



**Acadia Centre for  
Social & Business  
Entrepreneurship**

**ACSBE**

**Strategic Plan**  
updated 2011 - 2012



# Table of Contents

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- Table of Contents.....2**
- Executive Summary.....3**
- Part 1: Organizational Context.....4**
  - Governance Model and Role of the Board ..... 4
  - Organizational Structure..... 5
- Part 2: Strategic Plan.....7**
  - ACBSE’s Vision..... 7
  - ACSBE’s Mission ..... 7
  - Core Values and Guiding Principles ..... 7
  - Strategic Goals ..... 9
  - Operational Goals ..... 14
- Appendix A: ACSBE’s Decision Making Cycle .....16**

# Executive Summary

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The Acadia Centre for Social and Business Entrepreneurship (ACSBE) is a non-profit affiliate of Acadia University that was originally founded in 1988 as part of a consortium of four Atlantic Canadian University Business Development Centres. The Centre has evolved over the years from a single purpose provider of small business advisory services to a full service provider of career and entrepreneurial development programs for individuals, businesses, non-profit organizations and business development professionals.

ACSBE's vision is ***a culture where people take initiative to fulfill their potential to create a better world***, and its mission is ***to create an entrepreneurial culture, locally and globally, by being a leader in the development and delivery of entrepreneurial resources, programs and services***.

All of ACSBE's programming is based on the belief that an individual's personal vision is the driving force for attaining growth. ACSBE's *Entrepreneurial Decision-Making Cycle* is the foundation of the Centre's programming and is a natural, logical approach used to help individuals reach an informed decision and achieve success. The entrepreneurial decision-making process is based on the Centre's definition of entrepreneurship:

- Entrepreneurship is the ability to make an informed decision and take responsibility for the consequences of the action emanating from that decision (Risk Taking).
- An entrepreneurial person possesses certain skill sets such as being creative and innovative, and additionally, to be successful they are responsible, organized, and resourceful persons. Regarding attitude, s/he is opportunistic, perseveres and possesses a need to achieve and look for constant change.
- Entrepreneurial skills may be manifested in governments, businesses, or everyday societies and normally create change and betterment.

The Centre is dedicated to the development of entrepreneurial skills, characteristics and aptitudes resulting in: a) entrepreneurial graduates from Acadia University, b) a more entrepreneurial culture in the Central Southwest region of Nova Scotia, and c) a higher level of professional and counselling capability by entrepreneurial counsellors and educators across Canada and internationally.

ACSBE is determined to enhance its relationship with Acadia University, and has done so by incorporating specific strategies into each of ACSBE's program delivery goals. ACSBE seeks to build stronger and more meaningful relationships with faculty members and staff whose passion mirrors those of ACSBE's constituents, and to serve as a conduit between the University and the community.

In February 2009, the ACSBE Board approved a three year Strategic Plan (2009-2012). The Board undertakes strategic analysis and discussion on a regular basis, and the Strategic Plan itself is updated on an annual basis. The following document outlines ACSBE's Strategic Plan for 2011-2012.

# Part 1: Organizational Context

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## Governance Model and Role of the Board

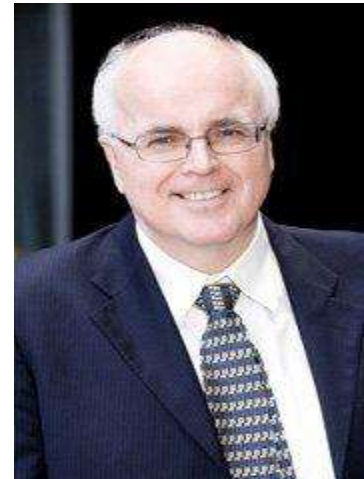
ACSBE operates under the direction of a volunteer board of directors using the *Policy Governance* model. The role of the Board includes the development and approval of the strategic plan and budget, and the establishment of policy and direction.

