

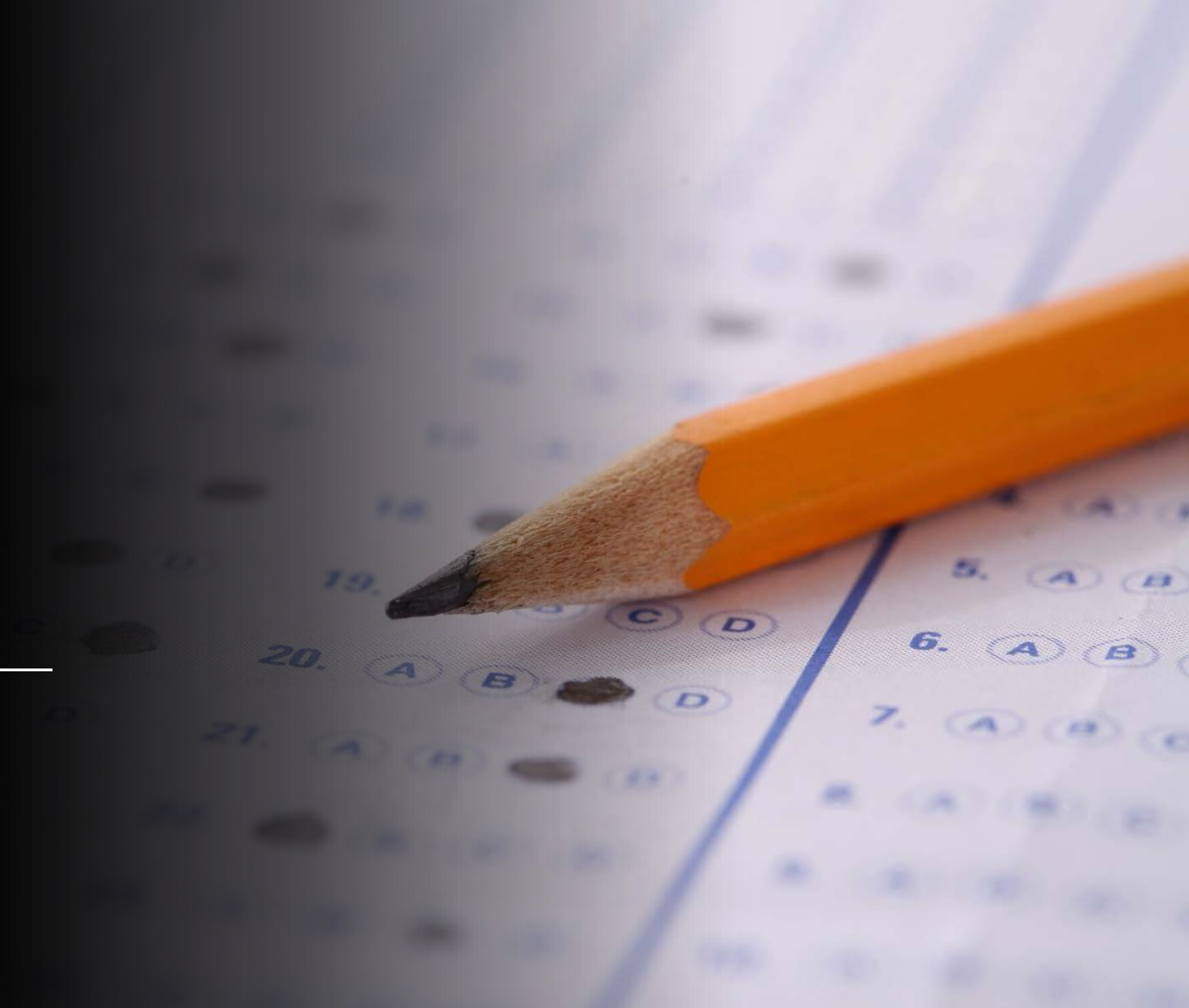
The Path Ahead

Strategic Planning – The Board's Role





Before we
begin...



