

**Creating a Preliminary Strategic Plan for the Central Texas Chapter of the
American Society for Public Administration**

By

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The success of corporations, businesses, governments and non-profit organizations lie in the future planning of the organizations. A successful organization is likely to have a strategic plan that includes a mission, vision and strategic goals for its future. Successful strategic planning improves the process of people working together because it provides a forum for understanding why the organization exists and the shared values that should influence decisions (Allison & Kaye 1997, p.8). The lack of a “shared vision” may be one of the major reasons why some companies are not successful. A strategic plan is the blueprint of how the organization will compete and allocate resources. It also provides a general pattern for growth and direction of the organization’s future (Goodstein, Nolan & Pfeiffer 1993, p. 169-170). The development of a strategic plan is vital to an organization’s stability and ability to measure its goals in the future.

Purpose of Research

The Central Texas Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration (CenTex ASPA) is one of many chapters of National ASPA in the United States.¹ According to the ASPA’s website, the organization has been in existence “since 1939 [T]he American Society for Public Administration (National ASPA) has emerged as the largest and most prominent professional organizations in the field of public

¹ The American Society for Public Administration will be reference as National ASPA and the Central Texas Chapter of the Society for Public Administration will be reference as CenTex ASPA. According to the website there are 115 Chapters, see http://www.aspanet.org/sriptiontent/index_listing_page.cfm.

administration.”² In 1998, National ASPA developed a 10-year strategic plan. Since then, the organization continues to follow its strategic plan and remain abreast of public administration affairs. CenTex ASPA was re-established in 1993 consisting of professors, students and dedicated public professionals. This organization is called the Central Texas Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration (Paddenburg 1999, p. 34-36). This group has no strategic plan to document or measure their success. Without a strategic plan of its own, CenTex ASPA has managed to move the organization forward by following the mission, vision and goals of the national organization.

In her mid-year report to ASPA members, National ASPA President, Cheryle Broom reported that between 2004-2008, the American Society for Public Administration is focused on achieving five strategic goals:

- Being a recognized voice for public policy issues
- Serving as a catalyst to enhance knowledge in the field
- Fostering inclusive communications
- Enabling those who serve the public to be effective
- Strengthening ASPA’s capacity to achieve its mission

Broom reports that the organization has been successful following the strategies of the goals and continues to keep members informed of the accomplishments outlined in the plan (Broom 2004, p. 12). Although CenTex ASPA has received awards for the chapter’s active participation,³ the members have expressed concerns over sustaining the organizations success in the future and the lack of a “big picture” vision for the organization. Members question the lack of a budget for programs, and the mystery surrounding decision making about certain events and their role as members. Also, some members continue to concern themselves with the active role of the officers and the

² Motto of ASPA see website <http://www.aspanet.org/scriptcontent/ASPAGeneral.cfm>

³ Awards received are shown in the CenTex ASPA website <http://www.main.org/aspafacts.htm>

council members. The members are concern that the officers and council members are not aware of information such as newsletters, notices and invitation to programs are not reaching them as promised by the CenTex council. In addition, most of the membership have no idea how to get involved and serve on the board. Paul Sanchez, president of the CenTex ASPA encourages the officers and council members as well as the membership to voice their recommendations and suggestions at monthly meetings, the newsletter, and annual presentations. The president emphasizes, “Let me know how we can make the organization better,” and “let me know what types of programs, events you as a member would like to see in the future.”⁴ The CenTex ASPA president continues to make an effort to encourage council members and the members to continue to remain committed to public service and to promote a better public service.

Further research will address the positive aspects in creating a strategic plan for an organization. According to Allison & Kaye (1997, p. 58), “Failure to state and communicate clearly the organization’s purpose can lead to inadvertently restrict its effectiveness.” The downfalls of not developing a strategic plan for an organization are that the organization will lack groundwork for meaningful change, risk unsuccessful communication and teamwork among the board of directors, and face the possibility of the organization going dormant and individuals leaving the organization. According to Bryson & Alston (1996, p.4-5), “A strategic plan is intended to improve an organization’s ability to think and act strategically.” If done correctly, the benefits include increased effectiveness and efficiency, improved understanding, better learning and decision making, enhanced organizational capabilities, improved communications and public

⁴ As President of CenTex ASPA 2005, council members and members are encouraged to express their ideas and recommendations at council meetings and or CenTex Chapter events.

relations and increased political support (Bryson & Alston 1996, p. 4-5). For these reasons, the purpose of the research is to create a strategic plan for the Central Texas Chapter of the Society for Public Administration.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 2 discusses the setting of the research. Non-profit organizations, Central Texas Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration (CenTex ASPA) and the National American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) are discussed in detail. Chapter 3 reviews the relevant literature on the history of strategic planning and defines which professional organizations utilize a strategic plan. Then, it describes and defends each working hypothesis in a narrative and provides a table that illustrates the conceptual framework. The subject of Chapter 4 is the detailed methodology for creating a strategic plan for the CenTex Chapter. Chapter 5 analyzes and evaluates the empirical findings for support, according to the president of CenTex Chapter recommendations. The final Chapter summarizes the research and recommends the mission, vision and goals for the CenTex Chapter strategic plan.

CHAPTER 2

SETTING

CenTex ASPA

Approximately 190 members made up of students, professors and practitioners with an interest in the field of public administration comprise the Central Texas Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration (CenTex ASPA).⁵ The governing body consists of the chapter officers, a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, newsletter editor, webmaster, parliamentarian, and membership chair and eighteen (18) council members. Elected council members serve a two-year term, and elected officers serve a one-year term. Officers and council members can serve an unlimited number of terms.⁶ CenTex ASPA promotes: networking opportunities with public service professionals

- quality publications
- national and regional conference
- participation in local chapter events
- meeting others in areas of expertise
- taking advantage of employment opportunities
- improving the image of the public service ⁷

The CenTex Chapter provides public administrators the opportunity to meet people from their surrounding areas, city, county or state. CenTex Chapter provides the exchange of

⁵ As the President of CenTex ASPA, information of membership is provided in a spreadsheet by National ASPA.

⁶ Information is provided in the CenTex ASPA By-laws at www.main.org/aspa/constitution

⁷ Information is provided in the CenTex ASPA website at www.main.org/aspa/.

ideas, lectures, luncheons, and conferences to keep members current in local public administration community.⁸

CenTex ASPA By-laws

The CenTex ASPA adopted By-laws in 1978 and then amended in January 2004. The chapter is 1 of 115 chapter organizations within the American Society for Public Administration structure.⁹ According to the CenTex Chapter By-laws, the chapter focuses on service areas of the Central Texas region as following:

- Advancing the science, processes, and art of public administration;
- Advancing the equality of opportunity of all persons through public administration;
- Encouraging and facilitating the interchange of ideas and information among Central Texans interested or engaged in the field of public administration;
- Promoting public administration in Central Texas through encouragement and support of professional development, public service productivity, professionalism, and administrative excellence.¹⁰

CenTex ASPA provides a wide spectrum of public and nonprofit sector related activities undertaken in the region for both academic, professional and student/practitioner interests. The Chapter serves the area of Central Texas whose boundaries include the cities of Austin, San Marcos, Waco, Seguin, Columbus, Huntsville, Tyler, Brownwood, Brady and Kerrville Texas to name a few. Membership is open to interested individuals regardless of race, ethnic-background, gender, sexual orientation, religion, creed, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability or political affiliation.¹¹ The CenTex ASPA encourages members to volunteer and attend scheduled events of the Chapter and to

