



# SAGA: Strategic Approach to Goal Achievement

## A Proactive Business Process

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## Introduction

Strategic Approach to Goal Achievement (SAGA) is a proactive business approach that defines a clear, concise, and straight forward process to set up business goals and the method to achieve them.

SAGA provides a formal, standardized approach to optimize the application of business knowledge in a proactive fashion that can minimize risk, maximize cost effectiveness, and enable management decision support.

## Overview

The main objective of SAGA is to maximize the probability of achieving business goals in the “real world” without failure.

Typically, business management has a perspective that includes the following 3 goals:

- 1) Achievement of goals after a realistic selection of goals is made.
- 2) Achievement of goals by strategy.
- 3) Strategy is developed by applying knowledge and best practices

The objective of SAGA is to determine realistic goals of the organization, proactively determine what needs to be done to achieve those goals, and align the achievement of those goals to a set of realistic alternatives and tasks.

## The SAGA Approach

- 1) **Set Up Goals**  
Ensure that the goals can be achieved in the real world without failure.
- 2) **Examine the Situation**  
Examine the environment for the following 3 areas:
  - a) Internal – at whatever level is appropriate to focus on such as group, department, division, or organization. Typically this comprises the following; Financial, Marketing, Operations, and Management.
  - b) External – for anything that is outside of the internal. These are areas for which your organization has no control over. Typically this comprises the following; Economic, Political, Social, and Technical.

- c) Interface – other outside organization goals and strategies and how they impact the achievement of your organization's goals.

### 3) **Analyze the Situation**

Utilize whatever appropriate best practice analysis methods are available and required.

Supplemental to typical analysis methods consider the following:

- a) The organizational "culture" consisting of the *values* of the organization, i.e. what the organization considers "right" and "wrong". The organization's *perspective* of the external world and how it works. Lastly, consider the organization's *self-image*, i.e. how the organization views itself and relates to the external world.
- b) Situations very seldom just happen suddenly, they build up over time. The following factors are important when analyzing the structure of the situation:
  - The most important element in a situation is the person analyzing it. Their perception plays a critical role in what determining the perceived findings and alternative outcomes.
  - The boundaries of the situation are not "world wide" but should be practical and realistic.
  - The internal structure of the situation within the boundaries is the person(s) analyzing it and the organization including the financial, marketing, operations, and management resources.
  - The external structure is everything that is outside of the internal structure and out of the control of the organization. This includes factors such as economic, political, social, and technical.
  - The interface environment is the effects that other groups and organizations have on the ability of your organization to reach its goals

### 4) **Synthesis of the Situation**

Once analysis findings and alternative outcomes have been determined they must be applied to accomplish something. On occasion, the analysis of a situation is too lengthy or too extensive in scope and the findings are never applied to addressing or solving the situation that is being analyzed.

By nature analysis is a reactive process. It focuses on historical information and experiences. Conversely, synthesis is proactive. The

synthesis process is the application of the knowledge of the person(s) performing the analysis to determine some future desired state and the roadmap to achieve it.

#### 5) **Develop Futures and Forecasts**

During and after the synthesis process, determine where the strategic direction of the situation. Developing futures and forecasts involves predicting what the future state will be and how it will affect the strategy that will be employed to achieve your organization's goals.

Developing futures and forecasts will result in a definitive set of strategic alternatives. These alternatives will be defined such that given a strategic direction they will optimize your organization's ability to achieve its goals in a predicted future state.

#### 6) **Selection of Strategic Alternatives**

Evaluate the alternatives based on:

- a) Likelihood of success
- b) Expected cost
- c) Anticipated benefit
- d) Risks involved
- e) How long it would take to implement
- f) The amount of resources required
- g) The level of expertise required
- h) The options available with this alternative
- i) The expected level of acceptance

It should be noted that developing alternatives is not an analytical process but a creative one. Frequently "brainstorming" is employed as being an appropriate method. This is also a proactive process in which knowledge is applied to current and future strategic outcome predictions and how those could be enhanced to achieve your organization's goals.

#### 7) **Choose the Best Strategic Alternative**

Make the strategic choice based on the evaluation of all the possible alternatives using the above criteria.

#### 8) **Implementation of the Strategic Alternative**

This includes but is not limited to the following steps:

- a) Define and develop Key Tasks

- b) Accomplishment of the Key Tasks that have been defined and developed  
Assignment of Key Resources to accomplish the Key Tasks
- c) Align the organization to synchronize and relate the Key Personnel resources that have been assigned to accomplished the Key Tasks
- d) Set up for Feedback needed for input back into the implementation so that it can accommodate any necessary changes in strategic direction
- e) Evaluate the Feedback to determine if the implementation is progressing toward the organizational goals. If not, then reevaluate those criteria involved in the Selection of the Strategic Alternative. Then decide if the organization and strategic is adaptable or if the strategy should be abandoned.

## Levels of Acceptance and Influence

The following is supplemental information appropriate to critical success factors concerning the SAGA approach:

- 1) The role of the leader is to develop the strategy and manage the implementation of it
- 2) Approximately 30% of those impacted by the strategy within the organization will reject it and 70% will accept
- 3) Coordination, cooperation, commitment, communication are critical to the success of implementing the strategy
- 4) Feedback and status checkpoints are critical to the success of implementing the strategy so that correctional actions could be taken to modify and enhance strategic direction as required