

Identity Statement (A Tool developed by Lapiana Consulting)

<http://www.lapiana.org/insights-for-the-sector/insights/strategic-planning/identity-statement>

Effective strategic choices are rooted in a firm understanding of “who we are” as an organization. *An Identity Statement is an honest description of an organization at a moment in time.* It incorporates critical defining elements of an organization related to mission, business model, and organizational strengths. Working together to articulate and agree on this Identity Statement is a key precursor to strategy development.

Elements of an Identity Statement

Mission:

Result / impact (vision):

Whom we serve:

Where we work:

What we do / how we do this (programs):

Our competitive advantage:

How we are funded:

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Work with your strategy team to articulate concise descriptions of each of these defining elements. The *process* of working through the Identity Statement together is just as important as the final product, and is a key precursor to strategy development by creating shared understanding of the organization’s fundamentals.

The Identity Statement should be reviewed regularly at staff and board meetings, and the components of it revisited when you sense that your environment may be about to change significantly. Although it may seem simple, the Identity Statement is a valuable tool for developing capacity for strategic thinking and acting. To learn more, read [*The Nonprofit Strategy Revolution: Real-Time Strategic Planning in a Rapid-Response World.*](#)

The conversations which take place as part of the process of creating and/or updating an Identity Statement are as important as the snapshot which is created. The questions which are raised and decisions taken cause leaders in an organization to think, strategically, in real time. The identity statement is also a useful orientation tool for new staff and Board members and a resource for relationship building with other organizations. *A sample Identity Statement from a multi service organization in Ontario follows*

Identity Statement

Mills Community Support Identity Statement

Updated (June 2017)

Components of Identity Statement

Our purpose	We build healthy, aged-friendly and welcoming communities through asset-based community development, strong partnerships and person-directed services.
And seek outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Older persons and persons with disabilities live safe, independent lives at home and in their community• Individuals with an intellectual disability live in a state of dignity, share in all elements of living in the community, and have the opportunity to participate effectively• People have affordable, well-maintained, adequate housing• Welcoming communities –barriers to inclusion and participation are reduced• Community organizations have a positive impact on community vitality
By serving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Older adults and their families• Adults with physical and intellectual disabilities• Individuals/families who require affordable housing• Community organizations
In (Geographic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primary focus on North Lanark (Mississippi Mills; Carleton Place; Beckwith and Lanark Highlands)• Secondary focus on Smiths Falls, West Carleton, Perth and South Renfrew County
Through	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Affordable housing• Assisted/independent living supports• Community adult education and community building projects• Community projects• Building capacity in the voluntary sector through educational and collective impact projects
And emphasizing our competitive advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capacity to provide effective person-centred services/support• Credibility with colleagues' organization and ability to create sustainable partnerships/collaboration• Innovation in service delivery management• Ability to engage citizens in positive approaches to community issues via collective impact work
We are sustainable by	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building relationships/networks• Disciplined approach to management• Action learning/changeability• Engaging the support of the community• Diversifying sources of funding