⁸ Information may be found in CenTex ASPA website at www.main/org/aspa/

⁹ CenTex ASPA By-laws –www.main/org/aspa/constitution

¹⁰ CenTex ASPA website [ww.main/org/aspa/constitution](http://www.main/org/aspa/constitution)

participate in the process of electing new officers and council members at the annual general meeting.¹² Once elected, the council establishes committees and/or task forces for various purposes. Thus, the president appoints committee chairs.¹³

National ASPA

According to the ASPA website and publications, the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA), established in 1939, is

the largest and most prominent, professional association in the field of public administration. ASPA is composed of more than 12,000 practitioners, teachers and students, and has “emerged as the focal point for intellectual and professional interaction, thereby serving as the principal arena for linking throughout the practice within the field of public administration.”¹⁴

ASPA provides a forum for the expertise of administrators working in the same field. The organization offers 19 national special-interest sections addressing issues such as health and human services, budgeting and financial management, public administration research, law and public administration and many others. Some of the many fields of interest to ASPA members are:

- Performance measurement
- Crisis management
- Intergovernmental relations
- Financial management
- Public sector labor relations
- Diversity issues
- Environmental and natural resources

¹¹ CenTex ASPA By-laws

¹² CenTex ASPA organization sends notices to the membership for each event and annual meetings.

¹³ Information provided in CenTex ASPA By-laws

¹⁴ ASPA website www.aspanet.org

- Nonprofit organization management
- Information technology
- Benchmarking
- Ethics ¹⁵

The national ASPA conferences provide public professionals the opportunity to discuss the challenges confronting the field of public administration. Valuable information is gained by the conference attendees in the latest research and makes professional contacts. The *PA Times* is a monthly newsletter that provides ASPA members with the latest news and trends in the field of public administration. National ASPA provides discount publications to all ASPA members through a publication's discount program. Published each fall, the publication's discount program brochure allows ASPA members to buy directly from publishers any of the listed resources at reduced prices. Participating publications have included: *Governing, the Public Manager*, and *American Review of Public Administration*. ASPA produces the *Public Administration Review* (PAR) continuing in its 55- year history as the preeminent scholarly journal in the field. *PAR* covers a wide range of issues, including strategic planning, ethics, and technology administrative systems in other countries, organizational culture and more. Also, *PAR* is a valuable resource to academics and practitioners in the field of Public Administration Studies.¹⁶

¹⁵ Information located at ASPA website

¹⁶ Information found at ASPA website –www.aspanet.org

National By-laws

ASPA By-laws begins with a purpose statement which includes the educational and scientific agenda:

- To facilitate the exchange of knowledge and results of experience among persons interested or engaged in the field of public administration
- To encourage the collection, compilation, and dissemination of information on matters relating to public administration
- To encourage the improvement of public service
- To advance generally the science, processes, and art of public administration ¹⁷

The National By-laws go on to explain the purpose of the organization where the society undertakes its professional and educational activities to advance and advocate excellence in public service by upholding and promoting integrity, ethics, and professionalism in the public service. ASPA promotes the equality of opportunity of all persons through public administration. Policy issues are also a concern of the ASPA:

- dealing with professional standards and the image of the public service
- dealing with implications for the management of public organizations and the workplace environment
- relating to major program areas of public agencies ¹⁸

ASPA Code of Ethics

National ASPA advocates to its members that they should commit to following the ASPA Code of Ethics in the good practices in public administration. The current code of ethics for the organization consists of the five following guidelines:

I Serve the Public Interest

Serve the public, beyond serving oneself. ASPA members are committed to:

1. Exercise discretionary authority to promote the public interest.
2. Oppose all forms of discrimination and harassment, and promote affirmative action.
3. Recognize and support the public's right to know the public's business.
4. Involve citizens in policy decision-making.

¹⁷ Information provided at ASPA website.

¹⁸ Information provided at ASPA website.

5. Exercise compassion, benevolence, fairness and optimism.
6. Respond to the public in ways that are complete, clear, and easy to understand.
7. Assist citizens in their dealings with government.
8. Be prepared to make decisions that may not be popular.

II Respect the Constitution and the Law

Respect, support, and study government constitutions and laws that define responsibilities of public agencies, employees, and all citizens. ASPA members are committed to:

1. Understand and apply legislation and regulations relevant to their professional role.
2. Work to improve and change laws and policies that are counter-productive or obsolete.
3. Eliminate unlawful discrimination.
4. Prevent all forms of mismanagement of public funds by establishing and maintaining strong fiscal and management controls, and by supporting audits and investigative activities.
5. Respect and protect privileged information.
6. Encourage and facilitate legitimate dissent activities in government and protect the whistle blowing rights of public employees.
7. Promote constitutional principles of equality, fairness, representative's, responsiveness and due process in protecting citizens' rights.

III Demonstrate Personal Integrity

Demonstrate the highest standards in all activities to inspire public confidence and trust in public service. ASPA members are committed to:

1. Maintain truthfulness and honesty and to not compromise them for advancement, honor, or personal gain.
2. Ensure that others receive credit for their work and contributions.
3. Zealously guard against conflict of interest or its appearance: e.g., nepotism, improper outside employment, misuse of public resources or the acceptance of gifts.
4. Respect superiors, subordinates, colleagues and the public.
5. Take responsibility for own errors.
6. Conduct official acts without partisanship.

IV Promote Ethical Organizations

Strengthen organizational capabilities to apply ethics, efficiency and effectiveness in serving the public. ASPA members are committed to:

1. Enhance organizational capacity for open communication, creativity, and dedication.
2. Subordinate institutional loyalties to the public good.
3. Establish procedures that promote ethical behavior and hold individuals and organizations accountable for their conduct.
4. Provide organization members with an administrative means for dissent, assurance of due process and safeguards against reprisal.

5. Promote merit principles that protect against arbitrary and capricious actions.
6. Promote organizational accountability through appropriate controls and procedures.
7. Encourage organizations to adopt, distribute, and periodically review a code of ethics as a living document.

V Strive for Professional Excellence

Strengthen individual capabilities and encourage the professional development of others. ASPA members are committed to:

1. Provide support and encouragement to upgrade competence.
2. Accept as a personal duty the responsibility to keep up to date on emerging issues and potential problems.
3. Encourage others, throughout their careers, to participate in professional activities and associations.
4. Allocate time to meet with students and provide a bridge between classroom studies and the realities of public service.¹⁹

ASPA Strategic Plan

According to Eric Bergrud, Senior Director of Programs and Service Development, the American Society for Public Administration began and adopted a strategic plan in 1998 and adopted a new plan in 2004. When asked, what model did ASPA follow in creating a strategic plan, the Director of Programs and Service Development answered “we did not use a model, rather relied on members and consultants with expertise in strategic planning.”²⁰ The American Society for Public Administration’s strategic plan from 1998-2003 was a “working plan.” Mary R. Hamilton, former executive director of the American Society for Public Administration-2003 and 2004 End-of-the-Year Report on State of ASPA (PA Times, 2004) commended the organization: “as a society, we have made a lot of progress toward achieving the three goals in that plan.” For the current adopted strategic plan 2004-2008- “Action plan,” it continues to concentrate on a mission statement, a vision and strategic goals.

¹⁹ Information found in the ASPA website at www.aspanet.org

²⁰ Via e-mail, Eric Bergrud, ASPA Senior Director of Programs and Service Development answered the question “what model does ASPA follow in creating a strategic plan?”

National ASPA Strategic Plan

The American Society for Public Administration's current strategic plan consists of a mission, vision, guiding principles and strategic goals. The 2004-2008 action plan is as follows:

ASPA Mission

Is the leading public service organization that:

- Advances the art, science, teaching, and practice of public and non-profit administration.
- Promotes the value of joining and elevating the public service profession.
- Builds bridges among all who pursue public purposes.
- Provides networking and professional development opportunities to those committed to public service values.
- Achieves innovative solutions to the challenges of governance.²¹

ASPA Vision

- ASPA is a major force in improving constitutional governance and service to the public to enhance the quality of life worldwide.

