

Take a good look around you – conduct an environmental scan

An environmental scan identifies trends, ideas, and conditions that may impact the organization's future. Highlighting these forces can help you see critical issues your organization will face, and develop strategies for meeting them.

Exercise: A Brief Environmental Scan

Working with your team members, consider the environmental trends that might affect your organization in the coming years. Use the worksheet on the following page to give you ideas, but remember that different organizations will be most impacted by different types of issues. Concentrate on the issues that are most important in your field, and to your organization.

For each issue that relates to your organization:

- Identify the specifics of the issue.
- Briefly outline the best case scenario.
- Briefly outline the worst case scenario.

When doing this exercise as part of a complete strategic planning process, you would:

- Determine if you needed to conduct research to learn more about any of these issues.
- Bring the highlights of this discussion into your work on your organizational vision, goals, and strategies.