Board Member Roles in the Strategic Planning Process

- What do you want to make sure we cover?
- What the Experts Say – Board Members Ten Basic Responsibilities
- Who Does What?
 - NPO Chief Executive, Board Members, Staff, Task Force & External Stakeholders
- Planning to Plan – Are you Ready? Questions to Ask Yourself and Others
 - Timeline, Use, Context for “Today’s Plan”
- Data and Feedback
 - Creating measurable objectives and goals
 - Effective goals to focus available energy and resources
 - Determining if goals will help meet the organization's mission
- Considerations
 - Tools for gathering input
 - Recording and reporting progress (Strategic Agenda)
 - Planning for current and future operational pressures
 - Market and client pressures and needs
 - Compensating for situational pressures (ex. COVID-19)



Founding Partner:





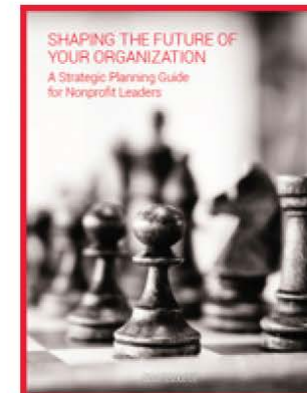
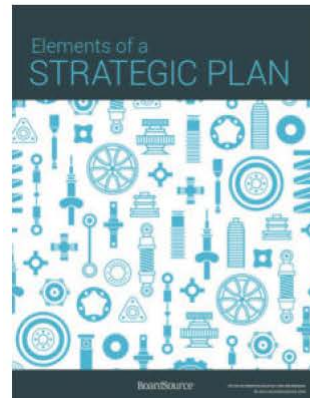
TEN BASIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF NONPROFIT BOARDS

Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards — BoardSource’s best-selling publication



Ensure effective planning.

Through the planning process, the board and staff translate the organization’s mission into objectives and goals to be used to focus energy and resources.



“The time to repair
the roof is when
the sun is shining.”
– John F. Kennedy



Poll 1 – Goals and Strategic Priorities



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Who does what?

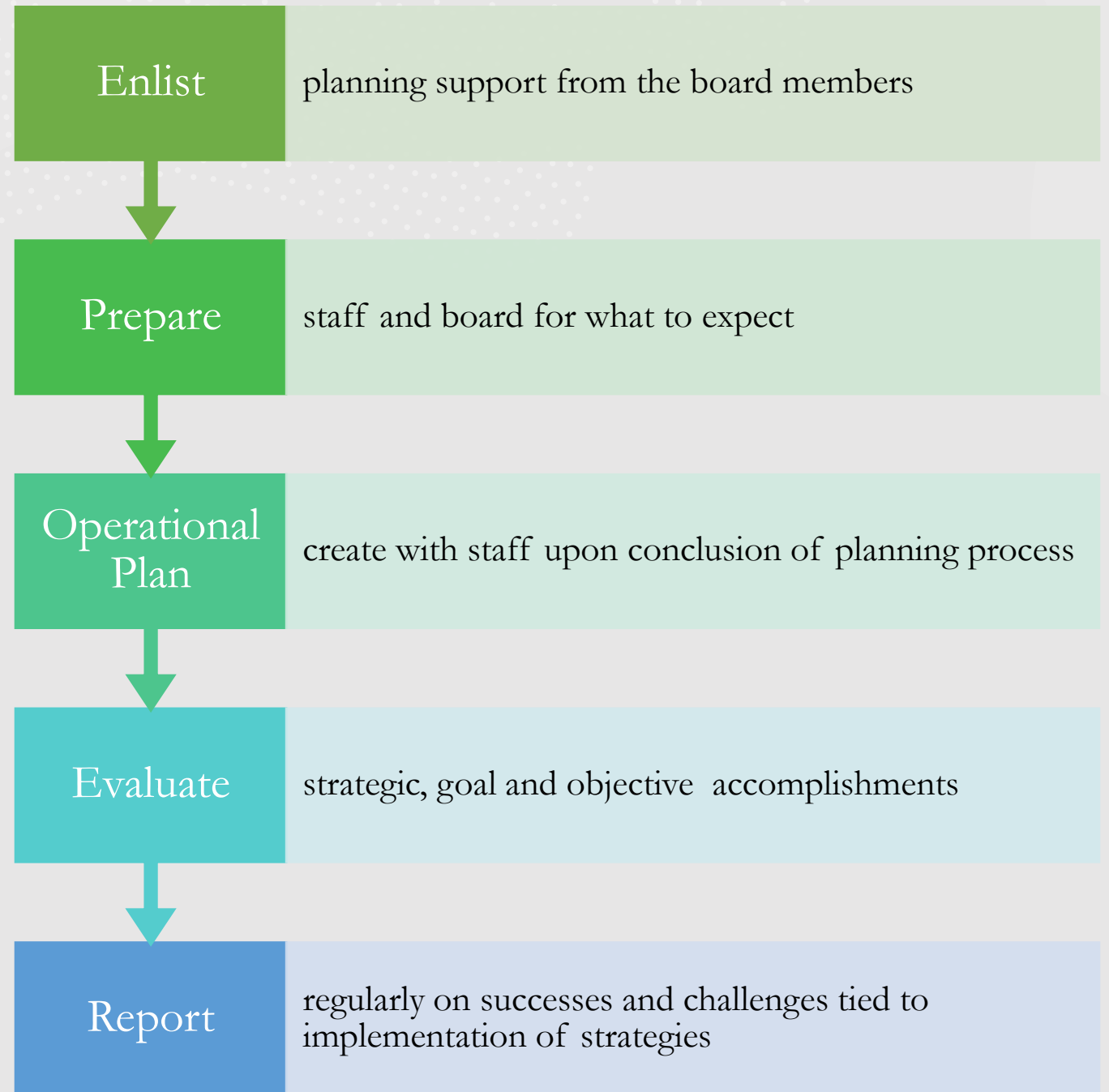
“Good fortune is what happens when
opportunity meets planning.”

