Strategy Guidance

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Strategy Definition

The field of public child welfare develops a strategy for achieving outcomes for children, youth and families. The most basic strategy identifies the vision, mission, goals and priorities that direct the work of the entire agency.

Overview

An effective strategy establishes the direction, expectations and values from which the workforce operates with discretion, resulting in a more empowered agency that knows where it's going and why. This leads to stronger and better-aligned workforce behaviors and motivations, a greater degree of internal and external collaboration and greater service flexibility and innovation.

To achieve the strategy, public child welfare agencies need a clear and action-oriented plan for improving the lives of the children, youth and families they serve. They must know how to develop such a plan, make it happen and be clear about how they are impacting outcomes. They must avoid having major crises stall their progress, resolve related debates and tensions, avoid reactive or limited responses to the challenges they face and instill a sense of hope and forward progress among the staff.

This guidance provides a pathway to this reality: everyone in an agency working in synch with a clear and energizing sense of purpose, flexing when needed but then returning to the primary goals, objectives and initiatives that help improve the lives of children, youth and families.

Questions the Guidance Will Answer

- What is strategy, why is it important and how does it affect those we serve?
- What set of elements comprise an effective strategic plan?
- How does an agency ensure that its strategic plans are implemented and avoid the effort resulting in "boring meetings and dusty books on a shelf?"
- How does an agency ensure that strategy is familiar and relevant to front-line staff?
- How does an agency avoid dispensing with its strategy whenever a crisis hits?
- How does an agency link its strategy to all of the departments and functions within it?
- How should the results of a strategy be measured and monitored?
- How does the theme of disproportionality and disparity fit into strategic planning?
- How does strategy work help to build a culture of empowerment and accountability?
- How does strategy help agencies address the "either-or" tensions we sometimes confront in our work?

Why is this Critical Area Important to the Field of Public Child Welfare?

- Professionals in well-respected fields tell their story in ways that are compelling, build trust about their work and generate support and desired resources. They attract talented people to join in these efforts. Strategy work is the first step for both the field and individual agencies in establishing this respect and credibility.
- There is strong public interest in and support for efforts to make children and youth safe, secure and generally healthy and well-adjusted. We must be clear and persuasive that the field and its organizations make this happen through strengthening families.
- Strategy is not a compliance activity or an abstract exercise in wishful thinking. Effectively developed strategies are concrete and approachable versus theoretical and overly technical.

How Will Outcomes be Achieved for and with Children, Youth and Families?

- Effective strategy provides the "game plan" for advancing outcomes both individually and collectively. A clear picture of the desired outcomes for children, youth and families forms the core of this plan.
- Monitoring, decision-making and quality assurance activities within any agency need to be guided by the right set of objectives and measures. Otherwise, the agency risks doing the wrong things quite well.
- Outcomes will not be achieved simply through good intentions, quality staff and even good front-line practice design and principles. If an agency's assets are either micro-managed or used in too unguided a way, they won't work toward the collective goals, be sustainable, or result in effective daily action.

Strategy

The strategy is the overall approach which maximizes the performance of the agency. An effective strategy will establish and communicate the goals and objectives of the agency to achieve positive outcomes for children, youth and families. An agency's strategy is manifested through a strategic plan which lays out in a clear and orderly flow the answers to a range of questions about how an agency will achieve outcomes. It tells this story in a way that is comprehensive and concrete, yet collaborative and flexible, much like a "playbook" does for a sports team that must prepare for games without expecting everything to go as imagined. The feel of the plan should be portable, adaptable and user-friendly so it is accessed continuously and refined often as agencies learn by doing their work and planning more strategically over time.

The strategic plan helps to communicate with staff, stakeholders, partners and the community about who you are, what you intend to do and why, how you will do it and what you need to succeed. This may result in stronger partnerships, more secure funding and other forms of support. It may also result in better orientation of new staff, better planning of new initiatives, clarification of roles and expectations throughout the organization and promoting an overall positive image of the agency and its work.

