



## MUSEUM MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS, INC.

*Helping Museums and Cultural Organizations Thrive in the Changing Environment since 1987*

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## Is Strategic Planning Still Relevant? MMC breaks it down.

There is an ongoing debate in literature and online about the value of strategic planning. Are Strategic Plans still relevant? Can you really plan beyond three years? Why even create a plan if it just sits on a shelf?

MMC has been working with museums and cultural organizations for over 30 years to create Strategic Plans that are useful and flexible. This is what we've learned:

### Why does a Strategic Plan fail?

1. The planning process is **too long and complicated**, momentum slows leaving staff and stakeholders uninvested or out of steam.
2. The **meaning of strategy is unclear** - strategy is specific and measurable.
3. Often, there is a **lack of vision** - the vision of the future comes first, and strategy is designed to make it happen. Remember this Japanese proverb: *Vision without action is a daydream, action without vision is a nightmare.*
4. A **lack of accountabilities** - timelines, resources, or individuals responsible for specific strategic objectives - leads to inaction.
5. The **Director and the Board are not committed to the plan**, therefore it is not taken seriously by staff and stakeholders. Leadership must show they embrace the plan and the process as important to the future of the organization.

### Why does a Strategic Plan succeed?

1. The plan addresses no more than **three to five years, maximum**.
2. The **planning process is simple and inclusive**, involving the community and key stakeholders, and is designed to motivate the participants. Clients often comment that the process itself - bringing people together to create a clear vision for the future - has been transformational.
3. The **plan is concise, inspiring, concrete, and readable**.
4. The planning **document is flexible**. Always expect at least 20% of the plan to change when new opportunities arise.
5. **Leadership is committed** to seeing that the plan is carried out.

**MMC's Unique Approach**

MMC begins by talking with stakeholders to understand the issues and the culture, then designs a planning process to fit the organization. MMC Strategic Plans are not glossy printed pieces that stay on the shelf, but user-friendly workbooks. The format we use is simple and can be updated by the client, and is accompanied by a spreadsheet, sortable by accountable individual and completion date.

So, is Strategic Planning still relevant? Yes, when done right.

**Contact MMC to design a Strategic Planning process that will move your museum to the next level.**

Contact MMC for your organization's individual solution:

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