– Thomas Edison

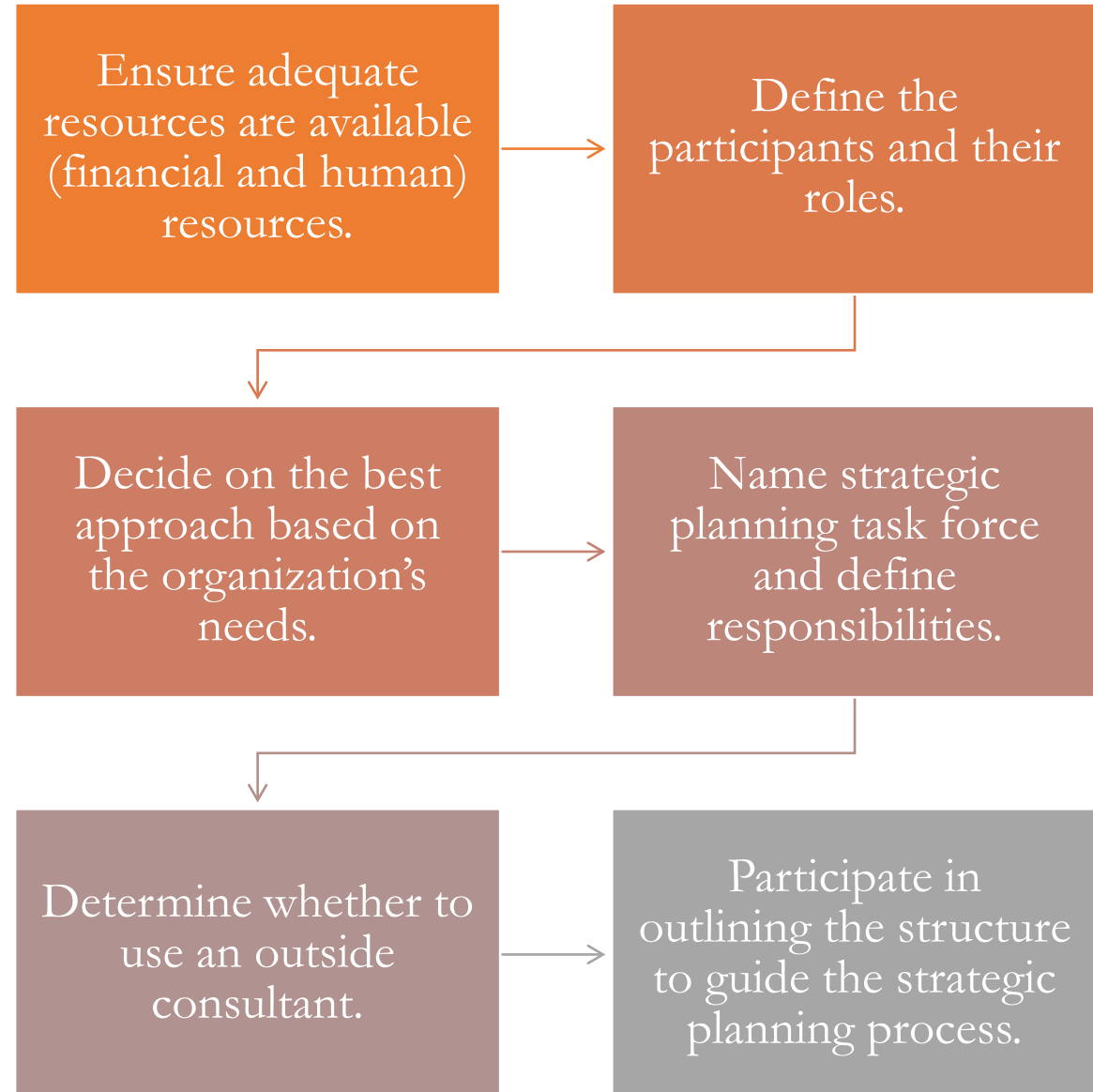
The chief executive's role:

*"By Failing to prepare,
you are preparing to
fail."*

– Benjamin Franklin



Chief Executive and Board Member Roles:



Staff's Role:

"Someone's sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago." – Warren Buffett

Analyze and report internal capacity and contribute perspective on strengths and weaknesses.

