ASTM International Manual for Development and Implementation of Strategic Plans

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Contents

Preface

ASTM International has prepared this document to help ASTM Technical Committees with the development of individual strategic planning activities.

The purpose of ASTM International is to assist in the development of standards appropriate for use throughout industry and business. To be proactive in the development of standards in a timely fashion, it is necessary for technical committees to project requirements for future standards, establish appropriate subcommittees, and attract individuals to participate.

As a society, ASTM International considers it important for all technical committees to develop strategic plans. This document is intended to be a guide for ASTM Technical Committees to establish and implement realistic strategic plans.

Introduction

Strategic planning is one of the most important activities carried out by ASTM Technical Committees.

The standards developed by technical committees are the key products and reason for existence. Strategic planning is a process that maximizes the committee's productivity to develop relevant and timely standards. Without adequate planning, the time committed by members may not be utilized efficiently.

Many people consider the idea of strategic planning intimidating. They are not convinced the investment of time and energy will be worthwhile and are hesitant to initiate such a process. A good committee plan provides guidance and direction to committee activities and results in increased efficiency and productivity. Strategic planning directs action toward a desired and forecasted result. It reinforces the assets and attributes of the committee, making it progressively stronger.

This manual describes a process for strategic planning. The usefulness of a plan depends upon the effort and dedication of those individuals who actually develop it, how well it is formulated and implemented, and how often it is reviewed and revised.

Strategic planning is not simply a one-time process. A committee's plan must be a dynamic document. As new technologies emerge, the committees must keep step with such developments, and their strategic plans must prepare them to meet the evolving need for new standards.

Section 1: Surveying Current Status and Needs

Status

One of the most important components of a committee's planning is an initial evaluation of its past and current activities. From the evaluation, the committee should identify its strengths and weaknesses and determine its needs. Using this information, the committee may develop a plan for future action.

The evaluation of the committee's past and current activities should include a thorough review of all aspects of its structure and operation including scope, organization, personnel, fiscal resources, relationships with other ASTM activities, existing and proposed standards, plans, and accomplishments. The scope should clearly and concisely define the committee's purpose. The organizational structure should provide the appropriate framework for the committee's efficient operation. Committee membership should actively represent the appropriate areas of science, engineering and technology, and consist of a cross-section of government, academia, and the private sector. Present and future leaders should display a personal commitment to the activities of the committee and provide vigorous leadership. Fiscal support should be adequate for the committee's work. A committee's internal and external relationships should support and enhance its productivity. Existing and proposed standards should reflect the needs of the technical community. Plans and accomplishments should be consistent with the committee's scope and objectives.

Strengths

The strengths of a committee are those areas of its structure and operation which receive high evaluations in the review process. Strengths are used as the basis for future planning and development by the committee.

Weaknesses

The weaknesses of a committee are those areas of its structure and operation which receive low evaluations in the review process. Weaknesses are targets for corrective action in future planning and development by the committee.

Needs

The needs of a committee must be met to overcome its deficiencies, initiate corrective actions, build on its strengths, and fulfill its purpose.

Section 2: Identifying Future Directions and Needs

Identification

The committee's evaluation of its status and needs will identify future directions and needs which must be considered and addressed in its strategic plans. The committee must also identify new and emerging technologies which impact its activities and the changing needs of the community it serves.

Range

The committee should evaluate the future directions and needs to determine if they are within its scope, if they are within the scope of another committee, if the current scope must be expanded, or if joint activity with another committee is needed.

New Work

The committee should determine whether the future directions and needs will require a new activity or an extension of an existing activity.

Evaluation

The committee should examine its strengths and weaknesses to determine whether its current structure and operation are capable of sustaining the new activity.

Resources

The committee should examine its current resources (personnel, facilities, finances) to determine whether they are sufficient to support the new activity.

Planning

Plans for future directions and needs should include appropriate actions to address the findings of the tasks conducted in this section. The necessary actions include defining objectives, and developing and achieving goals, as described in Sections 3, 4, and 5.

Section 3: Defining Objectives and Assigning Priorities

Identifying the Objective
Identify the committee's strengths and recognize those areas where improvements are necessary. Sort those areas in need of improvement and the committee's future direction into major categories by their common overall purpose. These categories are called OBJECTIVES.

Objective Statement
Develop a statement that includes a clearly defined purpose measured in an achievable time schedule. If applicable, quantitative measurements are useful when developing objective statements.

