# Sample Planning Retreat Agenda

(***Note:*** Depending on the complexity of your planning needs, this agenda may need more than one day to complete.)

* Review agenda.
* Agree on roles and responsibilities.
* Agree on meeting rules.
* Identify proposed meeting outcomes.
* Review past accomplishments by tracking organizational history on a length of posted butcher paper.
* Identify the following (with years identified across the top of the page):
* Programs’ and services’ beginnings
* Goals and strategies for meeting those goals
* People/leadership
* Organization accomplishments
* Lessons learned along the way
* Review organization’s mission statement:
* Brainstorm elements that should be included in the mission statement.
* Ask if the mission statement is clear and free of ambiguity. If rewriting for clarity or to include new ideas is necessary, assign this task to one person.
* Later in the meeting compare the revised draft to the current statement and gather feedback.
* Brainstorm the following, as a group:
* Organizational strengths
* Organizational weaknesses
* Threats to the organization and its work
* Opportunities
* With the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) and the mission analysis fresh in everyone’s minds, brainstorm the following:
* *Programs to keep:* Those that fit the mission and use the organization’s strengths and opportunities.
* *Programs to revise:* Those that fit the mission and need improvement.
* *Programs to discontinue:* Those that are a poor fit for the mission and are not well received and/or are losing money.
* *New program ideas:* To advance the organization’s mission.
* Ask board members to write down their three favorite ideas and post them on a wall where everyone can see them. Organize similar ideas together to see which ones are recommended by the largest number of people. Quickly review these ideas. Ask questions and discuss ideas to clarify intentions.
* Review the financial capabilities of the organization. This is especially important if you’re contemplating adding new programs. If significant new funds are needed, the source of these funds should be specified in a realistic fundraising plan.
* Have meeting participants circulate throughout the room and vote on their top priorities on the list of new programs (with costs and likelihood of being able to support any new priorities taken into consideration). Count the votes. Identify and list the top-ranking ideas.
* Compare the top-ranked ideas to the mission statement.
* Identify the objectives for the top-ranked ideas.
* Break down the group into small committees, each with an objective to address. Have each group create a list of stages and tasks to be pursued to launch the program and meet the objectives.
* Have small committees reconvene and combine their lists of stages and tasks.

After the meeting, do the following:

* Have a working group develop a timeline, budget, and fundraising plan for rolling out any new programs.
* Have one or two strong writers take on the task of incorporating all organizational goals, strategies, objectives, and outcomes into a single document — a draft of the new organizational plan.
* Have the consultant or executive director share the draft with the board and key staff members for discussion and approval.