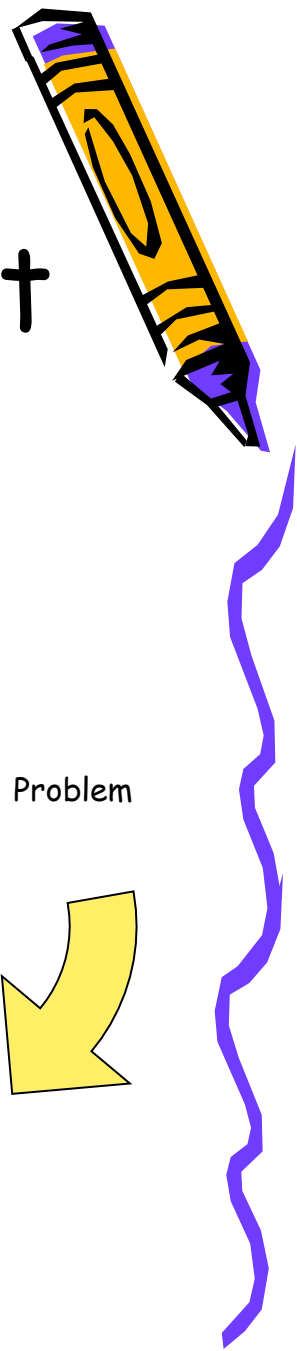
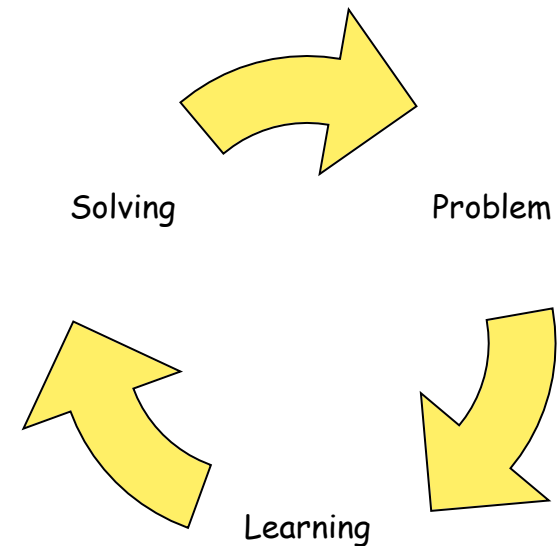
Schools with an understanding of leadership's responsibility **to prepare the school for the future** can do so by creating and nurturing a climate of strategic thinking



Key prerequisites for success

- Key values
- Leadership and leadership buy-in
- Ability to think outside the box
- Approach to problem-solving that is both **cyclical** (you will go through the problem-solving process many times and in different ways) and **iterative** (you will start with rough ideas about the problem and refine them as you go)
- Generative learning (which is about creating, not simply coping)
- Organizational receptivity to change demonstrated by a willingness to make structural changes to align with changes in strategy

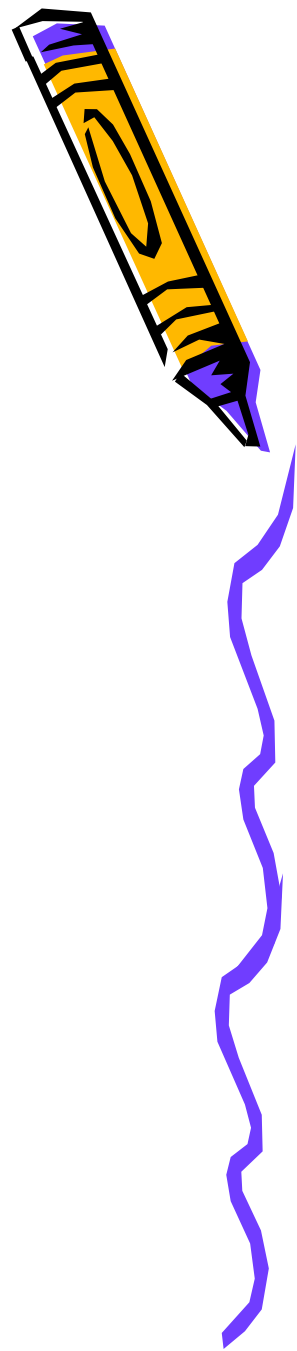
ST Mindset



Hallmarks of Successful Plans



- Inclusivity
- Shared responsibility
- Accountability
- Evaluation
- Institutionalization