Current members of the Executive Committee are as follows:

- Fred Morley, Board Chair
- Tom Herman, Vice-President
- Jake Rideout, Secretary

In addition to the Executive Committee there are 3 committees that report directly to the Board of Directors:

1. The Audit Review and Financial Policy Committee
2. The Human Resources Policy Committee
3. The Nominating Committee



*Fred Morley, Board Chair*

The Board is composed of 12 members who are appointed to three-year terms. Succession requirements of the board are met through rotational and staggered board membership terms and the active participation of the nomination committee. The current board composition is as follows:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Dr. Tom Herman	Board of Governors, Acadia University
Dr. Heather Hemming	Academic Administration – Acadia University
Dr. Brian Vanblarcom	Faculty – Acadia University
Dr. Peter Williams	Faculty – Acadia University
Dr. Jim Grant	Faculty – Acadia University
Jake Rideout	Student – Acadia University
Fred Morley (Chair)	Community with experience in Professional Development
Don Bureaux	Community with experience in Education
Vacancy	Community with experience in International
Ben Wiper	Community with experience in Business Development
Findlay MacRae	Community with experience in Community Development
David McNamara	Community with experience in Commercialization

In addition to regular board members the centre also benefits from the advice and direction of a group of external advisors including:

## Advisor

Carly Campbell  
Marjorie Davison  
Stephen Kerr  
Leigh Huestis  
Margo Tait  
Chris Bryant

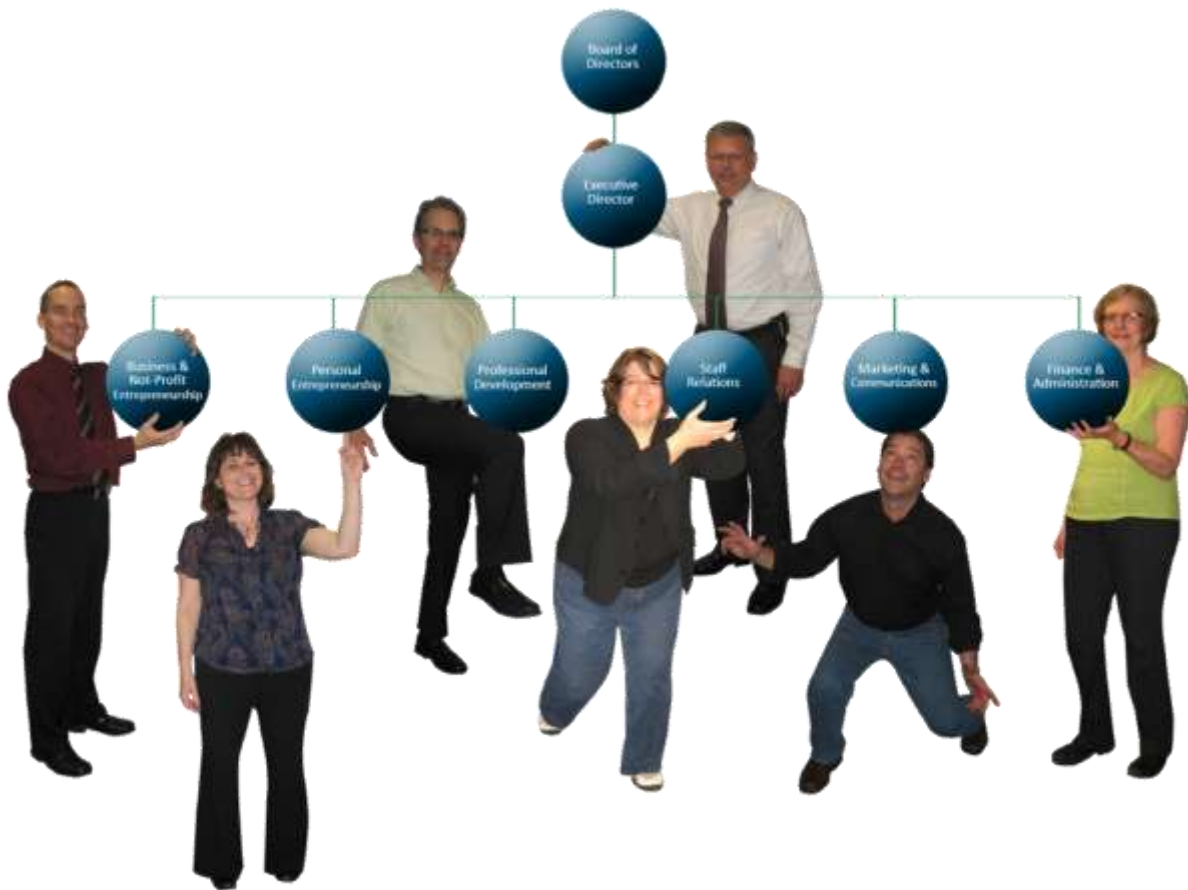
## Representing

Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency  
NS Department of Labour & Workforce Development  
Kings Regional Development Authority  
Acadia University Office of Industry & Community Engagement  
Annapolis Valley Regional School Board  
Office of Policy and Priorities, NS Government