Example

The objective statement may be worded as follows:
"To develop standards for the design, manufacture, performance, and operation of Shipboard Incinerators for adoption by the International Maritime Organization (IMO)."

Priorities
When the committee identifies multiple objectives, it is necessary to set priorities on the basis of that committee's needs and available resources, and by separating the objectives into "musts" and "shoulds." Some committees may be able to accomplish more than one objective at the same time, while others may need to achieve one objective before starting the next.

Section 4: Developing Goals to Meet Objectives

Goals

Once a committee prepares its objective statements, the next task is to develop goals to achieve each objective. The areas in need of improvement, as well as future directions, become the basis for identifying discrete goals to accomplish the objective.

Goal

Develop a statement for each goal that includes a clearly defined purpose measured in a specific time period. Multiple goals may be required to meet a particular objective.

Example

Section 3 gave an example of a committee's objective statement as:

"To develop standards for the design, manufacture, performance, and operation of Shipboard Incinerators for adoption by the International Maritime Organization (IMO)."

The committee determined three goals aimed at achieving its objective:

(1) Obtain support/participation of IMO personnel,
(2) Gain participation of key industry stakeholders, and
(3) Prioritize standards needed.

Goal statements and target dates could be established and worded as follows:

Goal	Statement	Target Date
1	Obtain support/participation of IMO personnel	2 months
2	Gain participation of key industry stakeholders	2 months
3	Prioritize standards needed	1 month

Section 5: Achieving Goals

Implementation

After a committee has developed its objective statements and established goals to achieve its objectives, it proceeds to identify the implementation tasks for each goal. Establishing a plan to achieve each goal is essential to enable the committee to determine the required effort, the timing of that effort, the available resources, and the assignment of responsibilities.

Integration

Integration of the planning function is vital to achieving goals and objectives. Coordinate each plan to efficiently utilize available resources. The time period allotted to accomplish each goal must be organized into concurrent tasks. The requirements for additional resources must also be considered.

Example

Section 3 gives an example of Goal No. 1 as:

"To develop standards for the design, manufacture, performance, and operation of Shipboard Incinerators for adoption by the International Maritime Organization (IMO)."

In order to accomplish this goal, the committee may lay out tasks and establish target dates:

	Task	Target Date
A	Assign responsibility	MM/YY
B	Identify IMO contacts	MM/YY
C	Prioritize standards needed	1 month
D	Assign responsibility	MM/YY
E	Identify IMO contacts	MM/YY

Integration in this example involves the coordination of the committee's resources and the utilization of ASTM Staff. Planning, scheduling, and promotion require integration for successful achievement of the committee's objective.

The integration process may reveal that the committee does not have the resources to accomplish an objective by the target date originally selected. This would necessitate changing the target dates for completion of one or more of the individual tasks within the goals for that objective. In the process of integration there may be other benefits not immediately identifiable that can only be determined when the complete coordination effort is reviewed.

Section 6: Measuring Progress

Evaluation

Measuring progress in the execution of strategic plans consists of regular reviews and evaluations. The reviews should address objectives, goals, tasks, and target dates. Evaluations should determine whether the execution of the plan is producing the necessary accomplishments in the expected time frame. These regular reviews and evaluations are necessary to determine if the objectives are consistent with the scope, directions, and needs of the committee, and if progress toward meeting the objectives is on schedule. If needed, appropriate, corrective actions should be identified and implemented.

Revisions

After the measurement process is completed, the committee may find it necessary to revise the strategic plan by modifying objectives and goals, changing implementation procedures, or altering schedules. Proposed revisions to a plan should follow the same process of coordination and integration that was used in its original preparation.

Section 6: ASTM International Resources

Measuring progress in the execution of strategic plans consists of ASTM staff assistance is invaluable to committees developing and implementing their strategic plans. It is important to identify the available ASTM resources to define realistic objectives. In addition, the committee must coordinate their implementation tasks with ASTM Staff to efficiently utilize those resources.

The **ASTM Technical Committee Officer Handbook** contains a section on "Headquarters Assistance". This section lists the resources available to members, and the staff positions to contact for assistance. Please refer to page 5 of the **ASTM Technical Committee Officer Handbook** for more information.

Appendix X1: Committee Self-Evaluation

X1.1 Surveying Current Status and Needs
Organizational Review:

X1.1.1 How is the committee structured? Does this structure make maximum use of the time available at meetings? Are present traditional procedures adequate to meet the needs of merging technologies? Are all members being equally involved, or are 10 percent of the members doing 90 percent of the work?