Eight Key Questions

1. What do we stand for?
2. Why do we exist?
3. What are our major opportunities and challenges?
4. What is our desired future state?
5. What must be accomplished to reach it?
6. How will we accomplish our goals?
7. What specific things will we do, changes will we make over the next five years?
8. How will we know we have been successful?



Your Strategic Plan Will Supply Answers

1. What do we stand for?

Core Values

2. Why do we exist?

Mission

3. What are our major opportunities and challenges?

Strategic Issues

4. What do we want the future to look like?

Vision

5. What must be accomplished to reach it?

Goals

6. How will we reach our goals?

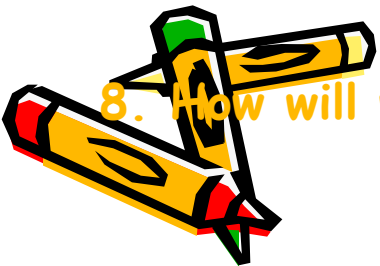
Strategies

7. What specific things will we do, changes will we make?

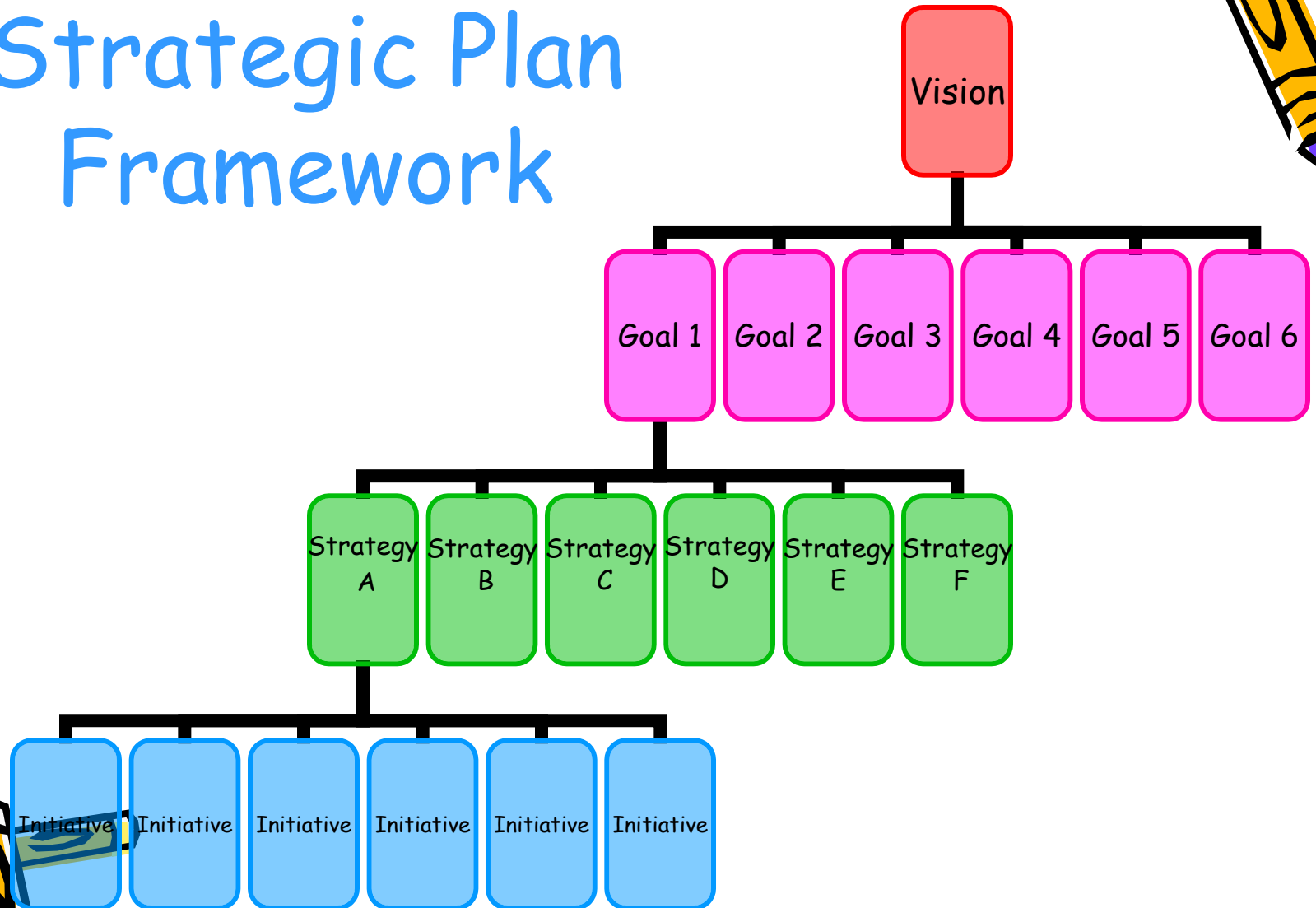
Initiatives

8. How will we know we have been successful?

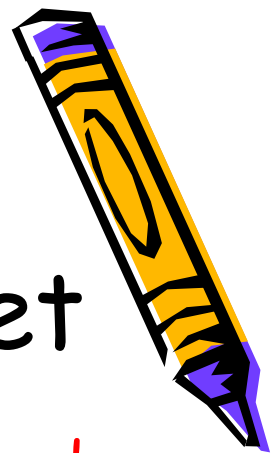
Performance Measures



Strategic Plan Framework



ST Mindset



Special characteristics of a school that has adopted strategic thinking:

- Knows itself
- Knows its environment
- Knows what matters
- Knows how to think critically and creatively about important issues with a future focus
- Recognizes its interdependence
 - Can generate alternatives
 - Remains flexible



"You can observe a lot by watching."

ST Process

The complete strategic thinking process

