

## What happened to that Strategy we did?

During my working life I have had a lot of experience of planning and strategy. I have been required to produce strategies and business plans often to suit particular requirements.

It had always struck me that what should have been a fundamentally important process was often treated as little more than a bureaucratic exercise. This wasn't a fault – it **was** a bureaucratic exercise. These plans were needed to satisfy internal and external requirements. The content was often completely disregarded – we had a plan and that gave someone some reassurance where it was needed.

I often tell the story of one particularly onerous plan that I was asked to do that contained at least a ½ page paragraph of nonsense within it. It was the fact that no-one ever asked me about that ½ page that made me realise no-one had read it. If you want to hide something – put it in the middle of 200 page strategy!

Good planning and strategy development should do more than get a tick in a box. It should be an exercise that involves and engages everyone in what the organisation is doing.

Do it properly and do it for the right reasons. As Winston Churchill once said- "However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results."

A highly polished strategy is not the endpoint – what it achieves is the endpoint, and then it is time for a new strategy.

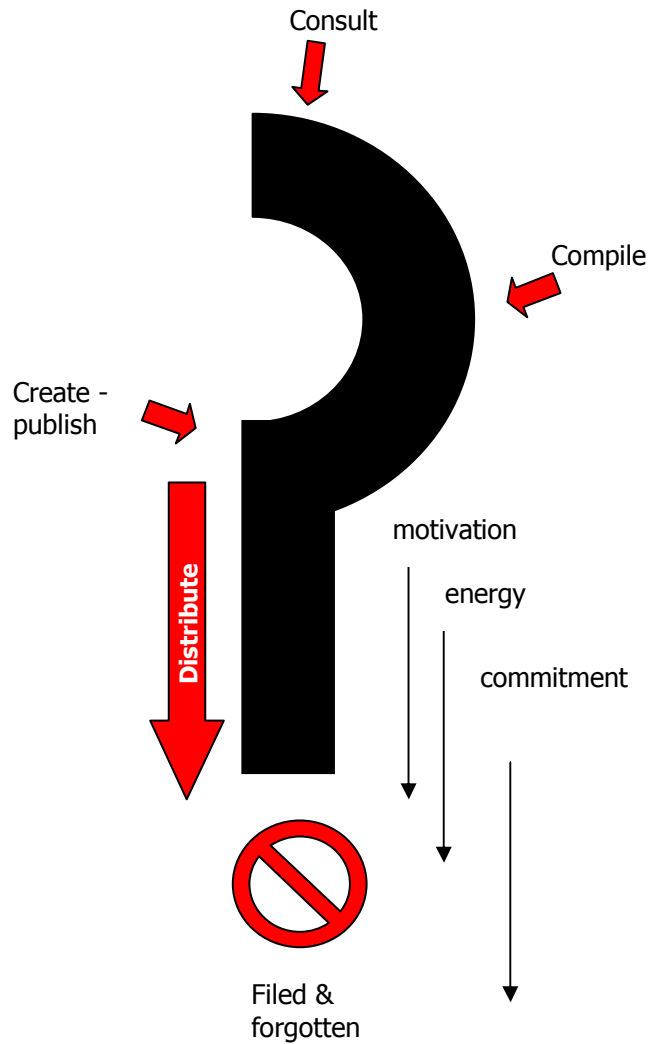
The process below shows what typically happens in planning and then shows a more desirable process. The additions are evaluating testing and refining with the people you have consulted and a proper monitoring and review process. None of this need be time consuming but it does need to be done or the strategy will stay in a drawer and be forgotten leading to the question "What happened to that strategy we did?"

The payoff of getting it right is the results that come from a workforce or team that is clear about direction and engaged in the plan. They don't need to ask that question because they are using it every day.

*If you want help with strategy and planning – call Summerhouses: people and development for a free initial consultation on how we can help [0]161 748 8845 or e mail [postmaster@summer-houses.eu](mailto:postmaster@summer-houses.eu)*

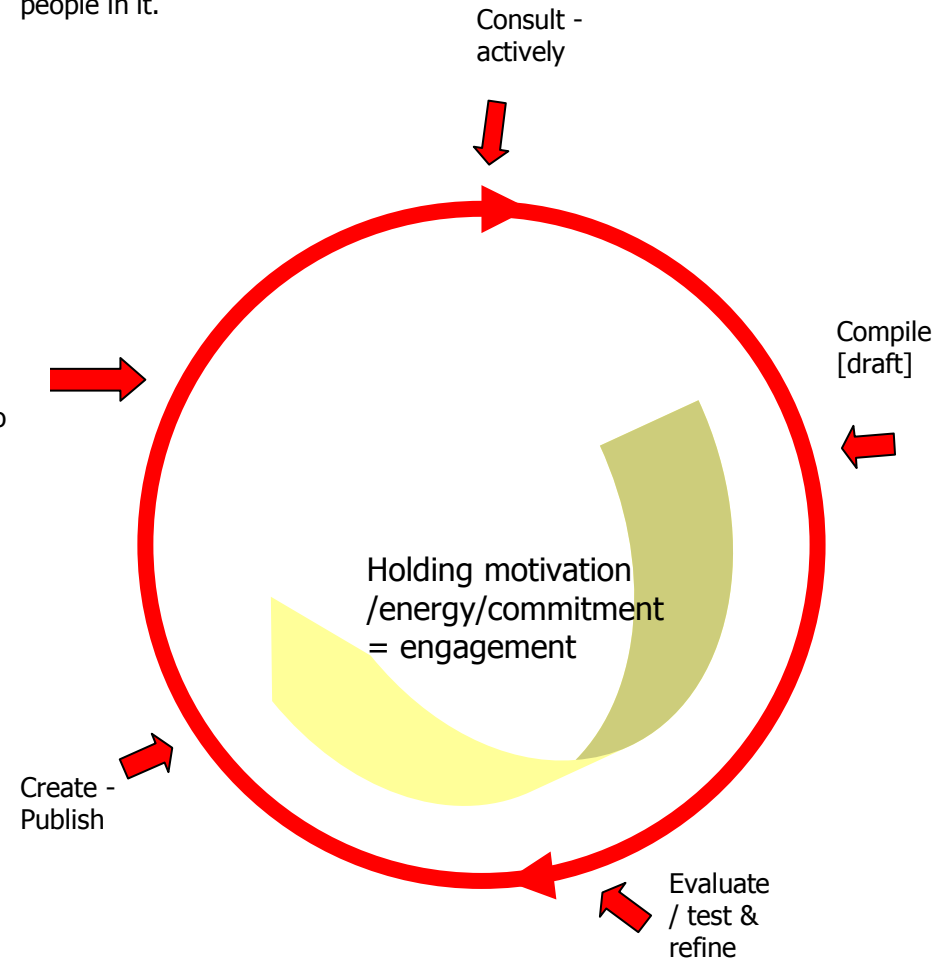
# A Typical planning/strategy process – the question mark [or ‘What happened to that strategy we did?’]

The typical process is a half cycle followed by a complete dropping of the commitment and engagement in the strategy culminating in the strategy being filed and forgotten – at least until it is time to do a new one



An improved process is cyclical – it keeps the strategy dynamic & alive and ensures implementation by engaging people in it.

Monitor & review/  
adjust according to  
an agreed  
framework



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