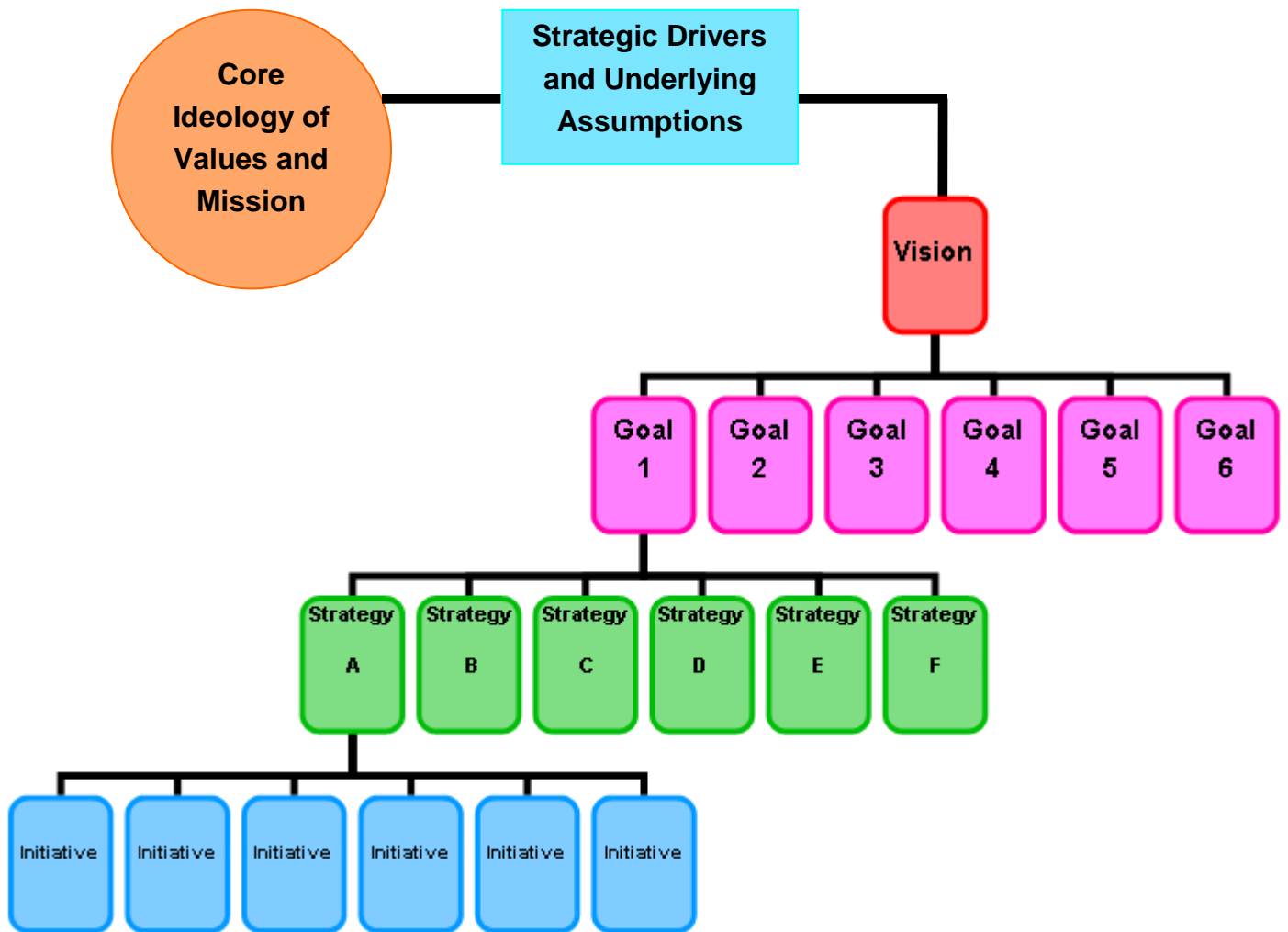


# ADVISORY

## STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

by Christina Drouin



# A STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK UNPACKED

<b>On the left</b>	<b>Values and Mission</b>	Immutable, transcendent, enduring, bedrock
<b>On the right</b>	<b>Vision, Goals, Strategies, and Initiatives</b>	Fluid, adaptable, achievable; a cascading hierarchy of specificity; big bold dreams that degenerate into work
<b>In the middle</b>	<b>Strategic Issues and Assumptions</b>	Potential disaster and undreamed of success coexist in the critical issues you must address over the near term as factors over which you have no control, and some that you do, swirl about.
<b>Core Values</b>		Core values are the defining ideals and standards to which the organization ascribes worth above and beyond all else. Core values answer the question <i>“What do we stand for?”</i>
<b>Mission</b>		Mission is a broad description of purpose. Mission answers the question <i>“Why do we exist?”</i> Mission statements that answer the question <i>“What do we do and how?”</i> are easily outdated and are not of the enduring quality that best practices in contemporary planning require.
<b>Strategic Drivers</b>		Strategic drivers are those opportunities and threats the organization must address over the next three to five years in order to advance its mission and vision. Strategic issues are based on a thorough analysis of internal strengths and weaknesses combined with relevant external threats and opportunities identified found by scanning social, technological, environmental, economic, and political factors. Strategic Drivers – also known as Strategic Issues, Critical Issues, or Strategic Agenda – answer the question <i>“What are our strategic priorities over the next three to five years?”</i>
<b>Underlying</b>		Underlying assumptions provide the context for adjustment and recalibration of your plan. They are written at the beginning of the process and checked into regularly, at least annually, to see if what you thought would be true about the future regarding your strategic drivers is actually unfolding according to your assumptions. If yes, proceed with your plan. If no, recalibrate.
<b>Vision</b>		Vision is a word picture of what the organization wants to look like in ideal terms in the future. The vision statement provides direction and inspiration. Vision answers the question <i>“What does success look like in five years?”</i>
<b>Goals</b>		Goals are broad statements of what the organization hopes to achieve in the next three to five years. Goals answer the question <i>“What must we accomplish to realize our vision?”</i>
<b>Strategies</b>		<i>Strategies</i> are statements of major approach or methods (means) for attaining broad goals and resolving specific issues. Strategies answer the question <i>“How will we reach our goals?”</i> If they are too specific they are likely initiatives rather than strategies.
<b>Initiatives</b>		Initiatives are the projects, programs or activities that are identified as necessary to achieve a goal. Initiatives answer the question <i>“What specific projects, programs and activities in the near and mid-term must the organization undertake in order to operationalize strategy, achieve goals, and advance toward vision?”</i>
<b>Performance Outcomes</b>		Performance outcomes are specific and concrete statements that are measurable and attainable and indicate a change in attitude, awareness, knowledge, skills, behavior, performance, status or condition. Performance outcomes and activities-based objectives may be part of initiative work plans.