Disparity and Disproportionality

A well-developed strategic plan will include the ongoing monitoring of racial, ethnic, or other forms of disproportionality as a "litmus test" that must be carefully studied for its root disparities. Disparity is defined as the unfair or biased treatment of those being served and it may be occurring with or without disproportionality in evidence. Disparity can occur at any point within an agency's key processes, from community outreach to intake to casework-related decisions to services offered. Disparity can also occur in the environment within which children, youth and families live and work through unfair treatment and limited access to quality services and opportunities. If disparity is in fact occurring, then the agency can respond more proactively and thoughtfully to reduce or eliminate it, with the full force of the strategic plan behind the effort. Once disparity within an agency is being reduced, the agency can focus on its potential role of helping to reduce it within the children, youth and family's general environment.

PPCWG recommends that public child welfare agencies include in their leadership platforms, policies, operations, casework practices and strategic partnership platforms that the agency treats families fairly and justly, avoiding or overcoming disparate treatment whenever it has been identified as a risk or a reality. PPCWG also recommends that public child welfare agencies include in their values an emphasis on equity, where all children, youth and families have access to and receive unbiased treatment and services. Agencies should reinforce this value by supporting staff to learn enough about each child, youth and family that comes to the attention of the agency so that any one aspect of a person is understood as part of a complex, whole and unique individual.

Resource Limits and Other Constraints

Budgets and finance, technology, policies and regulations and current research findings play a double role in a strategic plan. The agency should be both working within their realistic limits and influencing those limits to shift in a positive direction over time. For example, a plan might lay out initiatives within current budgetary or technology guidelines and include an initiative to make a better case for increased or reallocated resources over time. Or, front line practice initiatives might include both adopting well-researched practices and testing new and innovative practices at the grassroots level.

Comprehensiveness

Early on in strategic planning, an agency should be very careful not to take on more efforts than it has the capacity to handle successfully. As these successes are experienced and an agency's current capacity and readiness for change grows, a highly developed strategic plan would connect to every important agency department or function and each important organizational topic. For example, administrative departments and functions like Human Resources, and Information Technology are often left out of strategic planning efforts, yet they are vital to implementing most initiatives and supporting most objectives. And if employees are highlighting topics like supervision, turnover, training and development, trust, time management and communication, these would all find their place in a highly-developed playbook.

Aligning and Pace-Setting

In many agencies, the public child welfare-specific strategic plan would be developed in alignment with a broader agency or even community strategy being developed. In other agencies, the public child welfare planning effort might be setting the pace for broader strategic planning around it. The challenge is to balance the drive and ambition of public child welfare with a realistic and patient appraisal of how quickly and effectively coworkers, partners and others might collaborate on joint initiatives.

Strategic Planning

As you read the following, please see the Strategic Plan document, which serves as a template that includes the sections and questions that your agency might address:

Vision, Mission and Values

A vision statement describes how the future will look when an agency's desires and aspirations are realized. Because they encourage people to feel and to dream, effective vision statements help build and sustain motivation, commitment and collaboration. Examples of vision statements include "Giving children back their childhood" or "Open doors for children and youth." The vision statement reminds us why we are all here.

A mission statement describes the particular role an agency plays in realizing that vision. Different parts of a community play different and complementary roles in the lives of children, youth and families. Mission statements clarify what role the agency particularly plays, which also begins to clarify what other roles are needed to achieve the vision. Here is an example of an agency's mission statement:

The Department of Children, Youth and Family Services will, with our community partners, provide a comprehensive child protection system of prevention, preservation and permanency to ensure that children grow up safe, physically and emotionally healthy, educated and in permanent homes.

A statement of an agency's values let employees, partners and those it serves know the underlying behaviors—the ways we will treat each other—that are needed and expected to achieve the mission for and with everyone involved. These values tie directly to how an agency would hire, develop and manage the performance of its staff, create an inclusive and fair culture and set healthy boundaries with all of its stakeholders.

Environmental Challenges and Opportunities

An environmental scan describes the broader community within which an agency operates. It identifies all of the people and organizations that are relevant in achieving an agency's vision

and mission and describes them well enough for the agency to know how best to approach and work with them. Stakeholders such as funders, partners, competitors, the media and vendors should all be considered a part of this scan. The scan also identifies barriers to overcome in the current environment. And there are often mandates from the environment, such as local, state, tribal and federal requirements or consent decrees, which an agency must incorporate into its plans and priorities.

Analysis of Children, Youth and Families Served and Desired Practice Model

The children, youth and families served are an agency's clients. The people an agency serves, whether they come to it voluntarily or not, will generally accept that help and fulfill their part in achieving a shared vision, if they believe that the agency's services are of benefit to them. Children, youth and families served believe what they do about an agency based on both the overall perceptions in the community and the particular experiences they have with agency staff and services. Knowing what children, youth and families want and need to achieve desired results helps an agency determine what to offer and how best to deliver it, resulting in the agency's practice model.

