

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