X1.1.1.1 Efficacy (Ability to produce, revise, and maintain standards)
X1.1.1.1.1 What are your criteria to determine that the output of your committee is satisfactory?

X1.1.1.1.2 Interaction with other ASTM Committees, Government Regulatory and Procurement Agencies, and other related organizations --what ASTM committees, government regulatory agencies, and other related organizations (national and international) have similar, parallel, or related standards and standards activities? Have the committee officers attempted to secure participation of representatives of these groups in the activities of the committee? Have liaisons been established? If so, who are the committee's liaison representatives? Are these representatives doing an effective job? Should liaisons be established?

X1.1.1.1.3 Would reorganization, restructuring, or merger improve your ability to produce standards? If so, explain.

X1.1.1.2 Efficiency -- How long does it take the committee to produce a draft standard? Are standards being developed within a reasonable and satisfactory time frame?

X1.1.1.3 Effectiveness -- How are the committee's standards being used in the marketplace? How are these standards being received by the organizations the committee is trying to impact? Does the committee meet the needs of the business and technical community?

X1.1.1.3.1 Encouragement of Use of Standards -- Do your members promote the use of the committee's standards? For example, do they keep their purchasing, marketing, and advertising departments as well as their customers, vendors, and suppliers informed of pertinent standards and their benefits?

X1.1.2 Specific Actions to Accomplish Goals

X1.1.2.1 Have the draft standards under development by each subcommittee been identified?

X1.1.2.2 What timetables have been established for completing the draft standards under development by each subcommittee?

X1.1.2.3 What is your editorial review policy? Does it ensure that timely reviews are undertaken before the final drafts of documents are submitted to subcommittee ballot?

X1.1.2.4 What plans does the committee have for sponsoring symposia to highlight emerging technologies? How will the output of these symposia be utilized to advance the committee's standards efforts?

Evaluating Leadership:

X1.1.3 How does your committee evaluate the performance of its committee and subcommittee officers?

X1.1.3.1 Which officers are responsible for committee functions such as long range planning, publicity, awards, etc.?

X1.1.4 Identifying Future Leadership

X1.1.4.1 How are potential future committee leaders identified?

X1.1.4.2 How does your committee involve them in the important work?

X1.1.4.3 How does your committee motivate them to assume leadership responsibilities?

X1.1.5 Officer Training and Development

X1.1.5.1 How does your committee promote continuity and ensure the smooth transition of leadership?

X1.1.5.2 Have your officers participated in an ASTM Officers' Conference? Do they attend the training sessions offered at Committee Week meetings?

Membership:

X1.1.6 Are publicity releases being used to attract outside participation and membership? How are these being evaluated for effectiveness?

X1.1.6.1 Has the committee implemented a membership recruitment program?

X1.1.7 Training sessions for members are an aid to understanding ASTM and committee activities.

X1.1.7.1 Describe your committee training activities.

X1.1.7.2 How are training topics selected and presented?

X1.1.8 Participation

X1.1.8.1 How are members being challenged to stimulate active involvement in the committee's standards development process?

X1.1.8.2 Describe how new members and visitors are being involved in the committee's activities.

X1.1.8.3 What percentage of your members participate in round robin studies? What stimulus is the committee using to induce greater participation? What other non-ASTM resources, if any are being used, e.g., consultants, statisticians, third-party independent laboratories, supplier of reference materials, etc.?

X1.1.8.4 Support by Members' Employers -- The time allowed by employers for committee members to attend committee meetings, the funding by employers of members' travel and round robin studies, and the administrative assistance provided by employers are essential to the present and future health of the committee. Do the performance, productivity, and output of the committee justify employer support? What is the extent and range of time, travel, administrative support furnished by the members' employers? How many members support their attendance with personal funds and/or vacation time?

X1.1.9 Activity Recognition and Awards - Are the contributions of committee members being adequately recognized? What mechanisms are in place for presenting awards to deserving members (such as committee awards of appreciation)?

X1.2 Identifying Future Directions and Needs

This section highlights the need to anticipate changes and prepare for new developments. A planning horizon of five to seven years is recommended.

X1.2.1 New Technologies -- Identify emerging technologies and how these will impact the committee's activities, such as standards development, planned symposia, training programs, etc.

X1.2.2 Government Pressures -- Identify relevant regulatory and trade agencies, and determine if they are represented on the committee. If not, how to gain their participation.

X1.2.3 International Pressures -- Acceptance of U.S. product qualification in export trade. Needs of, and standards actions in, developing nations.