Desired Agency Structure, Culture and Leadership Platform

When an agency is clear about what it wants, with whom it's working and what is needed by those it serves, its leadership can determine how best to organize the agency in order to get the job done. There are many options for an organization's structure—by function, program, geography, type of children, youth or family served, or some combination of these. New or modified roles might be needed—establishing a community partnership role or office, for example. Project-specific teams such as taskforces and working committees are also part of structure.

Many new agency leaders initially opt to change their organizational chart, but these changes typically fail to improve agency performance. Any agency structure will have both strengths and liabilities, so it's essential for agency leaders to foster an effective leadership platform and agency culture so that whatever structure it employs is used to the best advantage. The principles and beliefs by which your agency's leaders will operate define a shared language and philosophy for the agency as a whole. Cultures can be relatively authoritative or they can be relatively laissez-faire. Public child welfare work requires a strengths-based, solutions-focused culture that is based on empowerment—discretion and collaboration within well-defined boundaries.

Organizational Strengths, Gaps and Capacity to Change

Identifying the desired practice model and organizational platform enables an agency to compare its current state to the desired one. This comparison, or baseline assessment, translates into a set of observable or measurable statements about an agency's strengths and gaps. As an agency asks why it has gaps, the baseline assessment further translates into a focused set of priority root causes and the general interventions needed to address them. An agency's available resources for and proven ability to implement, these types of remedies should then be carefully considered, further focusing its resources and energy for change.

Strategic Goals, Objectives and Initiatives

When an agency knows what it wants to accomplish and needs to improve, it can then establish goals, objectives and initiatives. Goals are the measurable outcomes an agency uses to monitor the impact of its efforts. Objectives focus on the general activities and efforts that will most likely lead to those outcomes. Initiatives are projects, both large and small, that an agency launches to support these activities. Some small and quickly achievable initiatives, such as a straightforward communication effort, go far in addressing certain improvement areas. Goals,

objectives and initiatives should address the full range of an agency's assessment results, including resources (e.g., finances, technology, facilities), workforce capacity, front line practice and stakeholder relationships (e.g., partners, legislators, media).

For example, a goal might be to reduce child abuse. A related objective might be to improve the coping skills of families at risk and a related initiative might be to collaborate with community partners to deliver a family assistance program focused on abuse prevention. Another goal might be to reduce the high proportion of African American children entering foster care. A related objective might be to improve the objectivity of caseworker decisions and a related initiative might be to revamp caseworker decision-making tools and techniques. Yet another goal might be to reduce staff turnover. A related objective might be to improve supervision and a related initiative might be to revamp supervisor selection and development techniques.

Major Projects or Work Plans and Commitments

To strengthen follow-through and accountability, objectives and initiatives should translate into concrete action plans and commitments. While an agency's plan would not include these down to the individual employee level, it should do so for each distinct department or function in the agency. In turn, these departments and functions would align their more specific projects and daily work plans to those identified here.

Performance Measures, Timeframes and Governance

The final section of an agency's plan should establish how progress will be measured and monitored. When an agency monitors its plans and commitments with accurate data that measures what it truly seeks to measure (validity) and then periodically reviews its plan progress, impact on the measures, lessons learned and adjustments to make, its plan will be a vital, dust-free and "living" document.

Key Processes

Key Processes are those activities or protocols necessary for developing and executing a strategic plan. For successful strategic planning, the key processes include: communication; decision-making; quality assurance; data collection and analysis; case management policies and procedures; continuous improvement; professional development; and performance management.

Communication

When the strategic planning process is open and inclusive of all levels of the organization, as well as children, youth, families and stakeholders, the result is more buy-in and more innovative and realistic tactics and initiatives. This requires a well-choreographed approach to bringing the right people together at the right times, informing them about answers to questions within the Strategic Plan, asking for their input regarding these same questions and informing them of ongoing progress and adjustments being made.

Decision-Making

Making critical decisions, often "tough calls," in alignment with an agency's strategy requires a thoughtful decision-making process that includes the following steps:

- Who is involved or will be affected by this decision?
- What is the current situation related to this decision?
- What data do we need to make a well-informed decision and do we have it?
- What is our criterion for satisfaction—what is the outcome that we reasonably expect?
- What are the alternative decisions we might make and what are their pros and cons?
- What is the clear, specific decision?
- How should our decision be implemented and communicated?

