

OCA STRATEGIC PLAN
CHARTER AND GUIDELINES FOR WORKING GROUPS

The OCA Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) has produced a Working Draft of a Strategic Plan which has been published on the OCA website for comment and has also been, and is being, discussed at Diocesan Assemblies. Based on the feedback we have received to date and on the guidance of the Holy Synod of Bishops, we are forming church-wide Working Groups to further develop the top level goals identified in the draft Plan – identifying possible action steps and milestones to make them more concrete and practical. These possible ‘action steps’ are meant to be examples of how one might proceed to implement a goal, not requirements as to how one must proceed. They are meant to serve as “seed” or “leaven” for implementation discussions at the upcoming All American Council (AAC). Where appropriate, the Working Groups should try to identify the roles of the parish, diocese and central Church in bringing these action steps to fruition. Further concrete steps towards implementation would be taken via the discussions at the AAC and following. Ten possible Working Group areas are proposed:

1. Parish renewal/ family & community formation
2. Diocesan revitalization/ hierarchy-clergy-laity relationships
3. Leadership/ management training for clergy and lay leaders
4. Clergy and lay continuing education
5. Evangelization/ church growth
6. Youth involvement/ action
7. Inter-seminary/ theological education
8. Contemporary cultural/ social/ moral issues
9. Inter-Orthodox relationships
10. Stewardship/ financing

The Working Groups will be composed of a wide variety of people, both (1) nominated from existing persons involved in the subject areas, as well as (2) at-large individuals with concern and energy who respond to a call for volunteers. Each group will elect its own chair. “Now what?” reports will be presented as two-page executive summaries, of what is to be accomplished and when. The actions should be informed by, but not limited to, the top level goals as expressed in the existing Strategic Plan document.

Creativity and “newness of thought” will be assisted by ensuring that the Working Groups include “questioners” as well as “experts” in their makeup. Experts are people who have extensive experience and knowledge in the subject areas. An initial list of experts will come from Departmental Ministries, their Diocesan counterparts, and others who have worked extensively in the area. Questioners will be people who have a vital interest and energy in these areas but no formal positions or “incumbencies”. Questioners have the duty to ask “why” when existing methods and/or processes are being proposed by the experts and “why not” when new innovative ideas not previously thought of are brought forth.

The output from these Working Groups will be documented in executive summaries and made available for review by the Strategic Planning Committee, the Metropolitan Council and the Holy Synod of Bishops in March 2011. If approved, the findings and recommendations will be included in

the final version of the Strategic Plan to be distributed to AAC delegates in late Spring and reviewed/endorsed at the 16th All American Council (AAC) in November 2011 AAC. It is expected that further implementation discussions will take place by the attendees at the AAC.

RECOMMENDED PROCESS FOR WORKING GROUPS

The intent is to form the Working Groups by the end of December, 2010 and for the Working Groups to conduct and document their work in January and February – ‘getting together’ via the internet and teleconferences. A general process for the work of the Working Groups is provided below. These are intended only as guidelines and are not prescriptive. However, attention to each of the process steps below will help to ensure that something hasn't been missed.

- Gather background pertinent to the top level goals as given in the Strategic Plan Working Draft.
 - Review the efforts made over the past decade by the Church to address relevant issues
 - Assess the present state of the activities of departmental ministries, seminaries, Dioceses, et al.
- Review the strength / weakness assessment in the Strategic Plan Working Draft.
 - How can existing strengths be used / directed / built upon to maximum effectiveness?
 - How can existing weaknesses be improved where they are important -- and accepted where they are not?
- Develop a representative set of intermediate objectives and action steps to accomplish for each top level goal; time frame to cover the next five years. These should still be mainly at the strategic level, since detailed (tactical) implementation is likely to vary depending on the needs and capabilities of the individual parishes, deaneries, and dioceses.
 - Include possible interim targets/ milestones/ accomplishments for each objective
 - Where appropriate identify the role of the parish, diocese, and central Church in accomplishing these objectives
- Determine resources (human, facilities and funding) required to carry out the objectives.
- Document the work in a report in the following general format:
 - Statement Of The Top Level Goals
 - Relevant Past And Current Church Work
 - Representative Intermediate Objectives and Action Steps for each Top Level Goal
 - Required Resources (at the parish, deanery, diocesan, and territorial level)

Summarize the work in a two-page document for submission to the Strategic Planning Committee, Metropolitan Council, and the Holy Synod of Bishops

- Each Working Group written report and two page summary are due Feb. 28, 2010

COMPOSITION OF WORKING GROUPS

Development of the final set of recommendations will be a mutual effort of all in the group. However, there are differentiated roles within the team of "experts" and "questioners" as explained below. Both roles are critical to group success. Usually we would want at least two individuals in each role. Also, for most effective interaction, we would not want the group to get larger than about 10 members. So the typical Working Group will have between 4 and 10 members. Group members do not have to be

located close to one another in terms of geography. Communication can be done via e-mail and teleconferences as necessary.

Expert

- Someone who has particular competence or past/ current responsibility for the issues covered by the initiative
 - Can be someone presently associated with a Departmental ministry or Diocesan counterpart
- Responsible for obtaining further data, assessing resources, feasibility, timing, etc
- Responsible for drafting first pass objectives/ action steps
- Responsible for listening to and working with the questioners

Questioner

- Someone who is vitally interested in the issue, i.e., has energy on the topic - but not an "expert"
 - Can be, e.g., someone involved on strictly a parish level or other organization
- Responsible for asking probing questions, especially “why” for existing directions and “why not” for potential new and divergent directions
- Responsible to ensure that the Working Group efforts are informed by, but not necessarily limited to, the Strategic Plan top level goals
- Responsible for listening to and working with the experts

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