

UNIT SUMMARY

What is the unit about?

This unit is about providing your organisation with a clear sense of direction and long-term plans that will help it move in that direction.

Managers and leaders need to focus on the future and provide a clear vision of where the organisation is going and the route it is going to follow to get there.

For the purposes of this unit, an 'organisation' can mean a self-contained entity such as a private sector company, a charity or a local authority, or a significant operating unit, with a relative degree of autonomy, within a larger organisation.

Who is the unit for?

This unit is recommended for senior managers.

Links to other units

This unit is linked to units **B2. Map the environment in which your organisation operates**, **B4. Put the strategic business plan into action** and **B7. Provide leadership for your organisation**, **D4. Plan the workforce**, **E3. Obtain additional finance for the organisation** and **E4. Promote the use of technology within your organisation** in the overall suite of National Occupational Standards for Management and Leadership.

If your organisation is a small firm, you should look at unit *A2 Develop your plans for the business*, which has been developed by the Small Firms Enterprise and Development Initiative (SFEDI) specifically for small firms and which **may** be more suitable to your needs. You can obtain information on the unit from SFEDI on tel. 0114 241 2155 or at the SFEDI website (www.sfedi.co.uk).

Skills

Listed below are the main generic 'skills' that need to be applied in developing a strategic business plan. These skills are explicit/implicit in the detailed content of the unit and are listed here as additional information.

- Consulting
 - Negotiating
 - Influencing and persuading
- Thinking strategically
 - Leadership
 - Analysing
 - Planning
 - Risk management
 - Innovating
 - Delegating
 - Prioritising
 - Setting objectives
 - Networking
 - Involving others
 - Communicating
 - Decision-making
 - Balancing competing needs and interests

OUTCOMES OF EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

You must be able to do the following:

1. Establish a clear, achievable and compelling vision which sets out where the organisation should be going.
2. Identify and prioritise strategic objectives that are consistent with the vision of the organisation.
3. Balance risk with desired outcomes.
4. Balance innovation with tried and tested solutions.
5. Ensure that your plan is flexible and open to change.
6. Develop policies and values that will guide the work of others towards your vision.
7. Delegate responsibility for achieving goals and allocate resources effectively.
8. Identify measures and methods for monitoring and evaluating the plan.
9. Balance the needs and expectations of key stakeholders and win their support.

BEHAVIOURS WHICH UNDERPIN EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

1. You constantly seek to improve performance.
 2. You generate and recognise imaginative and innovative solutions.
 3. You reflect regularly on your own and others' experiences, and use these to inform future action.
 4. You balance risks against the benefits that may arise from taking risks.
 5. You balance agendas and build consensus.
 6. You consider the impact of your own actions on others.
 7. You take opportunities when they arise to achieve longer-term aims.
 8. You create a sense of common purpose.
 9. You find practical ways to overcome barriers.
 10. You show sensitivity to stakeholders' needs and interests and manage these effectively.
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KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You need to know and understand the following:

General knowledge and understanding

1. The importance of long and medium-term planning to the success of an organisation.
2. The principles of strategic management and business planning.
3. What a written strategic business plan should cover.
4. The importance of creativity and innovation in strategic management.
5. How to identify potential risks in relation to the achievement of objectives.
6. How to develop strategic objectives which are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound).
7. How to delegate responsibility and allocate resources to support a strategic plan.
8. How to identify sustainable resources and ensure their effective use to support a strategic plan.
9. The importance of consulting with colleagues and other stakeholders during the development of the plan and how to do so effectively.
10. How to develop measures and methods for monitoring and evaluating performance against the strategic business plan.
11. How to take account of unfamiliar cultural practices, expectations and business processes when dealing with overseas companies or customers.
12. How to use the skills and experiences of staff from different cultures or countries and the business benefits of sharing different perspectives and learning from others.

Industry/sector specific knowledge and understanding

1. Legal, regulatory and ethical requirements in your sector.
2. Market developments in your sector at local, national and international levels.

Context specific knowledge and understanding

1. The market in which your organisation works.
2. Your organisation's actual and potential customer base.
3. The needs and expectations of your actual and potential customers.
4. Your actual and potential competitors and partners, and their strategies and plans.
5. New and available market opportunities at local, national and international levels.
6. Your organisation's ability to respond to market opportunities.
7. Colleagues and other key stakeholders, and their needs and expectations.
8. Processes for consultation within your organisation.
9. Sources of information that can aid monitoring and evaluation.