

**Strategic Planning and Management:
Improving Citizen Satisfaction and Government Productivity Through Strategic
Planning**

An Online Educational Module Based on
the Citizen-Driven Performance Measurement Project

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Campaign for Citizen Participation: Lessons from Montclair Case

Class Use Objectives: As a case addressing citizen participation in the development of performance measures, this case allows students to look at strategic planning as a tool to increase citizen participation and government performance. Instructors may choose to focus on: methods to encourage civic involvement in the strategic planning process; evaluation of the implementation of the strategic plan; and whether the strategic plan can be implemented in the current environment. This case focuses on the challenges and opportunities associated with designing a strategic plan that encompasses the introduction of non-traditional approaches to conducting business.

Pre-Requisites: Familiarity with the concept of citizen participation in government activities and strategic planning and management.

Discussion Questions: Here are some questions that highlight key issues in the case and are likely to foster meaningful discussion among students might include:

1. Who should be involved in the strategic planning process? Why? What parties should not be involved? Why?
2. How do you achieve consensus in the strategic planning process without sacrificing the goals and objectives of the organization? How can you increase citizen involvement using strategic planning?
3. When you think about ongoing strategic programming, what should the people of Montclair focus; e.g., strategic goals, action plans, and tactics?
4. Who should be responsible for evaluation Montclair's strategic plan? Why? Who should be involved in the evaluation process? How can Montclair improve the performance indicators that measure citizen satisfaction?
5. Are there any threats associated with implementing the Montclair initiative? If so, please identify.

Activities: These are suggested classroom activities appropriate for small groups of students.

1. Ask each group to select three service delivery areas for the Township of Montclair or a municipality you would like them to study. Be sure that the delivery

areas they select include services that are relatively easy to measure and services that are more difficult to measure. Services that are easier to measure might include: police, public works, parks; services that are more difficult to measure and might include: administrative aspects of finance department, health outcomes, manager's office. Ask the students to conduct an environmental scan and SWOT Analysis for each department. Once they conduct the environmental scan and SWOT Analysis, have them discuss in their groups their findings.

2. Ask each group to critique the Montclair's strategic plan. Have them identify the parties that were involved in the strategic planning process and the ones that were left out. If parties were left out, why were they left out? What might they do differently during the initiation phase of the strategic plan? After discussing the pros and cons of the Montclair survey ask each group to conduct a gap analysis/needs assessment. It could be for the municipality where their school is located, or where they live. In addition to conducting the gap analysis/needs assessment, how should the Montclair case be evaluated? How does each group plan to disseminate the strategic plan to the community?

3. This activity can be done on an individual basis or in small groups. Ask students to critique an existing strategic plan and make recommendations. Students may select the communities they want to examine or instructors may assign communities. It's a good idea to identify communities that have a track record with strategic planning and ones that have a strong web presence so students have access to information. Ask students to: Describe in detail the strategic plan used to enhance government performance. What type of data does the municipality collect? Who collects it? How often? Are measures collected for every function? How are measures reported? Are they tied to the budget? To performance assessments? To a strategic plan? Are citizens involved in the process? How? When? After describing the system, ask the students to evaluate it. Is this a good system? Why or Why not? What would they do differently? Ask them to present and discuss three specific recommendations for improvement.