## Organizational Structure

The policy governance model clearly establishes the reporting relationship between the Board, Executive Director and staff. This relationship dictates that the Executive Director is solely responsible to the Board for the management of the centre and is the only staff member to report directly to and receive direction from the Board.

The senior structure is shown in the following organization chart.



# May 2011: ACSBE Strategic Plan

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The following is a brief description of each of the key business units at ACSBE.

## Personal Entrepreneurship

ACSBE delivers quality programming to individuals who are motivated to take an entrepreneurial approach to career and life decisions. Programming is offered through self-help resources, one-on-one counselling, workshops and hands-on experiential learning, and is based on ACSBE's "Philosophy" and the Entrepreneurial Decision Making Cycle. Individuals engaged in ACSBE programming will be better prepared to make informed career, business, education and life decisions.

## Business and Non-Profit Entrepreneurship

ACSBE's clients pursue their vision and passion in two ways. Our *small business* clients work directly with skilled ACSBE staff to achieve their personal vision resulting in growing a better and more profitable business. They know they can count on ACSBE to provide trusted business consulting, one-on-one business counselling, and first class business training. Our *non-profit* clients engage ACSBE to support them as they grow their social cause through their non-profit or community groups. They look to ACSBE for support in strategic planning, adopting responsible management practices, and remaining competitive in the marketplace.

## Professional Development

ACSBE offers a range of products and services that provide business development professionals – the people who provide support and guidance to entrepreneurs – with valuable skills and tools using ACSBE's Entrepreneurial Decision Making Cycle to help their clients' businesses grow and thrive.

Program delivery includes:

- Modular, online courses
- Focused 1- and 2-day residential workshops
- APEC Training and Certification Program for Small Business Counsellors
- Custom training and consulting services

## Finance and Administration

ACSBE strives to create a sustainable financial environment that will allow the organization to be innovative and grow. To do this, we ensure the effective and efficient administration of all financial controls within the organization including all contracts. The preparation and analysis of financial statements on a monthly basis provides the due diligence required for effective financial stability. ACSBE strives to diversify its revenue sources, allocate resources effectively, control expenses and develop appropriate fiscal policies.

## Marketing and Communications

ACSBE strives to raise awareness of ACSBE's philosophy and programs at Acadia University and throughout the community, locally and globally. It is the responsibility of Marketing and Communications to create meaningful messages through words, ideas, and images that convey the overall perceptions about ACSBE (Our Brand). Furthermore, Marketing & Communications is responsible

# May 2011: ACSBE Strategic Plan

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for ensuring that these messages and images are delivered consistently, by every member of the organization. Key areas of focus are:

- Consultation and planning support for ACSBE programs
- Print and web design, development of publications and marketing materials
- Writing and editing assistance and general editorial guidance for select written and electronic publications; leadership role in communications
- Website planning, design and development
- Photography/Video

## Staff Relations

ACSBE provides a rewarding and satisfying work experience for all staff. ACSBE strives to have a motivated staff whose values and philosophy are congruent with those of the organization. ACSBE provides professional development to ensure that all ACSBE programming and services meet client expectations.

# Part 2: Strategic Plan

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## ACSBE's Vision

**A culture where people take initiative to fulfill their potential to create a better world.**

## ACSBE's Mission

**ACSBE creates an entrepreneurial culture, locally and globally, by being a leader in the development and delivery of entrepreneurial resources, programs and services.**

## Core Values and Guiding Principles

**Core values** are the essential and enduring common beliefs of an organization. Core values require no external justification; they have *intrinsic* value and importance to those inside the organization. The core values of an organization are a mixture of the values of the individual team members and the values embodied in the culture of the organization. Organizational core values exist in relation to clients/customers, employees, the community, and any other relevant stakeholders.