X1.2.4 Membership Growth -- Impact of business health on support of members'

ASTM activities. Competition of non-ASTM activities for members' time. Consider membership segments not now represented (students, trade groups, etc.).

X1.3 Defining Objectives
This section addresses the question "Where do we wish to go?"   Establish specific objectives to meet the anticipated changes and new developments identified previously. These objectives should be stated clearly and be both measurable and achievable within the planning horizon.

X1.3.1 Standards -- What and when needed? Who benefits from a given standard? Who pays for the consequences of a given standard?
X1.3.2 Workshops and Symposia -- What and when needed?
X1.3.3 Recruiting Retaining Members -- Talents required industries and organizations to be represented. Take a proactive approach.
X1.3.4 Membership Training -- Consider training for new members. Identify and encourage potential leaders. Give opportunity to show potential.

X1.4 Define Goals
This section addresses the question "How do we get there?"

X1.4.1 Committee Scope -- Is the committee scope adequate for future responsibilities? If not, revise.
X1.4.2 Committee Structure -- Is the committee structure adequate for future responsibilities? If not, reorganize.
X1.4.3 Membership -- Determine methods of recruitment to achieve goals. Define methods of membership training to achieve goals.
X1.4.4 Performance of Functions -- Develop techniques and approaches to improve performance.
X1.4.5 Interaction with Other Activity -- Develop techniques and approaches to maintain and/or improve interactions and liaisons with other ASTM committees, government agencies, and other related organizations (national and international).
X1.4.6 Coordination of Committee Activities -- Develop plans to integrate the workshop, symposia, and standards development activity of the committee.

Appendix X2: Sample Strategic Plan

ASTM International Committee E05 on Fire Standards
Long Range Strategic Plan June 2012

ASTM E05 Long Range Strategic Plan (June 2012)

Introduction

ASTM International is the foremost developer of voluntary consensus standards in an open forum for global consumption. It is important that E05 develop and maintain those standards that are useful to all users, including the fire engineering community. Thus, the following goals have been established to provide direction for the Committee.

Goals

1. Maintain and update existing fire standards, with emphasis on those most widely used.
A significant number of the fire test standards issued by ASTM Committee E05 are widely used to regulate materials, products, and assemblies used in construction, transportation and other uses. Committee E05 shall endeavor to keep these standards up-to-date to meet the needs of producers, users, and regulators.

2. Develop new fire standards for regulatory, quality control, product development, or research purposes.
ASTM Committee E05 provides balanced committees to develop new standards through a consensus process. New standards can be in prescriptive or performance based format. While not required for initial adoption, E05 shall strive to provide reproducibility and repeatability data for new test standards as quickly as possible and to maintain up to date precision and bias statements for all its test methods. Any individual is entitled to propose development of a new standard. Such a request would typically lead to the creation of a task group of interested individuals to assist the proponent further.

3. Develop and Maintain Standards to Meet and Anticipate Community Needs Related to Fire.
ASTM Committee E05 shall develop and maintain fire safety standards to meet and

anticipate community needs. Community needs related to fire are addressed by fire protection techniques; design of materials, products, or assemblies; and design and construction of buildings, vehicles or other objects. Any of these can be the subject of Committee E05 standards.

4. Coordinate with users and potential users of fire standards to ensure most efficient resolution of their need
ASTM Committee E05 shall remain alert to evolving global technologies and worldwide customer needs. The Committee encourages participation by all sectors of the fire community, including that of building code officials, the fire services and the fire research community.

Plan

A1. Maintain and update existing fire standards, with emphasis on those most widely used.

Recommendation 1.1: E05 Subcommittees are entitled to create and maintain Task Groups to develop and/or revise documents under its purview. Task Group membership is open to all. The Subcommittee chair shall appoint a technical contact person to chair the Task Group. A task group chair shall report on task group activities to their respective subcommittee, at every subcommittee meeting.

Recommendation 1.2: The Task Groups are encouraged to seek input from interested members of the public on their work product. The objective of such contacts is to elicit their input on experiences of using and improving ASTM standards and guides. It is encouraged that information on external input be included in the periodic reports to the Subcommittee.

Recommendation 1.3 Subcommittees are encouraged to identify fire research needs to update the fire test standards. Subcommittees are encouraged to work in consultation with the Research Executive with regard to their research needs.

A2. Develop new fire standards for regulatory, quality control, product development, and screening purposes.