Provide background information, research, data, and institutional history

Share unique perspective on programs and services.

Ensure organization has a sense of shared mission and vision.

Name strategic planning task force and define responsibilities.

Offer administrative support to the task force.

Continuous implementation of the plan in delivery of products and services.

Strategic Task Force or Committee Member Role:

- Meets regularly to guide process
- Determines planning approach & timeline
- Organizes retreat (including invitations & agenda)
- Prepares and presents the final strategic plan document



External Stakeholders

Key stakeholders can include clients, customers, or users; staff and board; donors and funders; community partners; members, if it is a membership organization; and even the general public, if it is a public charity.



Participate in

internal and external assessments during planning



Participate in

focus groups, surveys, individual interviews, and any other information-gathering tool the organization uses



Provide

an outside perspective of the organization; this supplies critical information about how the organization's programs and services are perceived and received

“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

Weaknesses are aspects of your business that detract from the value you create for you at a competitive advantage. You need to enhance these areas in order to compete with your best competitor.

Opportunities are factors that represent reasons your business is likely to prosper. Such as being able to expand a franchise into a new city, while some may fall into your lap such as another country opening up its market to foreign business.





Questions?

Once you know
who does what,
what is next?

Before any board begins a strategic planning process, they should assess their readiness by asking and then answering these questions:

Nonprofit Snapshot



Are we knowledgeable about the organization's programs, operating environment, and financial condition?



Do we have the energy, enthusiasm, time, and willingness to oversee the process?



Is there a commitment from key board members to lead the process?



Do we have board members willing to make a larger time commitment and serve on a planning committee?



Are we prepared to hear and learn things about the organization that might be negative?



Are we open to making potentially difficult decisions?



Do we have a process for addressing risks and conflict issues that often emerge during planning?



Are we open to implementing organizational changes that a new plan or framework might call for?



SPiN: Strategic Planning in Nonprofits

Sample Timeline/Workplan for Strategic Planning

This timeline is provided as a basis for discussion and development of the planning process and should be modified and customized to meet your organization's needs.