**Guiding principles** are the basis upon which organizations decide on policies, priorities, and programming. They help drive the establishment of goals, objectives, and action plans.

## Core Values

**Entrepreneurship** – is a life skill, which includes innovation, informed decision-making, taking initiative, risk-taking, responsibility and leadership – within our organization and in our various communities

**Education** – that is experiential, innovative and entrepreneurial

**Inclusiveness** – equity, openness, social justice, diversity

**Respect** - respecting individual and community values

**Collaboration** – partnership, the commitment of others, and the contribution of all

**Professionalism** – ethical behaviour

**Personalized approach** – being responsive to each client’s needs

**Accountability** – to our stakeholders

**Servant Leadership** – leading by serving, empowerment

## Guiding Principles

1. ACSBE’s interpretation of entrepreneurship as a set of life skills and characteristics that are applicable to a variety of business, social, community, and educational situations is fundamental to understanding ACSBE and its programs. The word entrepreneurship does not appear in either the vision or the mission statements as both implicitly encompass its meaning. ACSBE’s concept of entrepreneurship is included in the set of core values and all branding is linked to that holistic concept.
2. ACSBE recognizes the importance of the organization’s relationship with Acadia University and the interdependency of the two institutions. This interdependency refers to the relationship between the institutions as well as the relationship of both to the external community. It is expected that a mutually beneficial affiliation will continue to exist and grow, and all branding should recognize the inherent connection between the two.
3. The centre serves three distinct but interrelated constituencies: Acadia, Local (Central Southwest region of Hants, Kings, Lunenburg, with incremental programming in Queens, Annapolis, and HRM), and Global (geographically beyond central Southwest Nova Scotia). There exists an interdependent and reciprocal relationship among these three constituencies and all three are integrated. ACSBE’s main focus is to create an entrepreneurial culture at Acadia University and in the local constituency with equal priority.

## May 2011: ACSBE Strategic Plan

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4. ACSBE operates on the premise that it can best achieve its vision and mission by working in conjunction with Acadia University and community partners. To this end all program development and delivery will be aimed at:
  - a. Creating an entrepreneurial culture by enhancing the relevancy of entrepreneurship to Acadia University and encouraging Acadia University to be relevant to entrepreneurship in the community.
  - b. Fully engaging our stakeholders and clients and contribute directly to the economic development strategies of our partners
5. ACSBE, as a leader in entrepreneurial education and development, advocates for enhanced entrepreneurial programming in education and community development. To this end ACSBE will advocate by example, through impact reports, and by engaging decision makers and policy makers in dialogue when opportunities arise.

### Strategic Goals

Strategic goals are an organization's articulation of its top-tier priorities. These goals and their accompanying strategies are focused on allowing the organization to make a maximum contribution to ACSBE's vision and mission. Below each Strategic and Operational Goal are specific strategies and objectives measurement criteria:

#### **Strategic Goal #1: Instil an entrepreneurial approach to decision making for individuals, groups and organizations.**

*Strategy 1: To establish reciprocal relationships with faculty and staff at Acadia University who share the objective of helping individuals to reach their entrepreneurial potential.*

Objectives:

- Engage with four faculty and/or staff to develop partnership opportunities
- Integrate two ACSBE programs into Acadia University (Leadership program, Career Services)
- Provide opportunities for Acadia Faculty / Staff / Students to participate in or integrate research into ACSBE programming

*Strategy 2: Develop and deliver Entrepreneurial programming to priority groups who face barriers to advancement.*

Objectives:

- Partner with key stakeholders to deliver two Older Worker programs
  - Provide programming for 30 Older Workers

## May 2011: ACSBE Strategic Plan

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- Partner with key stakeholders to deliver two Youth Access Programs
  - Provide programming for 30 Youth with Barriers to employment
- Provide programs for up to 40 individuals who are connected with the Department of Community Services
- 95% of program participants will have made informed decisions as a result of their ACSBE intervention

### *Strategy 3: Provide programs and services to individuals who are exploring new opportunities related to employment and entrepreneurship.*