1. Understanding who you and what you are in light of the world in which you operate
2. Building context and identifying key concerns
3. Envisioning alternative futures
4. Focusing on vision, goals, strategies, operational plans, and results
5. Ongoing scanning for changing environments



"If you don't know where you're going,
you might not get there."

ST Process

- Two shores - present and future
- Onramp - strategic analysis and problem-solving
- Bridge - strategic plan and thinking
- Off ramp - implementation, scanning, scenario tracking, dialogue, evaluation, retesting assumptions, re-alignment if necessary



"Don't get me right, I'm just asking."

ST Process

Thinking Strategically

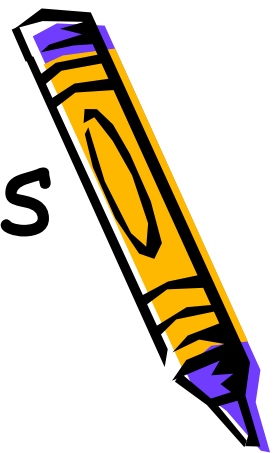
1. What are our assumptions about the future?
 - What informs those assumptions?
2. What's going on around us that we need to tune into?
 - What informs our conclusion?
3. Where do we want to be?
 - What informs our expectation?
4. Where are we now?
 - How do we know?



ST Process

Thinking Strategically

5. What steps can we take toward closing the gap?
 - What is good practice? How do we know?
6. Are we there yet?
 - What informs our response?
7. What has changed that is important?
 - Do our assumptions still hold?
8. What looks like it might change?
 - Do we see any patterns or emerging trends that will impact our sustainability in any of our core areas?

