

Strategic Planning Report

Introduction

Strategic planning in and of itself, is of little direct use, if concrete steps are not taken to execute the plan. The payoff of strategic planning for the AMEC is in its application, in the execution and implementation of the strategic thrusts and recommendations. It is in implementation that we begin to see the long-term, systemic impact change.

The implementation of the strategic plan involves the concurrent initiation of several ministry and operational plans at a variety of different levels of the church and in different segments. It is imperative that these changes be carefully managed at the top of the organization. In order to accomplish this, the changes in the management-control system, the information system, and the organizational culture that are needed to monitor and support the implementation of the strategic plan must be in place.

Key Challenges

A key challenge during implementation is keeping the strategic planning team meaningfully involved and interested, yet not allowing the team to take over the managing function of the Church. The planning team cannot and should not replace the properly constituted decision-making structure of the Church. However, in some cases, AMEC may lack the specific structure necessary to carryout some aspects of the plan. In this case, it is appropriate to develop temporary transitional structures for the purpose of cross-functional coordination. This document “*AME Strategic Planning Implementation Handbook*” provides suggestions for accessing existing structures of the Church to implement the plan and it recommends temporary transitional structures where they may be necessary.

Once a strategic plan is in place, together with a Connectional structure that fits that plan, it should become the road map by which the AMEC travels; the template against which Connectional decisions are made; the scale on which resources are allocated; and the impetus of Connectional energy. If these descriptions of the strategic plan are seen simply as clichés, implementation will not be effective. In addition, even if the planning team and top management are committed to the plan and its success, there is still the question of how the strategic plan becomes part of the lifeblood of the Church. This handbook is designed to help the AMEC integrate the strategic plan into the fabric of the Connectional Church. It provides a course of action that will help the Church at large buy-in and commit to the strategic plan. It confirms that the strategic plan is not an event but an on-going process for planning and growing the AMEC in the 21 Century.

Leadership Role

Research impresses upon us that the role of leadership is *the major force* in changing culture and mindset in an institution. The role of the Bishops in the implementation of the strategic plan cannot be overemphasized. Bishops must lead the change effort and be

totally committed to it. In the AMEC, Bishops are of the highest line of authority over the change initiative. They are the influencers of guiding principles, values, and culture. They are charged with keeping change in alignment with overall strategy, communicating, and modeling the change in behavioral ways, and then celebrating and acknowledging AMEC's successes.

Strategic Planning Team Role

This group of leaders and cross-functional representatives from across the AMEC has delegated authority from the Bishops and has been assigned the task of establishing strategic direction and benchmarks for tracking success. It is not the Strategic Planning Team's role to usurp the authority of the AMEC management but rather it is to transfer the responsibility of implementation to the appropriate people/existing management structure in the AMEC so that they may pick up and lead the organization toward its strategic targets.

AME Strategic Plan Implementation Handbook Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is two-fold: First it is to help the members of the AMEC understand in layman's terms the specific objectives, recommendations, and processes of the Strategic Plan; and secondly, to help the Strategic Planning Team transfer the responsibility for implementation to the appropriate people in the AMEC so that they can effectively lead the AMEC toward success.

This handbook is created as a working document. Its contents list the eight (8) Strategic Thrusts (objectives) and provides a structural framework for implementation.

It answers the following questions for each Strategic Thrust:

1. What is the recommendation?
2. Is there a process or structure already in place to get the recommendation implemented?
3. If so, what is the process or structure?
4. If not, what structure should be developed or what needs to be done to get this recommendation implemented?
5. Who are the people that need to be at the table to get the job done?
6. What is the specific change strategy that should be in place to support the Church as it attains its goal?

Meetings

Since the 2000 General Conference the Strategic Planning Team has been enhanced and given more responsibilities. We had 4 meeting of the implementation team and 2 meeting on redistricting.

See - Redistricting Session 05-23-05.doc

See - What are the major impacts of redistricting.doc

See - Strategic Planning Meeting #1 - Final Draft of Definitions.doc