

8 Elements of Good Strategy

DISTINCTIVE

Is a strong fit for our organization versus others in our space.

Is outward-facing, engaging and create strong “pull” toward us and our work.

Adds unique value to existing efforts.

Establishes us as the go-to organization on our subject matter.

VIABLE

We can fully resource the strategy, ideally outside operating income.

Delivered with internal competencies and capacity, and/or through strong partners.

Delivers early results with efficient use of resources.

We’ve minimized the likelihood of failure or unintended consequences.

MEANINGFUL

Can produce real outcomes that are important to our constituents.

Builds credibility, interest and collaboration with NGO allies.

Positive for current and prospective private and public sector partners/constituents.

HUMAN-SCALE

Grounded by empathetic insight about the human experience in our focus areas.

Focused on shifting the experiences of the real people we serve.

Based on empathy for everyone in the system of concern.

INTEGRATED

Comprised of a holistic set of solutions that work together to magnify impact.

Defines solution pathways from near-term to longterm.

Aligned with our organization’s brand and business strategy.

Addresses both internal developmental needs and external conditions.

AUDACIOUS

Overarching objective is big enough that it excites and motivates our key stakeholders.

Goals are specific and timebound, forcing us to commit to think and act at scale.

Scale of vision and impact will attract more partners and supporters.

Defines a clear future state from which we can backcast strategic pathways.

LEARNING

The goals/outcomes are specific and achievable to support evaluation and feedback.

Hypotheses about cause and effect relationships are testable so we can test our theories of change.

Defines a learning agenda to improve and refine strategy over time.

SYSTEMIC

Strategy can produce cascading effects--actions that trigger a chain of positive results.

Builds a platform for systemic change, not transactional.

Our approach to strategy development over time is systematic AND encourages emergence and adaptation as we learn.