Recommendation: Subcommittees are encouraged to consider developing consensus fire standards that involve simple, valid technology for regulatory, quality control, product development and screening purposes. . These standards need to address the needs of the market place as well as those of various potential users.

A3. Develop new fire standards which can provide data for fire safety engineering calculations.

Recommendation: It is incumbent on ASTM E05 to develop and maintain fire-test response standards to meet the needs of fire safety engineering, such as performance-based codes.

Sample Strategic Plan

ASTM International Committee A01 on Steel, Stainless Steel and Related Alloys Long Range Strategic Plan
November 2014

ASTM A01 Long Range Strategic Plan (November 2014)

I. Mission Statement: (Where we are)

ASTM International Committee A01 on Steel, Stainless Steel and Related Alloys is committed to the promotion of knowledge, the stimulation of research and the development of specifications, test methods, terminology, and other types of standards relating to cast or wrought steel, stainless steel, and related alloys. Peripheral activities (e.g. symposia, workshops, etc.) are directly related to this primary purpose. The mission of A01 is to satisfy customer needs by maintaining up to date standards for use anywhere worldwide.

II. Vision Statement: (Where we want to be)

Committee A01 will continue to strive to achieve recognition as the international authority and source for steel, stainless steel and related alloy standards. This involves developing and maintaining specific as well as generic standards for use by producers, users, and regulating organizations. A01 standards should become accepted on a global basis to facilitate international trade.

III. Strategic Plan: (How we get there)

Objective 1: To maintain or increase A01 membership at a level that permits the Committee and its Subcommittees to provide relevant and useful international standards to all individuals and organizations.

Goal A. Conduct A01 new member recruiting such that our membership ranks are sufficiently large in number and include an appropriate mix of members from all levels of experience in both the technical and standardization areas.

Action 1:   Solicit new members through advertising, press releases, events calendar and articles discussing consensus standards.

Action 2:   Solicit new student and faculty membership by approaching those educational institutions to develop and nurture an active interest in ASTM.

Action 3:   Encourage members who organize and participate in metalworking conferences and meetings to provide information about A01 and to solicit individuals to join A01.

Goal B. Increase participation of A01 members in all aspects of the standardization process; including meeting participation, standards preparation and ballot response.

Action 1:   More active promotion of the activities from each subcommittee of A01.

Goal C. Encourage continued employer support for members' participation in meeting and standards review.

Action1:   Inform members that letters of appreciation are available on request.

Action 2:   Stress on-line standards development forums and virtual meetings as a way to address travel issues in regards to employer support.

Objective 2: To generate and maintain standards that provide the steel community and their stakeholders a useful means to specify materials, to conduct accurate, standardized tests and examinations.

Goal A. Prepare and maintain standards that respond to current industry/user needs and priorities.

Action 1:   Invite key stakeholders and all those with an interest in a new work item to attend and contribute.

Action 2:   Request that Subcommittee chairpersons ask their membership for input and suggestions as to whom else should be notified of new work items and actively solicit those suggested for their involvement.

Objective 3: To maintain a long term plan for the A01 Committee by addressing both the administration and the technical expertise of the Main and Subcommittees.

Goal A. Be proactive in membership training.

Goal B. Provide feedback to ASTM to add tutorial content on the A01 website home page to help membership.

Goal C. Review the A01 organizational structure (current versus ideal) to determine if the structure is adequately meeting the administrative and technical objectives of the Main Committee and the technical Subcommittees.

Background: consider terms of office; job content.

Goal D. Regularly review membership for identifying and developing future A01 officers.

Goal E. Formally establish a mentoring program.

Goal F. Develop method(s) for improving A01 Officer and Subcommittee chairman performance.

>   Action 1:   Promote attendance to the Officers Training Workshop.

>   Action 2:   Continue to maintain open lines of communication between the officers, executive committee and subcommittee chairs.

Goal G. Conduct a biennial review of the Strategic Plan prior to the May meeting in odd numbered years.

Objective 4:   To obtain stakeholder feedback so that A01 can provide standards that satisfy specific needs of worldwide producers, users, and regulators of goods and services. In order to determine what these needs are and how well they have been satisfied, feedback is needed. Such feedback is obtained through the A01 members.

Goal A. A01 members must strive to encourage the active participation of all stakeholders in the standards development process.

>   Action 1: Where appropriate, comprehensive and statistically representative studies should be generated by means of surveys and through direct liaison with specific document user groups.

>   Action 2: ASTM A01 standards need to reflect the needs in order to better serve

the worldwide community.