

# Technology Planning Guide

**Framework for technology planning:** These steps are provided to help you build a technology plan. Every organization plans differently. Use the following as a framework: change it, add to and adapt it.

**What is technology planning for organizers?** Technology planning moves an organization from assessing its mission to using technology to strengthen the organizational work. Technology planning can be part of a larger organizational strategic planning process.

**Characteristics of a strong technology plan:** This list of characteristics should apply to the overall planning process.

- Strengthens the organizational work, not the technology
- Represents a living document
- Develops members and staff
- Has a scope of 1-2 years
- Oriented towards people and skills
- Has organizational commitment and support
- Connected to the organization's overall strategic plan

**Below are some key steps involved in the process:**

- 1. Develop a committee:** Involve a group of members and leaders in creating the plan
  - Include members and staff without technical skill as well as those with technical some know-how.
  - Seek representation from throughout the organization
- 2. Review assessment:** The assessment frames the planning process at the beginning, and is used throughout.
- 3. Review organizational goals:** Goals are the most important aspect of the plan; technology should help achieve these goals and augment other efforts
  - Use the assessment to help develop technology strategies to achieve your organizational goals.
  - To develop each strategy ask: "What do we want to achieve using technology to strengthen this component of our work?"

**4. Solicit technical know-how and conduct research:** Allows you to link needs and opportunities with the technical know-how and skills to address them

- Identify members and staff with technical skills
- Identify local volunteers with knowledge
- Consider hiring a technical assistance provider
- Talk to other groups interested in using technology in their work

**5. Develop strategies and objectives:** The activities and methods you plan on using to achieve your goals

- Identify actual applications or uses of technology that improve your ability to reach your goals
- Identify opportunities for members and staff skill building and training

**6. Prioritize strategies:** Identify which activities will push you closer to your goals

- Determine what strategies and objectives are most important based on which goals are most critical
- A prioritized list will help facilitate decision-making
- Other priorities can be implemented when time, skills and financial resources permit

**7. Identify Support Strategies and Training:** Identify training needs and technical assistance required.

- Teach staff and leaders to use the equipment so that is it useful
- Hire technical assistance providers when necessary

**8. Timelines:** Create a timeline for each objective

- Be realistic: Technology projects can often take longer than you expect
- Base your timeline on your priorities

**9. Budget:** Can include training, hardware & software, operating & personnel costs and others

- Base your budget decisions on priorities
- Consider outside help when developing the budget
- Develop a budget for the overall plan and for pieces of the plan

**10. Implement:** Start trainings, make purchases and begin to implement your new strategies

- Start with small projects or parts of your plan, and build as you go
- Consider starting with pilot projects to check out your success
- Use your plan to help secure funding

**11. Evaluation:** Be conscious of how your plan is improving your organizational work

- Document lessons learned from this process
- Evaluate movement toward a goal six-months after implementation and regularly thereafter