#### Objectives:

- 300 individuals will access ACSBE's resources through workshops, self-help services and phone/email inquires
- 100 individuals will receive enhanced services through counselling using ACSBE's Entrepreneurial Decision Making Cycle
- 60 individuals will investigate self-employment as a career option
- 20 individuals will start a business
- 95% of surveyed individuals will report that they have made an informed decision as a result of their ACSBE intervention

### *Strategy 4: Partner with like-minded stakeholders to achieve mutual strategic priorities related to Employment and Entrepreneurship.*

#### Objectives:

- Three programs delivered jointly with key stakeholders
- 20 individuals exposed to ACSBE's philosophy and Entrepreneurial Decision Making Cycle
- 95% of surveyed individuals will report that they have made an informed decision as a result of their ACSBE intervention

### **Strategic Goal #2: For small and medium-sized private enterprises to grow in alignment with the passions, interests, and desires of the lead entrepreneur.**

*Strategy 1: To establish reciprocal relationships with faculty and staff at Acadia University in the areas of consulting, research and impact studies related to business development.*

Objectives:

- Engage faculty and/or staff in five ACSBE projects
- Engage four faculty and/or staff in ACSBE projects
- Engage five students in ACSBE projects

*Strategy 2: Expose each new client to the ACSBE Decision Making Cycle resulting in overall increase in alignment of their personal vision and business vision*

Objectives:

- Partner with key stakeholders to provide business growth counselling or workshops to 200 entrepreneurs/SME's
- Five entrepreneurs/SME's will utilize Business Consulting Services
- 95% of entrepreneurs will indicated and overall increase in alignment of their personal vision and business vision

*Strategy 3: Entrepreneurs/SMEs report an increase in profits and/or job creation, directly resulting from ACSBE's support.*

Objectives:

- Partner with key stakeholders to deliver leadership/opportunity development programming to 40 entrepreneurs/SME's
- 10 entrepreneurs/SME's will utilize Business Consulting Services (Business Plans, Feasibility Plans, Marketing Studies)
- 80% of entrepreneurs/SME's indicate an overall increase in profits for their business
- 50% of entrepreneurs/SME's indicate an overall increase in number of jobs in their business

*Strategy 4: Entrepreneurs/SMEs report that they are more efficient, productive, and satisfied in their businesses through the effective use of technology and the Internet.*

Objectives:

- Partner with key stakeholders to deliver programming to 15 entrepreneurs/SME's to grow their business using technology
- 10 entrepreneurs/SME will increases their use of technology in their businesses

## May 2011: ACSBE Strategic Plan

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- 10 entrepreneurs/SME will increase profits using technology in their business
- 80% indicated an increase in efficiency/productivity in their business by effective use of technology

### **Strategic Goal #3: For non-profit and social enterprises increase their social impact on their constituents by utilizing ACSBE's strategic planning cycle and definition of entrepreneurship.**

*Strategy 1: To establish reciprocal relationships with faculty and staff at Acadia University in the areas of consulting, research and impact studies related to non-profit and social enterprise development.*

Objectives:

- Engage faculty and/or staff in five ACSBE projects
- Engage two faculty and/or staff in ACSBE projects
- Engage four students in ACSBE projects

*Strategy 2: Deliver programming and services that will enable non-profits and social enterprises to have a greater social impact on their constituents.*

Objectives:

- Five non-profits and social enterprises taking part in ACSBE programming and or services
- 95% of non-profits and social enterprises indicating they have generated a greater social impact

*Strategy 3: That non-profit organizations report an increased likelihood of diversifying their revenue sources by establishing or growing a social enterprise.*

Objectives:

- Five non-profit and social enterprise organizations will utilize ACSBE's Strategic Planning services
- Five non-profit organizations will participate in High Potential Non-Profits and Enterprising Non-Profit programs
- 95% will indicate they have diversified their revenue

### **Strategic Goal #4: Make a positive impact in the professional effectiveness of Canadian business development professionals.**

*Strategy 1: To engage the faculty and staff at Acadia University in the development and delivery of ACSBE's professional development programming.*

Objectives:

- Five current products reviewed by Acadia faculty members
- Two new products developed in consultation with Acadia faculty members
- Two faculty engaged in the delivery of ACSBE Professional Development
- Three new product offerings jointly launched with Open Acadia