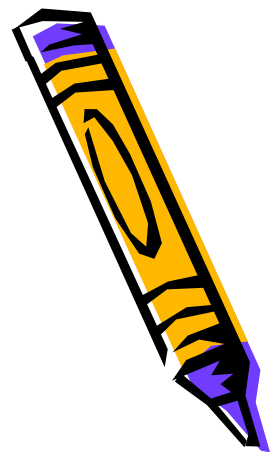
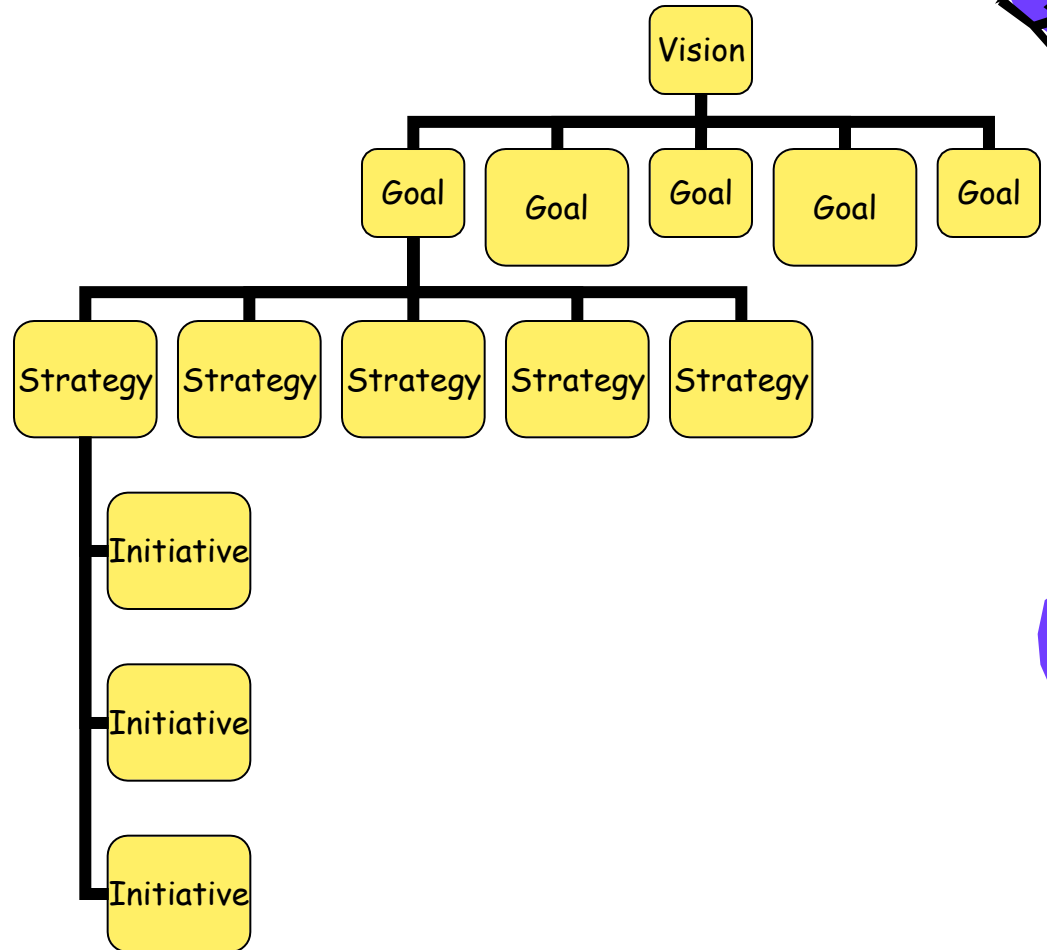


ST Process

Strategic Planning

A framework for
Strategic Thinking:

Values
Mission
Vision
Goals
Strategies
Initiatives
Operational Plans
Performance Measures



"If people don't want to come out to the park,
nobody's going to stop them."