Guiding Principles

We work to fulfill our vision and mission to position our Society at the cutting edge of public service.

- We promote and maintain a culture in which:
- We treat everyone with civility and respect.
- We value diversity, integrity and ethical behavior.
- We encourage participation and cooperation.
- We practice and expect honest and open communications.
- We demonstrate and advocate for responsible governance and professional excellence.
- We deliver the high quality services that we promise!

ASPA Strategic Goals

- Strategic Goal 1: Be a recognized voice for issues and values in public policy, management, and practice.
- Strategic Goal 2: Be a catalyst to enhance the scope and quality of resources and the knowledge base in the field of public service.

²¹ ASPA Strategic Plan is provided at website www.aspanet.org/scriptContent/ASPAgeneral.cfm

- Strategic Goal 3: Foster inclusive communications among those who serve the public.
- Strategic Goal 4: Find ways to enable those who serve the public to be current and effective.
- Strategic Goal 5: Grow the society membership and ensure its financial viability.²²

Reason for a Strategic Plan for CenTex ASPA

A Council member explains, “I think CenTex can in fact do a better job of restating the mission and coming up with goals that will help achieve the national goals by doing what a chapter can do best: provide ample networking and opportunities for service and leadership for members.”²³ The reason CenTex needs a strategic plan is to promote its own goals of hosting conferences, award ceremonies, networking luncheons and social events and producing its own newsletter to its membership. Strategic planning should include a hope for knowledge, a feeling that there is a better way of doing things, and awareness of an unpredictable environment, and a healthy respect for the uncertainties of the future (Mercer 1991, p. 155). As noted by a council member “strategies for all these have varied but we have relied mostly on energetic and generous volunteers who altogether have a vast network of contacts in virtually all the significant institutions that labor in our field.”²⁴ CenTex ASPA is a nonprofit professional organization that relies on the officers and council members who volunteer to operate the organization by promoting events, conferences and social gatherings for networking among its membership.²⁵

²² ASPA Strategic Plan is provided at website www.aspanet.org/scriptContent/ASPAGeneral.cfm

²³ Stated by a council member. Reuben Lieslie via-email during the strategic planning process.

²⁴ Stated by a council members, Reuben Lieslie via-email during the strategic planning process.

²⁵ All officers and council members are volunteers that serve CenTex ASPA.

CHAPTER 3

STRATEGIC PLANNING & ASPA

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the relevant literature on strategic planning for non-profit professional organizations. As emphasized by Mercer, “strategic planning is the process that creates a balance between what is desired and what is possible” (1991, p.22-23). This chapter reviews the history of strategic planning, defines the strategic plan, as well as indicates the key components that make up a strategic plan. The chapter also links to the National American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) strategic plan. One of the major components of the chapter introduces a working hypothesis that incorporates information from the ASPA strategic plan. It also includes a table that demonstrates a link between the working hypotheses and the literature that strengthen the purpose of this study--creating a strategic plan for the Central Texas Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration organization. One of the purposes of creating a strategic plan is to “help facilitate better communication and participation, accommodate varied interests and values, and foster wiser and reasonable decision making, that promotes successful implementation” (Bryson 1995, p.5). The CenTex ASPA officers and council members are involved in creating a strategic plan for the organization.

History of Strategic Planning

Modern strategic planning was first introduced to America’s businesses in the mid-1950s. At that time, only the largest companies in the United States had developed formal strategic planning systems. Since that time, formal strategic planning has matured

in most large companies in U.S. Strategic planning is interwoven into the entire process of management” (Mercer 1991, p.5). Strategic planning is interdisciplinary and incorporates concepts from military strategy, history, business practices, and organizational theory. It came to its prominence as a distinct discipline in the 1950’s and 1960’s because of its popularity with many corporations headquartered in the U.S. Even today, the essential concepts are applicable to any organizational settings (Allison & Jude Kaye 1997, p. 5).

According to James L. Mercer (1991, p. 18-19), strategic planning started in the United States as a military and private sector discipline and began in the mid-1950’s and early 1960’s in the private company named General Electric. It began with establishing organizational aims and purposes, followed by formulation of ways and means to achieve those purposes, and provides direction for implementation of operational or tactical planning (Mercer 1991, p. 19). Strategic planning achieved acceptance by the end of the 1960’s and quickly spread to other private companies (Mercer 1991, p. 18-19). Mercer breaks down the evolution of strategic planning in the private sector into stages. Initially (1950’s) strategic planning was conceived as a General Management Plan. The plan was developed for managers to understand the nature of strategic planning and how to utilize it as a managerial tool. An effective strategic plan was based directly on a strong budgeting system. “While a budgeting system by itself can overlook strategic issues, a strategic planning process unrelated to the budget is without substance.” An effective strategic planning process should be an important link between comprehensive planning and the annual operating and capital budgets (Mercer 1991, p. 7). For these reasons, the

General Management Plan incorporates business survey, management audit, organizational studies, performance standards and budgetary control in a company.

In the 1960's or the Profit Planning stage emphasized more business functions where the plan defines the business of the organization and identifies the profit forecasts. Thus, business assessment, company performance, profit plan, objectives, forecast plans and budgeting control now were considered in the shift to Profit Planning.

In the third phase, which occurred in the late 1960's and early 70's, the plan expanded to include a concept called Business Planning. The new focus included business assessments, company performances, stakeholder expectations and budget control systems. In addition, the third phase involved a strategic plan that included mission statements, objectives, strategies and resource allocations. "Managers also embraced the idea of business planning, because of its systematic way of dealing with both predictability and unpredictability occurrences" (Mercer 1991, p.7). Business Planning gave a new direction for organizations to follow to ensure more stability in reaching their long-term goals.

The fourth phase began in 1980 and was called Strategic Management. Mercer emphasizes that "strategic planning is a method of guiding managers so that their decisions and actions affect the future of the organization in a consistent and rational matter" (1991, p.19). This concept incorporated practice business assessment, environmental intelligence, corporate strategic planning, division strategic planning, organizational effectiveness, operational plans and annual plans and controls (Mercer1991, p.19).

By the mid-1980's, the use of strategic management concepts became a common practice in the public sector, especially in city government and larger nonprofit organizations (Ott & Russell 2001, p. 308). In the past, traditional business enterprises were the primary users of strategic planning. In addition, non-profit organizations also applied strategic planning concepts to improve their effectiveness. "The fundamental part of strategic planning is the team-building approach of developing leaders and involving people in the plan" Individuals learn by example and leaders of organizations are responsible to assure that they are effective leaders (Migliore, Stevens, Loudon & Williamson 1995 p. 3). The development of a strategic plan involves the leadership and people in the organization to create a plan.

At the end of the 80's and 90's, the changing environment led leaders in business, government and non-profit sectors to seek new and better tools to control their environment. "Not only do changes occur more frequently and unpredictably in the business world but changes in one area dramatically affect other areas" (Byrson & Einsweiler 1988, p. 1). Strategic planning then provides some of the concepts, procedures, and tools leaders need to succeed in a changing environment (Byrson & Einsweiler 1988, p. 1-2). Public and non-profit organizations face an array of challenges due to their budget constraints, which can increase, or decrease programs, services and products (Bryson & Alston 1996, p. xii).

