

## Strategic Planning: the Post-it Note Tool

By Jeannette Buller Slater

[Jeannette@CoachingPastors.com](mailto:Jeannette@CoachingPastors.com)



Earlier this year we looked at ways to help coach a ministry team to be more effective. When coaching a team, one of the challenges is to help each person on the team participate and yet keep the whole team moving in the same direction. We used the [SWOT Analysis](#) to take an honest look at the present situation. From there we used an [APA Analysis](#) to look forward and see where God is leading.

We're now ready to develop a strategic plan to reach the goals before us. The challenge of developing a plan with a group of people reminds us of the saying "Too many cooks spoil the broth." How can you facilitate a group to create a plan?

### Setting a Goal

First you want to make sure they have clear goals. Each goal should be written in such a way that it is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant (to your group's vision and call), and time-related. If you take the first letter of each attribute it spells SMART.

For example an evangelism team may say they have a goal to increase the number events for reaching unchurched people. In order to make this a SMART goal they could say "By September 2008 we want to have planned and executed 5 events for reaching unchurched people." For each goal developed, ask if it is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-related.



### Brainstorming with Post-it Notes

Once the team has a clear goal, they need to develop action steps to reach that goal. In order to do this, have a large poster board or newsprint available. You will also need to purchase Post-it™ notes of at least two colors.

Begin by having the team brainstorm a list of major milestones needed to accomplish their stated goal. Write each milestone on a bold colored Post-it™ note and put it on the board. It doesn't matter if they are in order at this point. When the team feels they have articulated all the milestones ask the team to arrange them in a time-oriented sequence order across the board.

Next ask the team to brainstorm all the action steps needed to reach each of those milestones. Write each action step on a Post-it™ note of a contrasting color and post it under the associated milestone. Review what you have created. Look for missing action steps, look at the sequence of milestones and action steps. Rearrange the Post-it™ notes as needed.

This will create your basic plan. However to complete the plan, you will need to decide on a timeline which takes into account the milestones and action steps. Write the dates for accomplishment on the board or on the milestone Post-it™ note. Finally, you will also need to decide who will be responsible for each milestone.

The team now has an action plan developed with the what (goal), how (action steps), when (dates) and who (people responsible) to accomplish their objective.

Proverbs 16:9 says that although we develop our plans it's the Lord who directs our steps. Take some time with the team to submit your plans to the Lord and ask him to direct your steps.

*Jeannette Buller Slater has been a coach since 1984. She offers executive coaching for pastors and church planters through [www.CoachingPastors.com](http://www.CoachingPastors.com)*