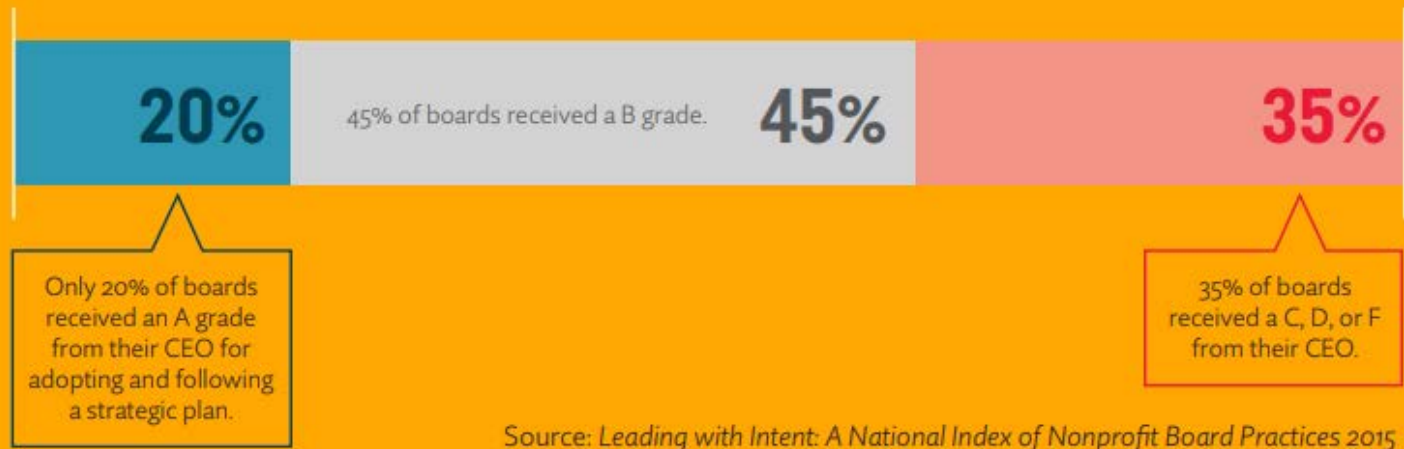
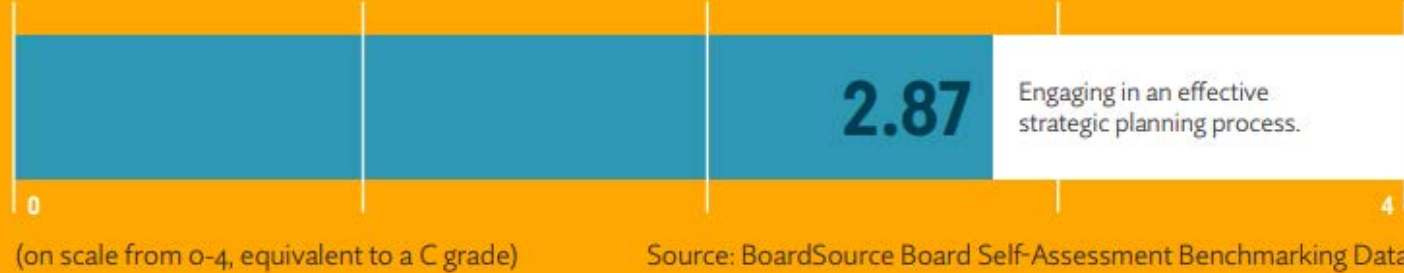
Task	Mo. 1	Mo. 2	Mo. 3	Mo. 4	Mo. 5	Mo. 6
Develop Planning Timeline and Approach						
• Consultant review of written organizational records						
• Discuss alternate approaches and plan formats with Planning Committee; determine desired process and format of end product						
• Write brief summary of organizational history and accomplishments, current situation						
• Identify information needed for strategic planning						
• Facilitate discussion to develop list of stakeholders						
• Develop a plan for soliciting stakeholder input						
• Committee brings proposal to Board for approval						
Review/Validate Mission and Vision						
• Approval of proposed planning process						
• Initial discussion of mission						
• Develop org. values, if desired						
• Stakeholder input to mission/5 year vision						
• Wordsmithing of mission as needed						
• Approval of revised mission statement & 5 yr vision						
Gather relevant data and stakeholder input Sample strategies listed below. Decision about data gathering needs and priorities should be made during development of timeline and approach.						
• Hold constituent/stakeholder focus groups						
• Membership and/or client survey						
• Interview key partners/funders						
• Prepare relevant financial information						
• Research other models/peer organizations						

Task	Mo. 1	Mo. 2	Mo. 3	Mo. 4	Mo. 5	Mo. 6
• Competitive scan/environmental scan						
• Review bylaws and current organizational systems, identify gaps						
Set goals/develop plan framework (usually accomplished in the context of a board retreat)						
• Review data						
• Brainstorm goals and objectives						
• Cluster/prioritize goals to identify 3-5 broad goal areas						
• Set broad goals in support of mission						
• Draft objectives						
Write the strategic plan						
• Identify leads for each portion of the plan						
• Provide template for plan						
• Provide coaching and facilitate small group discussions to support development of plan narrative						
• Provide training and assistance to develop measurable outcomes						
• Compile/edit draft strategic plan						
Review Draft Plan						
• Review, feasibility testing, additional prioritization if necessary, clarify roles and responsibilities (how will the plan get done?)						
• Financial projections/analysis if desired						
• Check for clear outcomes/ensure that progress can be shown/evaluated and develop strategy for ongoing board monitoring of progress						
• Validate plan with membership, if desired						
Approval of final strategic plan						

Agree Upon Timeline and End Product

Strategy and planning remains at the top of the list of areas needing board improvement.

EVOLUTION



Board Members should consider the current trend in nonprofit management. Reliance on formal strategic plans is lessening in favor of more flexible strategic frameworks.

Using robust annual plans and strategic frameworks allow flexibility to adapt to change.



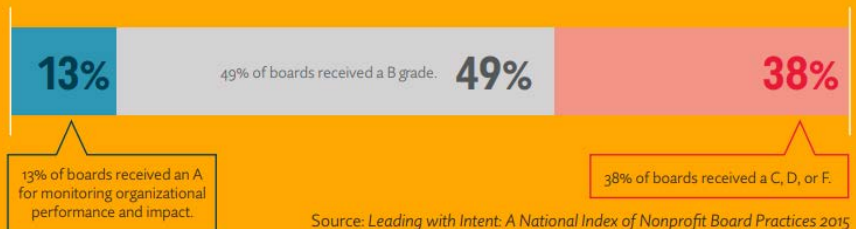
BIG PICTURE FOCUS



FLEXIBLE & NIMBLE



PRIORITIZATION FOR DECISION MAKING



The Strategic Plan is Dead. Long Live Strategy.