In the 21st Century, leaders of governments, public agencies, non-profit organizations, and communities continue to face serious difficulties and challenges as their environment change. Ideally, strategic planning became a tool to help organizations adapt to changes in the environments and help reach the organization's goals—strategic

management (Hendrick 2003, p. 491-493). According to Hendrick (2003, p. 493), “With respect to decision making, strategic management or strategic planning is characterized as structured problem solving by a group of individuals rather than one person.” He emphasizes that in the public and private sector “the purpose of strategic planning is to reduce uncertainty associated with ill-structured problems and a general lack of information and to increase coordination” (Hendrick 2003, p.493). Thus, the strategic plan is a tool that translates into a “clear picture” that is understood by the organization’s membership.

Defining Strategic Planning

According to John M. Bryson and Farnum K. Alston (1996, p.3), strategic planning is “a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it.” Bryson and Alston advocate several strategic planning practices for public and nonprofit organizations:

- Examine the environment in which they exist and operate;
- Explore the factors and trends that affect the way they do business and carry out their role;
- Seek to meet their mandates and fulfill their missions;
- Frame the strategic issues they must address, and
- Find ways to address these issues by reexamining and reworking organizational mandates and missions, product or service levels and mix, costs and financing; and management or organization.

“To be effective, strategic planning must be action oriented and must be linked to tactical and operational plan” (Bryson & Alston 1996, p.3). Thus, the plan should reflect the organization’s operational plan to remain successful.

A strategic plan is a written document that establishes the organization’s intent and vision of its future position and values. “It is a means for planning future growth and profitability and, as such, is key to the overall management process,” (Cook1994, p. xiv). Cook (1994, p.xiv) continues to make his point that a strategic plan is not wishful thinking, secretive or a guarantee of successful business results. A strategic plan does not require superhuman skills, extreme intelligence, or substantial outside help. Most of the skills and information required are within the organization. A strategic plan requires commitment by the business owner, honest evaluation of the current position and past history of the business (Cook 1994, p. xiv-xv). Cook (1994,p.xvi) emphasizes, “Most importantly, a strategic plan is a blueprint to help an organization develop and maintain a superior competitive advantage in the marketplace.” It is the vision of what the organization wants to become (Cook 1994, p. xvi). In practice, Mercer mentions that the private sector has created and implemented the modern strategic planning cycle over two decades, which many organizations use today. The planning process includes six key principles (Mercer 1991, p. 22).

Step 1: Everyone is involved in the process which increases understanding and commitment to the plan. The purpose of the first step is to negotiate an agreement with key internal or external decision-makers about the overall strategic planning effort and the key planning steps. *Step 2:* Ideas and goals are well defined at every level. At this stage, the work tasks and goals of the team are generally clear, and understood and

accepted by team members. *Step 3:* Accountability and responsibility for implementation of the strategic plan is clear. Usually the leaders of the organization plan for implementation are designated. *Step 4:* The strategic planning process is cyclical and is built into the organization's annual cycle. This is to ensure that the plan is developed on time-distributed, documented and recorded. *Step 5:* The process covers all the basis-goals, action plans and incentives. Mission formulation determines the competitiveness arena in which an organization operates, how resources are to be allocated, and the appropriate size of the organization. *Step 6:* The process allows managers to maintain control over the direction of the strategic plan. The top appointed managers or administrators are seen as the persons providing direction and leadership to the plan (Mercer 1991, p. 22-37).

Strategic Planning in Professional Organizations

Successful organizations with an implemented strategic plan and promote public administration are the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the Texas City Managers Association (TCMA). Both non-profit professional organizations provide technical and management assistance, training, and information resources to their members and their local governmental community.

ICMA

In the ICMA's website, ICMA's strategic planning committee actively engaged the association's members in discussions about ICMA's mission, core values, and strategic direction. The ICMA strategic plan was approved by their executive board and formally presented to the membership at its 2000 annual conference business meeting. With the strategic plan in place, the plan reinforces ICMA's strong commitment to the

values and ideals of the local government management profession and charts a path for the association in the first years of the new century. ICMA continues to be a professional and educational organization for chief appointed managers, administrators, and assistants in cities, towns, counties, and regional entities throughout the world since 1914. ICMA Strategic plan consists of a mission, core beliefs, objectives and strategies.²⁶

TCMA

In 1926, the Texas City Manager's Association (TCMA) was established, and similar to ICMA, the TCMA concentrated on the development of professional standards for city managers, promotion of the council-manager plan, and the exchange of ideas between managers as indicated in the TCMA's website.²⁷ The council-manager form of government is widely used in the United States and Texas. It has proven to be successful in large part because it stresses professionalism in city government. TCMA has a current strategic plan in place and was approved in April 2004 and amended in November 2004. The Texas City Managers Association strategic plan appears to be an outline of the structure of the organization and the responsibilities of each title. The TCMA's strategic plan shows the subcategories such as, board of directors, nominating committee, professional development committee, membership committees and a public relations committee.²⁸

National ASPA

The American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) is a national, non-partisan organization of more than 10,000 scholars, administrators, and public managers

²⁶ ICMA website-www.icma.org. See appendices for the ICMA Strategic Plan

²⁷ TCMA website-www.tcma.org. See appendices for the TCMA Strategic Plan

²⁸ TCMA website-www.tcma.org

in the United States. “ASPA is committed to the advancement of excellence in public service.”²⁹ For these reasons, ASPA has developed a strategic plan to accomplish their future goals.³⁰ The 2004-2008 strategic plan includes a mission, vision, guiding principles and strategic goals. A strategic plan is intended to improve an organization’s ability to think and act in logical increments to achieve their goals.

Components in a Strategic Plan

The 2004-2008 American Society for Public Administration Strategic Plan is a starting point to develop the CenTex ASPA plan. The key concepts in the working hypotheses are mission, vision and goals.

Mission

According to Bryson (1988, p.96), the mission clarifies an organization’s purpose, or “provides why it should be doing what it does.” The aim of a mission is to clarify a specific purpose of the organization and the philosophy and values that guide the organization (1988, p. 96). Kenneth Cook (1994, p. 4) emphasize, “the mission statement lays out the foundation for the future actions, and the major philosophies that underlie those actions.” The American Society for Public Administration’s mission foundation is that the leading public service organization

- Advances the art, science, teaching, and practice of public and non-profit administration.
- Promotes the value of joining and elevating the public service profession.
- Builds bridges among all who pursue public purposes.
- Provides networking and professional development opportunities to those committed to public service values.

²⁹ ASPA website-www.aspanet.org

³⁰ Information provided in publications that the American Society for Public Administration sends to the membership.

- Achieves innovative solutions to the challenges of governance.³¹

The American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) plays a major role in the development of public administration and serves as a leading non-profit organization for professional leadership. Darrell L. Pugh (1985, p.475) stress, “a large measure of the field’s history is entwined in the Society, the first general association dedicated to the sciences, processes, and art of public administration.” He emphasizes that, “ASPA has represented the movements, circumstances, personalities, and pressures that have sculptured American public administration” (1985, p.475). Thereby, the arts and sciences are an essential part in the study of public administration.