Establishing the basis for group input and group decision-making helps balance the need for quick and authoritative decisions with inclusive and empowering decisions where beneficial. In determining what type of decision to make, three factors are important to consider:

- To whom is this decision highly relevant?
- Who possesses the expertise needed to make a good decision?
- Are those we might involve because of relevance and expertise committed to the same outcomes as we are?

Where relevance, expertise and commitment are all high, a group majority or consensus decision is usually the best approach. When relevance is high but expertise or commitment is low, group input is more beneficial. And when relevance is low, making an authoritative decision (with individual expert input if needed) is usually the best approach.

Quality Assurance

Like decision-making, quality assurance processes need to use criteria for satisfaction and measures of quality that are directly related to agency strategy and they need to examine all of the relevant, informative points in the process being evaluated. For example, a quality check at intake that monitors and troubleshoots accuracy and timeliness will not be sufficient if an agency's strategic objectives include reducing disparity, improving how the agency is seen by those it serves, or connecting an individual or family to a fuller range of services when needed.

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Data Collection and Analysis

When data translates into valuable information and knowledge it supports the development and monitoring of the agency's strategic plan. Typical data requirements that support agency strategy include:

- Environmental trends such as demographic shifts
- Longitudinal data across programs that focus on the individual, family and community
- Data that enable root cause analysis for what is and isn't working in the operation
- Data to populate an overarching performance "dashboard"
- Data to support individual and unit performance management
- Data to "tell the agency's story" to staff, stakeholders and children, youth and families served

Budget Development and Finance

Processes and tools for allocating resources to current operations and new initiatives need to be directly tied to strategic goals and objectives. Too often they are tied instead to historical trends or basic compliance with stakeholder expectations.

Case Management Policies and Procedures

Effective strategic plans result in internal policies and procedures for cases that balance keeping the individual and family front-of mind while promoting compliance with required regulations. Policy manuals and related tools help caseworkers understand not just what to do, but how and why.

Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement as an ongoing practice at all agency levels matches the strategic direction established by a plan with the energies and insights of the staff as a whole, significantly raising the quality and impact of follow through, as well as the sense of accountability that everyone involved feels for the desired results and outcomes.

An effective continuous improvement process includes three tiers of organization:

- Sponsor groups, who are the champions and internal clients of improvement teams
- Continuous improvement teams, who establish specific improvement remedies
- Working teams, who implement more complex remedies through project plans

An effective continuous improvement process systematically guides continuous improvement teams through the following steps that constitute a self-reinforcing cycle:

- Define the thing to be improved in observable, measurable terms
- Assess strengths and gaps between the current and desired state
- Identify the root causes for these "findings"
- Plan quick win, short-term and longer term remedies that address root causes
- Implement remedies with the most appropriate tools (e.g., project plans)
- Monitor plan progress, impact on desired outcomes and lessons learned

For example, an agency's approach to improving disproportionality and disparity would entail clearly defining what these terms mean for that agency, thinking of disproportionality as a finding and disparity as one of its possible root causes. An effective assessment of disparity may reveal many possible types, requiring an array of remedies. Disparity within the agency can be addressed more directly within casework processes and practices and perhaps faster than

disparity outside of the agency, which may require longer-term remedies focused on research, advocacy and partnerships. Applying continuous improvement strategies to this area helps avoid the traps of either denial or crusading, essential to making systematic improvements.

Professional Development

Developing staff skills and experiences in alignment with strategy requires novel methods for development planning and techniques for "learning by doing." Building staff capacity for emerging strategies can be achieved through novel talent management and succession planning mechanisms.

Performance Management

Staff performance evaluations and individual development plans are most powerful when they are directly linked to the agency strategy. Strategic goals, objectives and measures at the agency-wide level should translate into department, unit and individual-specific performance goals, objectives and measures. Tennessee's public child welfare agency uses its "practice wheel" for working with children and families as the model for staff in every function and level of the agency.

Operations

In order for the agency to execute the strategic plan, the following elements must be well established and realized in daily operations. These operations include: role clarity; staff understanding and buy-in; monitoring progress; monitoring system integrity; collaboration and integration; and risk management vs. managing by crisis.