THE CASCADE OF STRATEGIC CHOICES:



“It is not the strongest of the species that survive, not the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.” – Charles Darwin



Poll 2: Measurement

Have you accomplished your mission?

Board member stewardship responsibility, utilizing resources for their most productive use.

Boards should ask themselves, "Is your definition of success the same as your chief executive? Is it the same as your client(s)?"

STEP 1 – Review your Mission Statement

- What difference are you are committed to making?
- Who/What? (persons, places, or things) are you aiming to impact?
- What is your ultimate intrinsic desire, or what do you want most?

STEP 2 – Identify or Create Mission Accomplished (Measures)

- What results, outcomes, and specific evidence do we use to determine measurable impact (aligned with mission)?
 - Not Outputs, Outcomes... (does your organization have a tracking system in place?)
 - Identification of reliable measures that indicate changes in conditions for the (persons, places, or things) served
 - **Complex Mission (multiple programs)** = multiple measures **3-5** to demonstrate collective impact of work

STEP 3 – Identifying the GAP(s)

- **CURRENT** state of (persons, places, or things) you aim to impact
- The state of (persons, places, or things) you aim to impact in an **IDEAL** world.
- The difference between the two is your GAP(s) and is what you are trying to solve through strategic planning.



Evaluation and Measurement of Outcomes

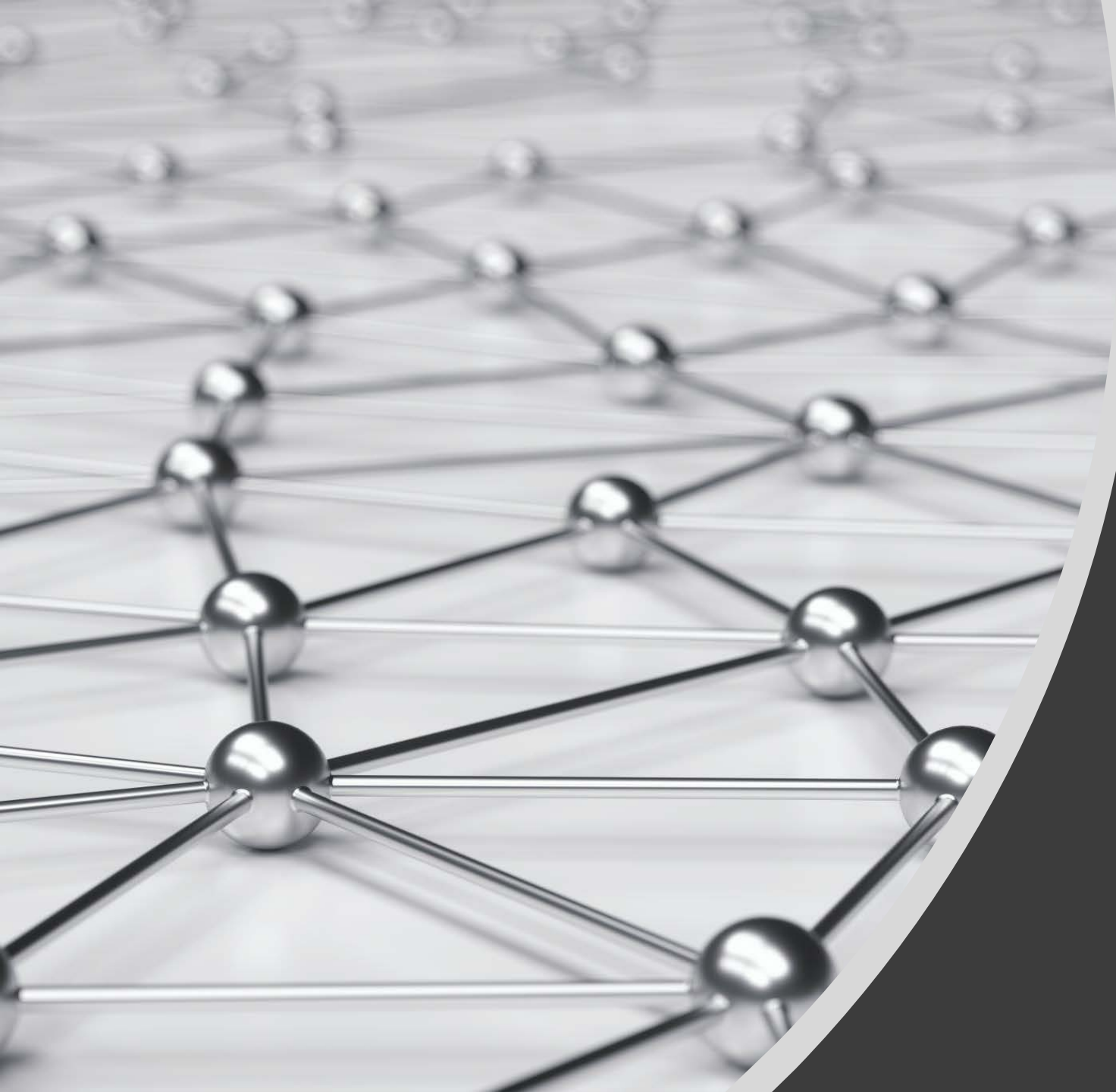
How do you know if your nonprofit is making a difference? Impact is the difference your nonprofit makes: There's the work you do, and the results that flow from it. More and more nonprofits, grantmakers, and government partners, are focusing on outcomes, rather than "outputs." As a board, part of your strategic planning should cover how you will measure success. Trends in philanthropic funding suggest boards should focus on outcomes more than outputs. [National Council of Nonprofits](#)