ST Process

Plus a focus on strategy

Involves choices and decisions in four key areas:

1. **Organizational identity** - values and mission that define the school
2. **Operating** Strategy - the objectives, timetable and performance standards needed to deliver the school's product/service offerings
3. **Marketing** Strategy - the position the school wants in the minds of its constituents: involves determining what the value of your offerings are, what offerings will be made to what markets when and how, and how they will be promoted (markets served, institutional position or competitive strategy, and marketing mix including product, price, place, and promotion)
4. **Financial** Strategy - the determination of what's needed to finance operations and vision and how it will be derived



ST Process

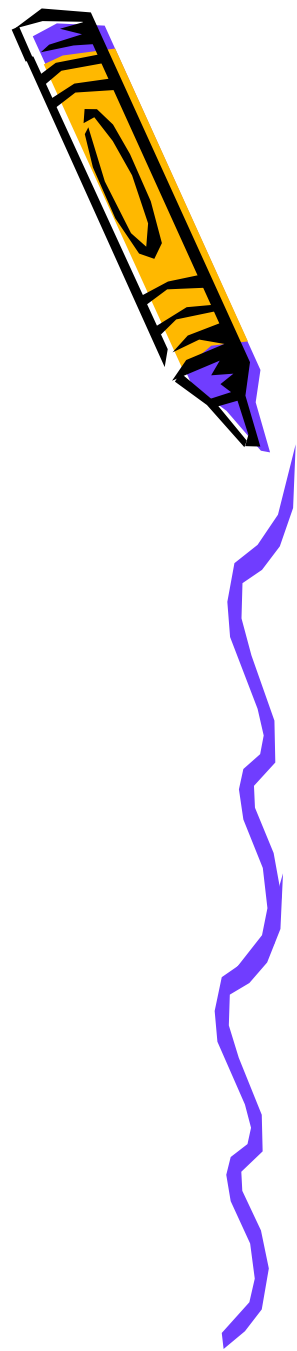
If you are thinking strategically, ask these questions:

What is our current dominant strategy in each of these areas? What are the assumptions behind it? Is the strategy working?

What is our future strategy in each of these areas? What are the future driving forces in each of these areas? Do our assumptions still hold? What might be some alternative concepts for each of these areas?



"When you come to a fork in the road, take it."

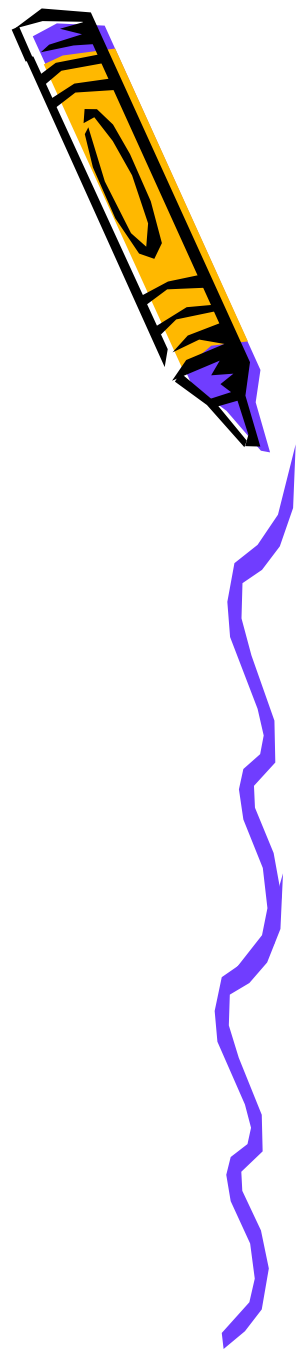


ST Process Tools

1. Strategic Thinking Sessions
2. What if? Scenario Development
3. Root Cause Analysis
4. Appreciative Inquiry
5. "Both...and" thinking with 2X2 matrices
6. OTSW (also known as SWOT)
7. Brainstorming
8. Environmental Scans



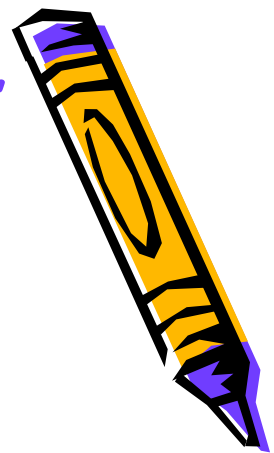
More ST Process Tools



9. If...then assumptions
10. Research Plan
11. Core Competency Analysis
12. Critical Issues Matrix
13. Mission Testing
14. Decision-making Models
15. Dashboard Indicators
16. Open Space Technology



"It's déjà vu all over again."