Role Clarity

For both developing and executing a strategic plan, many distinct roles within your agency will be required:

- The executive team is ultimately responsible for strategic planning and monitoring.
- Department and function heads are responsible for leadership platforms, culture, structure and models of practice that align to strategy.
- Middle management is responsible for key processes that support implementing strategy.
- Supervisors and front-line staff are responsible for daily performance in alignment with strategy.
- A planning role or function is useful for facilitating strategic planning and managing the plan itself and for linking strategic plans with other high-level planning efforts
- A communications role or function is useful for connecting strategic planning to all of the participants as well as to the intended audiences.
- Human Resources, Information Technology, Budget and Finance and other support functions also play critical roles since many of the remedies identified for closing gaps fall within their areas of responsibility and expertise.
- Multiple hats above are common in smaller agencies.

Staff Understanding and Buy-In

The typical member of the staff has thoughtful answers to these questions, not as a set of canned, memorized responses, but as their primary way to connect their daily work to the big picture of the agency:

- What is your agency's vision and mission and how do you advance that mission in your particular role and function? How does the vision and mission make you feel?
- What are your agency's values and what specifically do you do to live by them?
- Who are your agency's main external partners/stakeholders and what do you know about them that informs your work?
- Whom do you serve, what do they want and need from you, and how does that inform your work?
- How do the leaders in your agency help you to be more strategic in your work?
- What is your agency best at doing? What does it need to improve and why? How are you all going about making improvements?
- What are your agency's strategic goals, objectives and main initiatives? What part do you play in advancing them?
- What are your individual performance goals and objectives and how do they connect with the agency's overall ones?
- How well are you and the agency doing in achieving your goals and objectives?
- If you have any similar questions yourself, to whom do you go for answers?

There are a number of ways that an agency can help front-line staff understand and buy into the agency's strategy, including:

- Involving staff and others in the strategic planning process itself
- Familiarizing newly hired staff with the agency's plan as part of new staff orientation

- Improving how leadership talks about, aligns their units to and models elements of the Strategic Plan, reinforced within succession planning and leadership development programs
- Establishing a two-way dialogue with staff regarding strategic progress, impact and lessons learned, through town hall meetings, on the intranet and through other internal communication mechanisms
- Celebrate success stories and staff achievements that tie directly to the Strategic Plan
- Link strategic goals, objectives, initiatives and measures to the front-line through the agency's performance management and staff development systems
- Periodically survey or hold focus groups with staff regarding these or similar questions and use the results to guide ongoing communication and supervision efforts

Monitoring Progress

Monitoring is an essential way to maintain energy and focus for what really matters in an agency and to manage knowledge and lessons learned across departments and functions, up and down hierarchical levels and with external partners. Monitoring is what enables strategies to continuously improve and, at times, sets the stage for breakthrough innovations. Characteristics of effective monitoring include:

- Regularly scheduled, participative "happenings" that invite stakeholders, partners and persons served by the agency to get involved
- Two-way dialogues that focus on problem-solving versus judgment
- Presenting is informal, candid and shared among many participants
- Methods of presenting information are flexible, provided data and materials address plan progress, impact on goals and outcomes, lessons learned and adjustments to consider making

Monitoring how well an agency's strategy is working often falls into one of these ineffective modes, which should be avoided:

- Compliance-based, with a focus on checking boxes and moving on
- An "inquisition" by senior managers, ripe with performance anxiety
- A dog-and-pony show, with praise mainly for one's presentation skills
- An exercise in form-over-substance, often true of canned approaches
- Regularly postponed, cancelled or otherwise put on the back-burner

Monitoring System Integrity

Mechanisms must also include ways for persons served by the agency or front-line staff to alert agency leadership when they experience or observe actions by agency staff or private providers that are contrary to the agency's mission and values. For example, providing direct access to an agency ombudsperson or executive when someone sees or experiences abuse or coercion by a caseworker, supervisor, or private provider is critical to protecting the agency's integrity and trustworthiness.

Collaboration and Integration

Strategic planning, key process development and continuous improvement thrive best when they are cross-program and cross-system work. For example, services integration requires that certain strategic initiatives be developed and implemented by a number of departments alongside public child welfare. Some strategic initiatives with the greatest impact on child and family outcomes might be collaboratively developed and implemented at the local, state, tribal and federal levels simultaneously. Finally, an agency's strategic plan should be directly linked to other important planning efforts—such as its Performance Improvement Plans or reform plans—through a central planning and coordinating function.

