ILLUSTRATIVE EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BRIEF

From Good Intentions to a Governable 90-Day Plan

FICTIONAL DECISION-SUPPORT EXCERPT · NOT CLIENT WORK · EXECUTIVE STRATEGY

From Good Intentions to a Governable 90-Day Plan **Illustrative sample only.** This fictional DecisivIQ advisory brief shows decision-support material for a nonprofit planning discussion. Northstar Youth Works and all data and figures are hypothetical. This is not a client case study, completed plan, or promise of results.

Executive premise

[Northstar does not have a mission problem. It has a choice problem. Its after-school learning and family-navigation programs are valued, demand is rising, and staff are carrying more exceptions than the model can absorb. The plan should make commitments that can be governed, measured, and sustained.]

[The recommended course is to organize the next 12 months around two program pathways, one shared outcome frame, and a disciplined leadership cadence. That means deferring a proposed workforce-readiness service until management can show that current pathways have clear ownership, usable measures, and a credible capacity plan. Broad ambition without those conditions creates more activity, not more capability.]

Illustrative decision situation

[Northstar Youth Works is a fictional community nonprofit with a $ 1.8 million annual operating budget, 14 staff members, and two principal programs: Pathways After School and Family Navigation. Pathways hypothetically reaches 240 young people annually and Family Navigation assists 160 households. The board seeks a 12-month strategy amid uneven reporting, staff turnover, and a proposed workforce-readiness pilot.]

[The decision is not whether workforce readiness is worthwhile. It is whether Northstar can add it without weakening delivery in programs central to its mission. Materials suggest no common participant-progress definition, no cross-program measure owner, and board meetings used for retrospective updates. These gaps slow responsible choices.]

Decision-quality observations

01 Mission language is broader than the operating model.
Pathways can own attendance, participation, and learning-support outputs. Family Navigation can own timely service connections and resolution of identified needs. Neither should claim long-term community outcomes without clear assumptions and proportionate evidence.

02 The proposed expansion is attractive but premature.
A summer pilot could strengthen relevance to older youth, but it would compete for leadership and management attention needed to stabilize delivery. It needs a target group, expected outputs, owner, partner dependency, and stop-or-continue point.

03 Governance needs cleaner separation.
The board should set mission guardrails, approve direction within its authority, and receive a concise view of progress, risk, and decisions requiring its attention. Management should own execution choices, staff allocation, and corrective action. The reporting package draws the board into operational detail while leaving major tradeoffs implicit.

04 The measurement issue is discipline, not volume.
Northstar needs reliable measures leaders can discuss candidly. Evidence still needed includes attendance by segment, referral completion, caseload capacity, staff time, and reporting reliability.

DECISIVIQ / STRATEGY INTO OPERATING DISCIPLINE

Choose with clarity. Execute with control.

Options and material tradeoffs

Option A: Add the workforce-readiness pilot immediately.
This answers stakeholder interest and may open partnerships. Without a dedicated owner and capacity, it risks fragmentation and weak learning data.

Option B: Consolidate the two current programs for 90 days, then decide on a pilot.
This creates room for program logic, baselines, ownership, and review habits. It delays expansion but supports a credible later choice.

Option C: Freeze new work for a year and stabilize internally.
This is lowest-risk, but may overcorrect if a partner can carry defined delivery responsibilities.

Strategic option
The preferred course is Option B. It protects the core while preserving a future choice. Northstar accepts a short delay in expansion to earn stronger execution confidence.

Recommended action architecture

01 Approve two mission-linked priorities and name accountable owners within 30 days.
Priority one is consistent Pathways delivery; priority two is timely Family Navigation. For each, document intended outcome, activities, outputs, assumptions, risks, and one executive owner. The Strategic Planning Brief and Program Logic and Measures Matrix make this chain visible.

02 Install a 90-day management rhythm before considering the pilot.
Hold a 30-minute weekly operating review, monthly decision review, and board-management touchpoints at days 45 and 90. Separate facts, hypotheses, decisions, blockers, and escalations. Clarify board-oversight matters versus management calls. Pause pilot design if caseload, staffing, or data reliability deteriorates.

03 Use day 90 to make one bounded expansion decision.
Management should present the board with a short decision paper: launch a small partner-enabled pilot, redesign it, defer it, or decline it. Include evidence, capacity implications, dependencies, measures, and consequences for core priorities. The board confirms direction and conditions; it does not manage the pilot.

Executive questions to test

01 What evidence would persuade us that each core program is delivering intended near-term value, rather than merely staying busy?
02 Which decisions genuinely require board attention in the next 90 days, and which should management make without seeking de facto permission?
03 If the pilot is deferred, what mission-critical learning or partner opportunity would we lose, and is that loss material enough to justify the capacity risk?

Professional boundary

This sample reflects strategic planning and decision-support work only. It does not provide legal, tax, accounting, investment, regulatory, procurement, compliance, audit, certification, or government-representation advice. It does not create bylaws, board resolutions, binding legal instruments, filings, or 501(c)(3) applications. Governance and 501(c)(3) planning materials are discussion aids and require review by appropriate counsel and authorized decision makers before reliance or action.
The fixed scope excludes facilitation, surveys, focus groups, stakeholder interviews beyond intake, organizational assessments, independent research, detailed forecasting, fundraising plans, staffing models, grant work, funder outreach, software configuration, dashboard development, data collection, and ongoing project management. No grants, funding, board adoption, organizational results, certifications, compliance outcomes, or other external outcomes are guaranteed.

Engagement snapshot

Offer: Nonprofit Strategic Planning **Fixed price:** $ 695 **Timeline:** 5 business days, beginning after all required inputs are received.
The engagement reviews the mission, current plan, program descriptions, and supplied board or reporting materials. Deliverables are a 6 to 8-page Strategic Planning Brief; Program Logic and Measures Matrix for up to two programs; 12-month Priority Execution Roadmap; and Governance and 90-Day Execution Rhythm.
Inputs include planning materials, up to five board or management documents preferably totaling no more than 25 pages, constraints, available outcome evidence, and a 45-minute intake call with one accountable client lead. One consolidated, in-scope revision is included within 7 calendar days of delivery.

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