Advancing the Art, Science, and Teaching of Public Administration

According to Dwight Waldo (1948, p. 55-56), he stresses that public administration is a science, because scientific management and public administration is an extension of scientific facts. Waldo emphasize, “Since public managers rest upon scientific facts and laws, only those trained in the scientific method of ascertaining these facts and exercising these laws can supply this human agency” (Waldo 1948, p.56). He defines, “anything which is true—or at least significant—is a fact” and the duty of scientists is to discover facts” (1948, p. 57-58). Thus, engaging in discovering facts become research and research involves measurement and then evolves into scientific research. Dwight Waldo further explains, “When measurement is possible, science has arrived; until measurement is possible research is of dubious merit and even of questionable legitimacy.” He concludes that measurement “solves problems” in public administration (1948, p.58). Woodrow Wilson (1887/1978, p. 5), wrote about public administration and strongly believed that the science of administration was to control the

³¹ ASPA Strategic Plan is on the website www.aspanet.org

direction of government. He argued that public professionals reduce the amount of bureaucracy, confusion and make it “less unbusinesslike”(Wilson, 1887/1978, p.5). Wilson believed that administration should be separated from the realm of politics and should not be manipulated by politics (1887/1978, p.5). Also, he emphasize that “the science of administration a good and necessary step in the development of the American democracy” (1887/1978, p.5). Woodrow Wilson (Ott & Russell 2001, p. 15) mentions, “The science of administration is the latest fruit of that study of the science of politics which was begun some twenty-two hundred years ago.” He believed that administration is government--government in action. This is the reason why public administration is linked with the sciences. Government is complex, because of its rules and regulations that continue to grow and become more difficult to translate (Ott & Russel 2001, p. 15-16).

According to Pugh (1985, p.481), ASPA has focused its efforts “to advance the science, processes and art of public administration” and extend professional standards “to including the image of public administration.” He emphasizes that “in response to this condition, ASPA leaders focused on alternative membership incentives and a new rationale for membership” (Pugh 1985, p. 481). These incentives should encourage new membership to stay current in the field of public administration and keep members involved in the sciences of public administration. Pugh stress, “participation in ASPA was characterized as a means to achieve a general sense of professionalism for public administration that was capable of unity and integrating the diverse specialization within the field under one association” (1985, p.480-481). The science of public administration

to the profession remains an important component for the profession to stay informed in the evolving profession (1985, p.481-482).

Paddenburg discovers that the art in public administration is “the belief in public administration, the art, is concerned with the fluid and creative qualities inherent in the discipline” (Paddenburg 1999, p.8). He mentions that there is an important use of both art and science of public administration as mentioned by Dwight Waldo (1999, p.8). Paddenburg finds that “an artist creates works of aesthetics using imagination and intuition but an administrator uses imagination and intuition to solve problems.” As mentioned, public administrators constantly make decisions in their workplace and it becomes apparent that to stay creative and innovative it is an art form in the profession (1998, p. 8). ASPA is a leading organization that dedicates its membership to promote the arts and sciences, teaching and practices in public administration. Therefore, the strategic mission for the local Chapter of ASPA becomes the Working Hypothesis 1a: **WH1a:** CenTex’s strategic mission advances the art, science, teaching, and practices of public and non-profit administration.

Promoting Public Service

Darrell L. Pugh (1989, p. 1) argues that “public administration is or is evolving into a profession is a popular, traditional positions.” He stresses that public service activity should be lead by trained professionals (1989, p.1). Pugh promotes good public service as

Public service is the service of the common good in peace or war and will be judged by this standard. Not merely lower unit cost but higher human happiness and values are the supreme ends of our national life, and by these terms this and every other system must finally be tested (Pugh 1989, p.3).

According to Paddenburg (1991, p.16), professional associations are a body of people who collectively have a wealth of expertise to draw upon in a common field. He elaborates that associations have three important functions. One, the organization make it their mission to define the nature and scope of the field (1991, p.17). Second, an organization should “treat the profession as a whole—looking beyond the narrow self-interest of the group or individuals.” Finally, the organization functions as a social networking opportunist and that individuals cannot perform their duties separately (1991, p.17). For these reasons, the Central Texas Chapter of ASPA second mission is Working Hypothesis 1b: **WH1b:** CenTex’s strategic mission promotes the values of joining and elevating the public service profession and builds bridges among all who pursue public purpose.

Networking & Professional Development Opportunities

According to John Paddenburg’s findings in his research, he emphasizes “networking provides access to information, new perspectives, and new opportunities and thereby creates a sense of professional community within an organization” (Paddenburg 1999, p.23). Networking in an organization provides an opportunity for any member to learn new skills of communication and trust among his/her peers. The advantages of networking and professional development within an organization are that the members have the opportunities to build relationships among professionals with experience and learn new skills. Paddenburg concludes that CenTex Chapter is rated very effective in providing networking opportunities such as the organization’s annual conference and co-sponsored programs. But the areas rated ineffective and required further development are mixers/social gatherings and mentoring programs. Also, development of skills that

would be useful in the field of public administration can be provided by the Chapter within programs and events provided by the organization (1991, p. 58-59). ASPA strives in the promotion of networking and professional development opportunities through annual conferences, programs and events throughout the years.³² Thereby as a Chapter of ASPA, the CenTex organization mission is Working Hypothesis 1c: **WH1c**: CenTex's strategic mission provides networking and professional development opportunities to those committed to public service values.

Vision

The statement of a vision includes a promise that the organization will support its members in pursuit of the vision. According to C.Davis Fogg (1994, p.11), a vision statement is defined as how management envisions the business in the future and answering the questions, “why do we exist?” The vision statement answers the question, “what do we want to become in the future.” A vision statement offers the key competitive advantages that the organization possesses. The vision emphasizes the purpose, behavior, performance criteria, decision rules and standards that public serving, rather than self-serving. The statement of the vision includes a promise that the organization will support its members in pursuit of the vision. The vision should be relatively short and no more than ten double-spaced typewritten pages (Bryson 1991, p.5). The American Society for Public Administration clearly addresses its vision statement and answers—why do we exist?

Governance in Public Administration

Improving constitutional governance is a way public administrators can solve problems—a better government. According to Guy B. Peters (Ott & Russell 2001, p.

³² ASPA website www.aspanet.org

109), “Governments have created a vast array of institutions designed to exercise collective control and influence over the societies and economies for which they have been give responsibilities” (2001, p. 109). Public Administrators can influence these institutions by recommending to consolidate or restructure in order to address new problems and become more efficient. Peters argues that the efforts of governance are continuing to get more difficult today then in the past. “Political leader in the world must ask themselves what they do in their national capitals have much effect in shaping the lives of their citizens” (2001, p.110). He emphasizes that leaders in government must continue to find new ways of governance. He mentions “it remains crucial for governments and the individuals who constitute them, should continue their search for innovative mechanisms for making governments work better and to serve society better” (2001, p.110). Peters stresses that government leaders should improve the internal performance of their organization (2001 p. 110). He emphasizes that “a change in the definition of what constitutes good government and acceptable public administration” (2001, p.111) should be practiced. ASPA promotes constitutional governance service and a better government to its membership. Therefore, the strategic vision of the local chapter of ASPA becomes the following Working Hypothesis 2a :

WH2a: CenTex ASPA strategic vision improves constitutional governance service to the public to enhance the quality of the Central Texas Region.

Goals

The strategic goals for an organization provide the direction the organization desires to accomplish over several years. According to Bryson & Alston (1996, p.115), a goal is defined as a “long-term organizational target of development. It states what the organization wants to accomplish or become over the next several years.” Bryson &

Alston emphasize, “goals provide the basis for decisions about the nature, scope, and relative priorities of all projects.” Goals for an organization should be realistic and attainable (1996, p.115).

National ASPA promotes advancing the arts, science and teaching of public administration, public service, and networking and professional development opportunities to those committed to public service. For these reasons, the National ASPA strategic plan developed five strategic goals. The five strategic goals for the American Society for Public Administration Strategic Plan 2004-2008 are:

- a. Be a recognized voice for issues and values in public policy, management and practice
- b. Be a catalyst to enhance the scope and quality of resources and the knowledge base in the field of public service.
- c. Foster inclusive communication among those who serve the public.
- d. Find ways to enable those who serve the public to be current and effective.
- e. Grow the society membership and ensure its financial viability.