Getting started



Past

What **did** matter? What were our interests, learnings, ambitions, interactions, relationships?

Present

What **does** matter? What are our interests? What are we learning? What are our ambitions? How are we interacting? What is the quality of our relationships?

Future

What **might** matter? What might our interests be? What should we be learning? What could our ambitions be? How might we be interacting? What might our relationships look like?



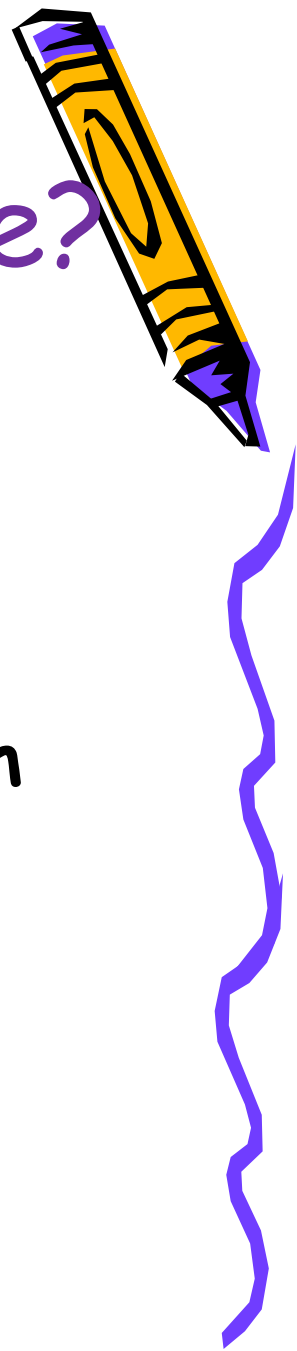


What's on
your
mind?



How does this affect me?

- Understand your role
- Participate in Core Values Alignment Exercises
- Participate in our online survey
- Participate in the Planning Symposium
- Participate in initiative development
- Ask questions
- Think for the institution
- Strategic Planning Project Team



On ramp - Initial Strategic Thinking

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"It's not over 'til it's over."

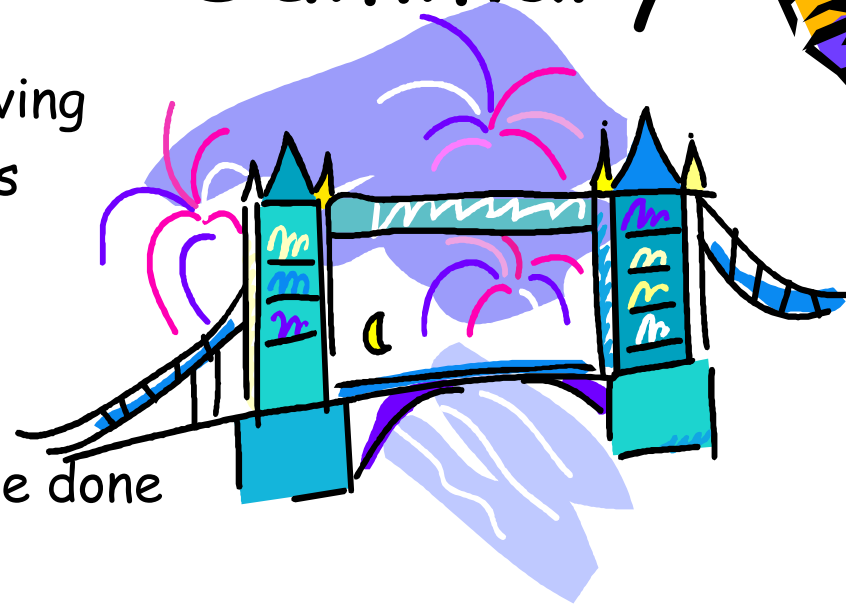
Summary

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Off ramp - Ongoing Strategic Thinking

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It's over.

Thank you!