Risk Management vs. Managing by Crisis

By its very nature, public child welfare work includes responding to legitimate and, at times, severe crises being experienced by children, youth, families and communities. However, some agencies are consumed by the crisis of the day and therefore don't have time to develop or remain engaged in their unfolding strategic initiatives. Other agencies respond well to crises but the related stress on time and emotions take a toll on the organization's climate. In developing a strategic plan, environmental scans and an analysis of who is served should lead to significant reflection about how an agency manages crises, towards establishing practices and protocols for crisis prevention, early risk detection (such as a "hot line" for children, youth and families served or staff to report abuse and coercion) and systematic crisis response. This "risk management" effort will, over time, help an agency respond to risks and crises in a way that models what it wants the children, youth and families it serves to learn and practice: crises should be prevented if possible and responded to thoughtfully and constructively if not.

Implementation

In order to "go from here to there," an agency must establish and implement an effective approach to strategy. An agency should consider participation and input from stakeholders, the strategic planning cycle, other planning within the agency, effective facilitation, the competencies of staff and how to overcome obstacles.

Participation and Input

As opposed to the "war room" or executive retreat method, an agency's strategic planning efforts should invite input and direct participation from all levels of the agency, those being served and a range of partners and stakeholders. In reviewing the Strategic Plan, questions to consider are: (1) who has the expertise to best answer these questions; and (2) who needs to buy into these answers. This will guide agency decision-makers as far as who to involve in strategic planning activities.

Openly testing and refining a draft of a strategic plan in a highly inclusive way is an effective means to generate understanding and buy-in prior to any implementation of changes. Moreover, this level of involvement helps to groom future managers and executives, as more and more staff will be familiar with the work of the roles above them in the hierarchy and better connecting the perspective of those roles to their current work.

Strategic Planning Cycle

Many agencies develop and update their written strategic plans annually, in synch with their annual budgeting cycle and this is sensible timing for the purpose of securing needed resources. But to get the full value out of strategic planning as a participative activity, designed to drive continuous improvement and innovation throughout the agency and within its environment, months should be scheduled for its development and revisions to be completed. In a highly developed agency, a plan might be updated as needed with lessons learned from related monitoring activities, making it a "living" document. And these plans should contain multi-year goals, objectives and initiatives, not just those that impact the current year's budgets.

Other Agency Planning

To implement and support the agency's strategic plan, a number of other high-level agency plans should be put in place concurrently:

- Budget and Finance
- Administrative Practices
- Information Management
- Workforce (e.g., staff development, staffing)
- Communication (both internal and external)

As described above, department and function-specific work and capacity plans would also follow directly from the agency-wide strategic plan. While their primary development would likely occur in the final quarter of each fiscal year, these are also "living" documents based on the evolving agency strategy and lessons learned from monitoring activities.

Facilitation

Strategic plan development and related planning can be a highly innovative and an enriching developmental experience in and of itself. The facilitation of participative working sessions that result in such an experience should be highly customized and dynamic, allowing for safe,

candid reflection by those involved, while still resulting in concrete work products and clear accountabilities. An agency's planning or staff development functions should include such facilitators or contract with an outside facilitator to enable this experience.

Competencies

Staff competencies that lead to effective strategy development and implementation include:

- Communicating vision and direction
- Promoting ethics and fairness
- Strategic and systems thinking
- Systematic planning and organizing
- Time and stress management
- Continuous learning
- Decision-making and collaboration
- A service orientation focused on the children, youth and families
- Environmental astuteness
- Driving innovation

Overcoming Obstacles

An agency should anticipate and plan how it will overcome obstacles to implementing its strategy, as there will surely be a few. Typical obstacles to implementing a strategy include:

- Shifting policies and regulatory requirements, Performance Improvement Plans, reform plans and consent decrees
- Unexpected traumas such as a child death or negative news cycle
- Budget shortfalls and other unplanned resource cuts
- Changes to the executive team or other key participants
- Internal politics and interdepartmental turf disputes
- Lack of effective support from functions like Human Resources and Information Technology
- Resistance from staff; cultural inertia
- Lack of time to focus on strategic priorities vs. reacting to crises
- Operational or project performance below expectations
- Limited performance of vendors and private providers