The CenTex ASPA shares the same mission and vision as national ASPA and ASPA’s goals are attainable and can be accomplish in several years. Therefore the strategic goals of a local chapter of ASPA become:

WH3: CenTex ASPA Strategic Plan includes Four Strategic Goals.

- a. CenTex’s strategic goal is to be a recognized voice for issues and values in public policy, management and practice
- b. CenTex’s strategic mission is to be a catalyst to enhance the scope and quality of resources and the knowledge base in the field of public service.
- c. CenTex’s strategic mission is to find ways to enable those who serve the public to be current and effective.
- d. CenTex’s strategic goal is to ensure its financial viability.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework used for this research is a working hypothesis because the research purposed is exploratory. Shields emphasize that working hypotheses are guides to early-stage investigations (Shields, p. 211). The conceptual framework helps focus efforts to develop a strategic plan for the Central Texas Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration (CenTex ASPA). The data collected explores intermediate steps between identifying the problems and the finalized plan. The conceptual framework is the tool used to organize the empirical portion of this study. Table 3.1 summarizes the working hypotheses and lists the sources used to develop each hypothesis (see Table 3.1: Conceptual Framework).

Table 3.1: Conceptual Framework

Conceptual Framework: Centex ASPA Strategic Plan 2004-2008	
Working Hypotheses	Sources
<p>WH1. CenTex Strategic Plan includes a long-range Mission.</p> <p>a. CenTex’s strategic mission advances the art, science, teaching, and practice of public and non-profit administration.</p> <p>b. CenTex’s strategic mission promotes the value of joining and elevating the public service profession. Builds bridges among all who pursue public purposes.</p> <p>c. CenTex’s strategic mission provides networking and professional development opportunities to those committed to public service values.</p> <p>d. CenTex’s strategic mission achieves innovative solutions to the challenges of governance</p>	<p>American Society for Public Administration Strategic Plan 2004-2008,</p> <p>Paddenburg (1991); Ott & Russell (2001); Pugh (1988); Pugh (1985) Waldo (1948) Wilson (1887)</p>
<p>WH2. CenTex Strategic Plan includes a long-range Vision.</p> <p>a. CenTex’s strategic vision improves constitutional governance and service to the public to enhance the quality of the Central Texas Region.</p>	<p>American Society for Public Administration Strategic Plan 2004-2008,</p> <p>Bryson (1991), Fogg (1994), Paddenburg (1999)</p>

Working Hypotheses	Sources
<p>WH3 CenTex Strategic Plan includes Three Strategic Goals.</p> <p>a. CenTex’s strategic goal is to be a recognized voice for issues and values in public policy, management and practice</p> <p>b. CenTex’s strategic goal is to be a catalyst to enhance the scope and quality of resources and the knowledge base in the field of public service.</p> <p>c. CenTex’s strategic goal is to find ways to enable those who serve the public to be current and effective.</p>	<p>American Society for Public Administration Strategic Plan 2004-2008,</p> <p>Bryson & Altson (1996),</p>

Creating a strategic plan for an organization is to foster an organization’s mission, vision, values, goals and then implements the strategies to move the organization forward. There are several steps in implementing a strategic plan and if done correctly, an organization can continue to remain successful. To create the CenTex Strategic Plan, the research will follow the methodology specifically intended to enhance the local chapter’s future plan to move the organization forward.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the technique (data collection method) used in creating a strategic plan for the Central Texas Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration. The chapter discusses the methods in collecting the recommendations unique to the organization. A strategic planning task force is created to develop the strategic plan. Table 4-1 summarizes questions addressed by the strategic planning task force. Table 4.2: Data Collection Timetable shows the dates, time, event, member participation and accomplishment in the strategic planning process.

Outline of Strategy

A strategic planning task force is the officers and council members of the Central Texas Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration. James L. Mercer (1991, p.30-31) recommends in a research study that the number of members on a planning team should be between five and twelve members. The logic is to attain the desired information from a team that is not too large that it could divide the group in half if disagreements arose (Mercer 1991, p.30-31). In order to move the process along, the president of the organization developed the strategic planning task force.³³ The CenTex ASPA eight (8) officers and eighteen (18) council members became the strategic planning task force. The president, with the assistance of a facilitator, arranged each meeting with the task force to address the mission, vision and strategic goals in several work sessions. Four meetings were scheduled to complete the task. The first occurred at

the council's retreat. The other three meetings were held at the monthly CenTex ASPA council meetings, which occurred on the second Wednesday of the month. The strategic planning task force focused on each individual key component of the strategic plan. With this in mind, the information collected during the discussions utilizing the assistance of a facilitator, a key player. As Earl Babbie (2004, p.303) promotes, "The use of a third party facilitator is a common practice by many groups working on strategic plan" (Babbie 2004, p.303). For this project, a facilitator will be utilized to control the purpose and the boundaries of the task force. Also, the use of a facilitator is key so that all the members, including the president, may have an opportunity to participate in the strategic planning process which focuses on the mission, vision and strategic goals.

Table 4.1: Question Summary

A strategic planning task force questionnaire was used to collect and confirm information of the proposed Strategic Plan. Although the conceptual framework is the outline and foundation that was used to create the CenTex ASPA strategic plan, the questionnaire is a tool to create a dialogue and a discussion environment with the key players of the organization--CenTex Council members. In Table 4.1 summarizes the questions asked to the task force as the beginning of the process in developing the strategic plan. The mission, vision, and goals were defined using a worksheet format with questions. The strategic planning task force answered the questions using an interactive exercise with the president, and facilitator participating as well. As Earl Babbie emphasize, "while focus groups research differs from other forms of qualitative field research, it further illustrates the possibilities for doing social research face-to-face with those we wish to understand" (Babbie 2004, p. 303). Each of the strategic tasks- mission,

³³ The President of CenTex ASPA is the author of the applied research paper.

vision and goals were discussed and debated by the task force utilizing the questions Format as shown on Table 4.1. The facilitator asked the various questions wanting the task force to interact freely and creatively. The question format was intended to motivate the task force to brainstorm their thoughts during the strategic planning sessions. The goals of the organization were also discussed in a session and resolved at a subsequent meeting.

Table 4.1: Question Summary- Mission

Strategic Planning Task Force Questionnaire
<p>A mission statement should clarify an organization’s purpose and indicate why it is doing? What it does?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are Centex current programs? Are they innovating and are we being effective? 2. Is the organization meeting the needs of the membership? What are your concerns about how we do business? 3. How is the organization providing networking opportunities to its membership? Can we obtain additional members this way? 4. How is Centex communicating with the membership? What type of publications are we providing? 5. How successful do you believe we are about informing our members about current events and programs? Do you know how we can improve the process?

]

Table 4.2: Question Summary- Vision

Strategic Planning Task Force Questionnaire
<p>A vision statement should emphasize purpose, behavior performance criteria, decision rules and standards that the organization serves. The vision should be short and to the point.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="250 489 1101 527">1. Do you know Centex vision? If so, can we improve our vision?<li data-bbox="250 600 1279 669">2. How can we improve the commitment on how we inform our members of our shared vision?<li data-bbox="250 743 1243 812">3. Do you believe we need a vision to operate as an organization? If not, state your reasons.<li data-bbox="250 886 1190 924">4. How can this Board improve the communication with its membership?