*Strategy 2: Provide training to business development professionals and Acadia students to enhance their professional knowledge, skills and attitudes.*

Objectives:

- Train 800 business development professionals
- Train 20 Acadia students in ACSBE's entrepreneurial development approach
- 100% will indicate they have enhanced their professional knowledge, skills and attitudes

*Strategy 3: Provide a range of simple, effective tools and resources to business development professionals to enhance their professional effectiveness.*

Objectives:

- 200 ACSBE publication customers
- 100% positive customer feedback on ACSBE publications

*Strategy 4: Create and maintain an online community for business development professionals to network, share ideas and resources, and solve problems.*

Objectives:

- 200 community members
- 100% positive feedback about network

## Operational Goals

### Operational Goal #1: For key stakeholders at Acadia, locally and globally to be aware of ACSBE's Entrepreneurial Decision Making Cycle

#### *Strategy 1: Disseminate ACSBE's message throughout Acadia University*

##### Objectives:

- Ensure that ACSBE representatives have six speaking engagements on campus to promote ACSBE's philosophy
- Communicate with the campus community on a monthly basis via electronic media
- Survey Acadia community on awareness of ACSBE philosophy

#### *Strategy 2: Increase traffic to web site*

##### Objectives:

- Through Google Analytics and Website (Joomla) traffic analysis, determine:
  - which pages of our website are most (or least) popular
  - how customers are finding our site through the search engines
  - track online/offline promotions
  - where visitors are coming from
  - search words used to find ACSBE's site
- Weekly e-newsletter
  - send to 3500 recipients
  - reduce bounce-backs from 19% to 5%
  - increase opens from 21% to 50%
  - opt outs .3%
  - increase click-throughs from 16% to 32%
- Reciprocal links/partnering with 12 organizations

#### *Strategy 3: To encourage dialogue/feedback from clients/stakeholders:*

##### Objectives:

- Increase Facebook followers from 241 to 400
- Increase YouTube videos from 10 to 36
- 12 Public Speaking engagements to promote ACSBE's philosophy
- 12 Client Testimonials

## **Operational Goal #2: To have a professional and motivated staff.**

### *Strategy 1: Establish a standard professional skill set for all staff positions.*

Objectives:

- Review current job descriptions to establish professional skills list by position by October, 2011
- Identify a system by which skills gaps among staff can be identified and opportunities provided to fill these gaps through in-house and purchased training, facilitation, conference attendance, work assignments, mentorship or resource purchases.

### *Strategy 2: Achieve 100% staff satisfaction*

Objectives:

- Establish a model to measure staff satisfaction and motivation by July 31, 2011
- Coordinate four yearly motivational activities for centre staff
- Survey 100% of staff twice per year

## **Operational Goal #3: To ensure a financially sustainable organization that can innovate, grow and be entrepreneurial.**

### *Strategy 1: To maintain ACSBE's Board mandated restricted contingency fund.*

Objective:

- Maintain a restricted contingency fund balance of \$200,000

### *Strategy 2: To establish a special projects fund to support initiatives that are mission related where traditional funding may not be available*

Objective:

- Build an unrestricted special projects fund equal to 2.5% of annual gross revenues

### *Strategy 3: Develop a revenue diversification strategy that will lessen ACSBE's dependence on government contracts*

Objective:

- Increase fee for service revenue from 25% (2010) of total revenue to 50% of total revenue

## Appendix A: ACSBE's Decision Making Cycle

All of ACSBE's programming is based on the belief that an individual's personal vision is the driving force for attaining growth. The Entrepreneurial Decision-Making Cycle is the foundation of the Centre's programming and is a natural, logical approach used to help individuals reach an informed decision and achieve success. This process can be applied by individuals in defining occupational strategies, creating ventures such as businesses and not-for-profit organizations. This process can be used by organizations to define corporate and human resources strategies by maximizing employee potential. It can be used by communities to define economic, educational, and recreational strategies. One can follow the process in order, or choose to start at any point along the way. The important part is to consider each step in the cycle before making a final decision and to use the process thought, action and reflection. This reflection provides a continual focus on the achievement of the vision and is designed to ensure that focus and necessary adjustments in plans are made.