“Before anything else, preparation is the key to success.” – Alexander Graham Bell



Questions?

If you don't know how your organization **measures** success, look to see if there is an issue with infrastructure.



Poll 3: Infrastructure



Assess the Infrastructure – **Can we do this?**

Mission and vision priorities (**those 5-7 areas of focus**) are defined and agreed to, the next step... ensure your organization can do the work today to support the vision priorities for tomorrow.

Questions to address include:

- What are the functions in the organization (financial, programmatic, support, etc.) and how do they relate to each other?
- How well will our current infrastructure enable us to achieve our vision priorities? (Don't scrimp on your **human capital**. Measurement is HARD... you need the right resources and skill sets to optimize success.)
- Are there any functions missing?
- Do we have functions we no longer need?

Strategy as a Practice:

A good way for nonprofit's board to stay engaged is to tie the nonprofit's strategic initiatives to the agenda for board meetings. Include a short discussion about some part of the nonprofit's strategic directions in every board meeting agenda. Questions to ask include, "Is that strategic initiative still relevant?" "Are the priorities (or tactics) we identified earlier the correct ones for the near future?"

Compare Traditional and Strategic Board Agendas

Traditional Board Agenda

- 1. Welcome and approve** minutes of last meeting
- 2. Executive Director's Report**
Verbal report on web site redesign update
- 3. Finance Committee Report**
Circulation of quarterly financial statements. Treasurer or Finance Committee Chair points out a few variations between budget and actual, which are briefly discussed. Asks for a motion to approve change of signature authority on bank forms due to change in officers.
- 4. Nominating Committee Report** Update on new candidates and who has had lunch with whom to cultivate relationships
- 5. Program Committee Report**
Chair of Program Committee asks staff to provide a 10 minute verbal report on various programs that are being implemented to increase the community's awareness of the agency's programs and services. Discussion is curtailed because time is running out.
- 6. Fundraising Committee Report Update** on plans for Gala and reminder to purchase tickets
- 7. New Business?**
- 8. Adjourn**
Meeting lasts two hours

Strategic Agenda

- 1. Welcome and Opening Thoughts**
(Different board members offer opening thoughts each meeting)
- 2. Consent Agenda**
Approval of minutes of last meeting, and acceptance of items listed on consent agenda: previously circulated written report from ED on web site redesign; dashboard of revenue/expenses from Finance Committee; ACTION: approve change of signature authority on bank forms; Accept reports on board member prospects from Board Development Committee and from Fundraising Committee.
- 3. Discussion of Strategic Initiative #1 Expand Community Awareness**
Full board discussion facilitated by board chair. Are goals being met? What are board members hearing in the community? What are the barriers? What other avenues could be used to increase awareness? Consensus is to convene a communications task force to recommend how web site, annual report, and partnerships with other agencies can expand awareness.
- 4. What's keeping you up at night?** (Use this brainstorming session to develop future issues for board attention.)
- 5. Adjourn**
Meeting lasts one hour
Outcome: rich discussion on a strategic priority for the organization.

Monitoring Progress

Strategic Considerations for Boards

Work Plans & Budgets

Are vision priorities, goals, and actions part of plan and financial reviews?

Evaluative Metrics

Are they in place to regularly review performance? Are quantitative measurements in place to define success?

Refer Back

Do you use the strategic plan in less formal ways, such as during committee meetings?

Finally, Our World Moves FAST!