Table 4.3: Question Summary- Goals

Strategic Planning Task Force Questionnaire
<p>Goals should act as the guiding force for the strategic plan. Goals present ideals, which are the organizational commitment to a desired future state or condition. Also, goals should be attainable and also be sufficiently ambitious to make the organization strive for improvement. Goals are usually based on a three to five year plan.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What are CenTex’s current goals? Do you think we need them?2. Are the current goals realistic for our organization to reach? If not, why?3. What innovative programs are in place to keep the membership abreast in public administration?4. Who will be responsible to carry out the goals and strategies?5. What do you think we should accomplish by 2008?6. How is CenTex communicating with the membership in other cities? And are we being effective on getting out message across and involved?

Data Collection Timetable

It became a challenge to get the task force back together outside of the regularly scheduled council meeting. The one meeting that was planned outside the scheduled monthly meetings resulted in low attendance. Much of the success in creating the

strategic plan was the work completed at the council's retreat and scheduled monthly meetings. However, there were problems in crafting the plan due to time constraints allocated to the discussion of the strategic plan at each meeting. Thirty-minutes were allowed to discuss the strategic plan in each of the council meetings. Most members at the meeting could only stay during their lunch hour before heading back to work.

Nature of Task Force

The task force did commit to meet and discuss the development of the strategic plan in several scheduled meetings. However, these volunteers dwindled at each meeting. The intent was to have as many as 27 members participate in the development of the strategic plan. Only a core group participated in the process. Other reasons for the low attendance were the fact that there were other concurrent active committees. Due to individual commitments such as full time jobs, attending schools, family and personal events in the lives, the general meetings suffered from low attendance. For these reasons, information was sent via email to the CenTex officers and council members.

Introduction Table 4.2

Table 4.2 presents the data collection timetable for the applied research project. The table shows the dates and times the strategic planning sessions were scheduled and the number of task force members that attended. The table also indicates the task force accomplishments. For those members who did not attend, emails were sent to each of the officers and council members for their input.

Use of E-mail

The president sent electronic mail to the task force to communicate and receive their input prior to the strategic planning sessions. Although the information was emailed

to all the officers and council members, only a small core group responded.

Table 4.4: Data Collection Timetable

Date/Time	Event	Member Participation	Accomplished
January 29, 2005 9 AM-11AM	Council Retreat	<p>Chapter Officers: Paul Sanchez, (President) Kim Gunn, (Vice President) Lucy Cantu, (Treasurer) Ammy Jones, (Membership Chair) Doug Whitworth (Newsletter Editor) Mindy Martinez, (Newsletter Editor) Victoriano Casas,(Parliamentarian) Shivaun Perez,(Webmaster)</p> <p>Council Members: Craig Campbell, Aiada Douglas, Karen Eikner, Claudia Jenks, Cherry Beth Luedtke, Qena McCarthy Duane Pufpaff, Patricia Shields</p> <p>Facilitator: Ken Matwiczac (Past President)</p>	Preliminary Mission
February 4-9, 2005	E-mail	Mario, Espinoza, Ken Matwiczac, & Doug Whitworth,	Mission Edits
March 2005 6 PM- 8PM	Strategic Planning Task Force Meeting	<p>Roberta Byram, Kim Gunn, Claudia Jenks, Patricia Shields</p> <p>Facilitator: Sonya Alexander</p>	Mission/Vision
March 2-8	E-mail	Craig Campbell, Mario Espinoza, Ken Matwiczac, & Sony Alexander	Vision Edit
March 9, 2005 12:30 PM-1 PM	Council Meeting	<p>Chapter Officers: Paul Sanchez, (President) Kim Gunn, (Vice President) Liz Cerda,(Secretary) Doug Whitworth, (Newsletter Editor) Marilyn Balanoff,(Immediate Past President)</p> <p>Council Members: Craig Campbell, Roberta Byram,</p>	Vision

Date/Time	Event	Member Participation	Accomplished
		Aiada Douglas, Karen Eikner, Mario Espinoza, Qena McCarthy, Patricia Shields, Howard Balanoff, Reuben Leslie Facilitator: Sonya Alexander-Harry	
March 22-25, 2005	E-mail	Mario Espinoza, Kim Gunn, Ken Matwiczac, & Doug Whitworth	Input
April 2005 12:30 PM-1:00 PM	Council Meeting	Chapter Officers: Paul Sanchez, (President) Kim Gunn, (Vice President) Lucy Cantu, (Treasurer) Doug Whitworth, (Newsletter Editor) Mindy Martinez, (Newsletter Editor) Marilyn Balanoff, (Immediate Past President) Council Members: Howard Balanoff, Roberta Byram, Craig Campbell, Aiada Douglas, Karen Eikner, Mario Espinoza, Duane Pufpaff, Patricia Shields Facilitator: Sonya Alexander-Harry	Goals

Conclusion

Chapter 5 provides an overview of the methodology used to collect data for the strategic planning process used by the Centex Chapter task force. Chapter 6 will review the results in creating the strategic plan.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

The purpose of this research is to create a strategic plan for the Central Texas Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration. The key components of the strategic plan are the mission, vision, and goals. The development of the strategic plan reflects the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 3.

President's Recommendation

The strategic planning task force and the president of CenTex ASPA created the mission, vision and goals after reaching a consensus at scheduled council meetings. Table 5.1 –5.3 clearly show the working hypotheses and the results of the strategic plan developed by task force.

Mission

At a council retreat, the president provided four draft mission statements for the task force to consider in their deliberations. The final mission statement is derived from National ASPA's mission and the president's interpretation. The president presented the following mission statements to the task force:

- CenTex's strategic mission advances the art, science, teaching, and practice of public and non-profit administration.
- CenTex's strategic mission promotes the value of joining and elevating the public service profession, and builds bridges among all who pursue public purposes.
- CenTex's strategic mission provides networking and professional development opportunities to those committed to public service values.
- CenTex's strategic mission achieves innovative solutions to the challenges of governance.

Vision

The president introduced his version of the organization's long term vision at a second council meeting. The vision statement is derived from National ASPA's vision and the president's interpretation. The president's vision statement read: Centex strategic vision improves constitutional governance and service to the public to enhance the quality of the Central Texas Region.

Goals

At yet another scheduled council meeting, the president outlined the following preliminary goals to the strategic planning task force. The goals were derived from National ASPA's strategic goals and the president's interpretation:

- CenTex's strategic goal is to be a recognized voice for issues and values in public policy, management and practice.
- CenTex's strategic goal is to be a catalyst to enhance the scope and quality of resources and the knowledge base in the field of public service.
- CenTex's strategic goal is to find ways to enable those who serve the public to be current and effective.

Strategic Planning Task Force Recommendations

The task force discussed several key issues. Some of these issues include: 1). definition of an organizational mission, 2). improving the image of public service, 3). promoting good ethical practices, 4). networking opportunities, 5). continuing membership participation, 6). and increasing the membership. In addition, the task force discussed promoting public administration through social mixers that provide networking opportunities. Target audience included students and professors from Texas State University, University of Texas, St. Edwards University and Texas A& M University of Public Administration & Public Policy schools. The task force expressed the importance

of setting an example by becoming a role model for public professionals. Thus, the strategic planning task force mission recommendation for the CenTex ASPA is as follows:

- Advance Professional Public Service and Improve Public Service Perception
- Promote Good Governance
- Foster Ethical Professional Behavior in Public Service
- Be a Role Model
- Provide Professional Development and Networking Opportunities
- Facilitate/Communicate Among Public Service Agencies/Organizations

CenTex ASPA Vision

The strategic planning task force discussed the fundamentals of what is a vision; what is a shared vision; what is the commitment of the membership; and how to promote excellence in public service. Several of the task force members expressed their concerns about promoting ethics and wanted to include language in the vision statement. Others expressed concerns over defining ethics in the vision statement. One task force member expressed his belief that this group should develop a better vision than the National ASPA. Another task force member emphasized, “The vision should express the purpose of what we do best--which is networking.”³⁴ Table 5.2 shows the working hypothesis that the president presented to the task force and the proposed vision statement from the group. The final vision statement developed by the strategic planning task force is: CenTex Chapter promotes excellence in public service and uphold integrity and professionalism throughout service.