Strategy must be a part of every meeting.

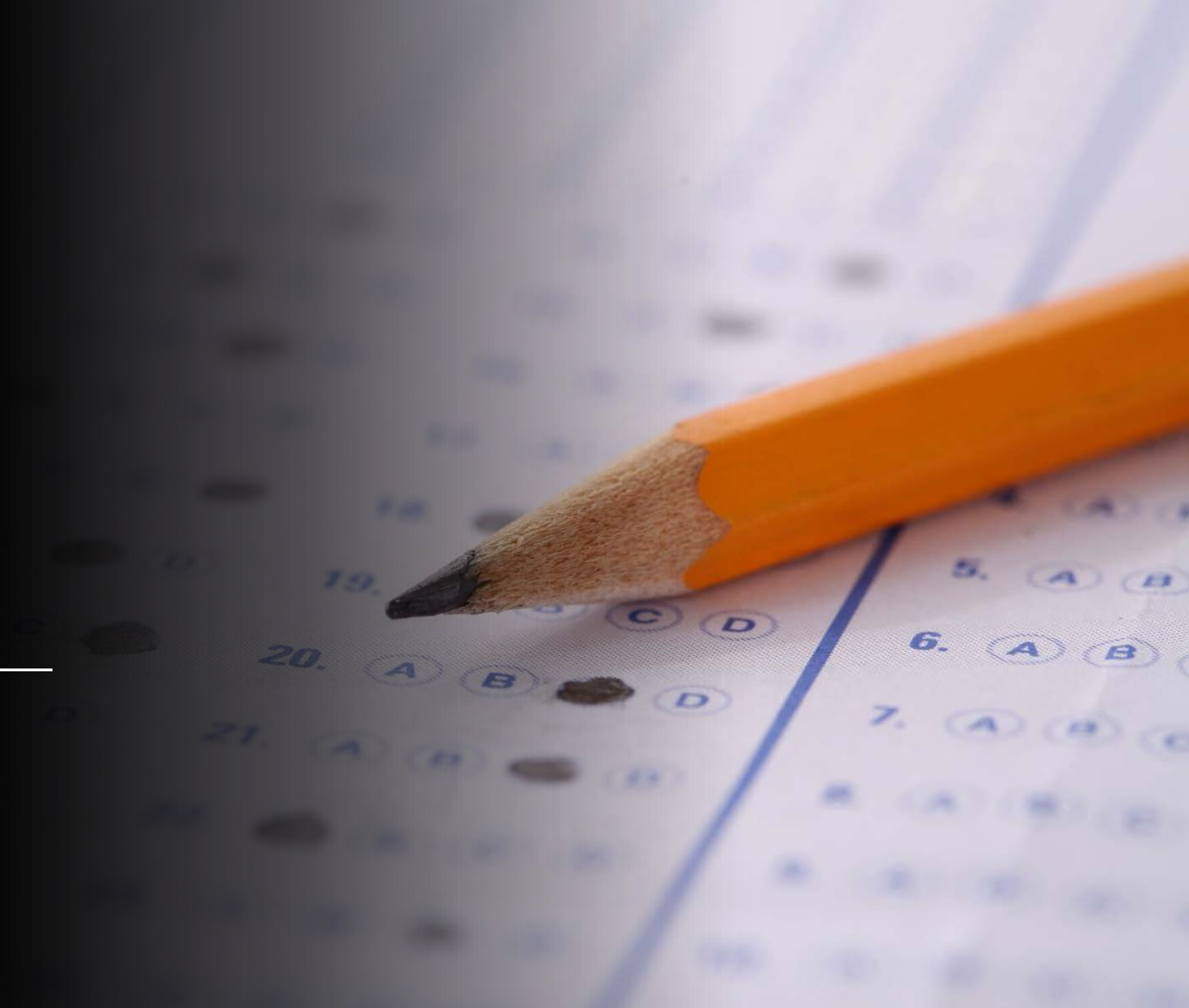
Board members share responsibility for success or failure of the plan.



Regardless of the tool measuring progress, the board holds responsibility for the organization's success. You should give yourself permission and the **ABILITY** to **ADJUST**!



LEARNING GAINS...



Resources

Board Assessment

Nonprofit Snapshot

Strategic Plan Outline

Interview Request Letter

Campaign Survey

SWOT Analysis – key constituent



Any Questions

Next Training – May 10th 1:00pm to 3:00pm

MICHELLE BUCHANAN, DINI SPHERIS

MEMBERS ONLY (3:00pm-4:30pm)



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IF WE CAN HELP:

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We Appreciate Our Partners:



Founding Partner:



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grateful

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