CenTex ASPA Goals

³⁴ During the strategic planning task force meeting, one of the CenTex council members expressed his concerns.

The overall members of the task force agreed with the president's goals but expressed concerns over two goals: the financial viability goal and a networking goal. The reason behind the concerns over the financial goal is due primarily because of the current weak financial budget of the organization. As expressed by the president, "the organization lacks a budget to support programs for future planning such as a scholarship for our membership or future networking programs."³⁵ In addition, the task force expressed the importance of incorporating fostering networking opportunities as a goal. Other comments included adding fundraising as a strategy in meeting the financial goal. Table 5.3 outlines the guidelines in creating the goals for the organization. The following lists the goals developed by the strategic planning task force:

- Be a recognized voice for ethics and values in public policy, management and practice.
- Be a catalyst to enhance the scope and quality of resources and the knowledge base in the field of public service.
- To find ways to enable those who serve the public to have access to current and effective practices.
- To Foster networking within public service.
- To develop a financial foundation upon which to support programs.

³⁵ As president, the organization lacks a budget for programming.

Table 5.1: Results

President’s Recommendation WH1: Centex ASPA’s Strategic Plan includes a Long-Range Mission	Strategic Planning Task Force Recommendation
a. Centex ASPA’s strategic mission advances the art, science, teaching, and practice of public and non-profit administration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancing Professional Public Service and Improve Public Service Perception
b. Centex ASPA’s strategic mission promotes the value of joining and elevating the public service profession. Builds bridges among all who pursue public purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate/Communicate Among Public Service Agencies/Organizations • Foster Ethical Professional Behavior in Public Service
c. Centex ASPA’s strategic mission provides networking and professional development opportunities to those committed to public service values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Professional Development and Networking Opportunities
d. Centex ASPA’s strategic mission achieves innovative solutions to the challenges of governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Good Governance • Be a Role Model

Table 5.2: Results

President’s Recommendation WH.2: Centex ASPA Strategic Plan includes a long-range Vision.	Strategic Planning Task Force Recommendation
a. Centex ASPA’s strategic vision improves constitutional governance and service to the public to enhance the Central Texas Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes excellence in public service and upholds integrity and professionalism through service.

Table 5.3:Results

President’s Recommendation WH 3: CenTex ASPA’s Strategic Plan include four Strategic Goals	Strategic Planning Task Force Recommendation
a. Centex ASPA’s strategic goal is to be a recognized voice for issues and values in public policy, management and practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be a Recognized voice for ethics and values in public policy, management and practice.
b. Centex ASPA’s strategic goal is to be a catalyst to enhance the scope and quality of resources and the knowledge base in the field of public service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be a Catalyst to enhance the scope and quality of resources and the knowledge base in the field of public service.
c. Centex ASPA’s strategic goal is to find ways to enable those who serve the public to be current and effective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To find ways to enable those who serve the public to have access to current and effective practices.
d. Centex strategic goal is to ensure financial viability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop a financial foundation upon which to support programs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To foster networking opportunities within public service.

Implementation

With the many changes an organization will face in the future, leaders need to continue to create ways to promote programs, events, and plan for future needs. Strategic planning is a tool that brings members of an organization together to focus on the purpose, reason and direction of an organization. In the future, CenTex ASPA plans to operate with the help of a strategic plan. The leaders of the organization will remain effective by utilizing tools such as strategic planning to resolve the concerns and issues of the organizational evolving membership. Through the process of strategic planning, the

leaders of CenTex ASPA's have developed the organization's mission, vision and goals for the future. The next step for the organization is to implement the strategic plan for the Chapter.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The Central Texas Chapter of Public Administration (CenTex ASPA) has the foundation and the beginnings of a strategic plan. A strategic planning process can become overwhelming especially when the members of an organization have differences in philosophy about their mission. This is why the process of developing and completing a strategic plan is critical for the success of an organization. Many non-profits that receive funding from grants require that the organization have a strategic plan. Funding agencies want to know that the organization is well organized and is very clear about their purpose and mission. With so many non-profit groups that exist, a well thought out strategic plan is what can set one organization apart from the others. The lack of a plan makes daily operations of an organization very difficult. For this reason, the strategic planning task force of the Central Texas Chapter of Public Administration (CenTex ASPA) is completing a strategic planning process that demonstrates their commitment to high standards in advancing the science of public administration, promoting professional public service, providing networking and professional development opportunities to those committed to public administration.

Although the strategic planning process is not complete, the strategic planning task force is committed to complete the process with the guidance of the president of the Chapter. The president recommends further scheduled meetings to develop and clarify the mission, vision and goals for the organization. For now, CenTex ASPA continues to

evolve with the help of a preliminary strategic plan and recommendations by the president of the Chapter.



American Society for Public Administration
CenTex
Chapter

*Advancing excellence
in public service...*

CenTex ASPA
Preliminary Strategic Plan
2005-2008

Mission

- Advance Professional Public Service and Improve Public Service Perception
- Facilitate/Communicate Among Public Service Agencies/Organizations
- Foster Ethical Professional Behavior in Public Service
- Provide Professional Development and Network Opportunities
- Promote Good Governance
- Be a Role Model

Vision

CenTex Chapter promotes excellence in public service and upholds integrity and professionalism throughout service.

Goals

- Be a recognized voice for ethics and values in public policy, management and practice.
- Be a catalyst to enhance the scope and quality of resources and the knowledge base in the field of public service
- Find ways to enable those who serve the public to have access to current and effective practices.
- Foster networking within public service.
- Develop a financial foundation upon which to support programs.

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APPENDICES

Centex ASPA –Strategic Planning Task Force Discussion Worksheet

Mission Statement

A mission statement should clarify an organization's purpose and indicate why it is doing what it does. By examining the answers to the following questions, a draft mission statement can be formulated.

1. What are Centex current programs? Are they innovating and are we being effective with the programs?
2. Is the organization meeting the needs of the membership? What are your concerns about how we do business?
3. How is the organization providing networking opportunities to its membership? Can we obtain additional members this way?
4. How is Centex communicating with the membership? What type of publications are we providing?
5. How successful do you believe we are about informing our members about current events and programs? Do you know how we can improve the process?

Centex ASPA –Strategic Planning Task Force Discussion Worksheet

Vision Statement

A vision statement should emphasize purpose, behavior, performance criteria, decision rules and standards that the organization serves. The vision should be relatively short and to the point.

1. Do you know Centex vision? If so, can we improve our vision?
2. How can we improve the commitment on how we inform our members of our shared vision?
3. Do you believe we need a vision to operate as an organization? If not state your reasons.
4. How can this Board improve the communication with its membership?

Centex ASPA –Strategic Planning Task Force Discussion Worksheet

Goals & Strategies

Goals should act as the guiding force for the strategic plan. Goals represent ideals, which are the organizational commitment to a desired future state or condition. Also, goals should be attainable and also be sufficiently ambitious to make the organization strive for improvement. Goals are usually based on a three to five year plan.

1. What are Centex current goals? Do you think we need them?
2. Are the current goals realistic for our organization to reach? If not, why?
3. What innovative programs are in place to keep the membership abreast in public administration?
4. Who will be responsible to carry out the goals and strategies?
5. What do you think we should accomplish by 2008?
6. How is Centex communicating with the membership in other cities? And are we being effective on getting our message across?