

## *Defining market and strategy*

Every consulting firm has a number of options in defining its market and strategy. This section outlines the main steps in applying a systematic approach to strategic management. Strategy should be based on hard data. It is useful to start with a thorough self-diagnosis. In short, such a diagnosis should help to develop a realistic view of your consulting organisation's profile, its position in the profession and its place in the market for its services (see Figure 18).

## *Preparing a business plan*

A business plan is a written summary of what you hope to achieve by being in business, and how you intend to organise your resources to meet your goals. It is an essential guide for operating your service and measuring progress along the way. Planning not only forces you to identify your clients, your market area, your pricing strategy, and the competitive environment within which you will operate, it also establishes what resources, especially in terms of finance, are required and when. Figure 19 shows the steps in developing a business plan.

**Figure 18** Developing a consultancy profile

1	Who are you?	
	• institution focus	• consultancy group focus
2	What have you done?	
	• achievements (personnel/organisation)	
3	What can you do?	
	• vision	• goals
	• business plan	
4	How will you do it?	
	• targets	• budgets
5	The advantage of using you	
	• marketing	

Source: R. Bishop at the Commonwealth workshop on educational consultancy skills, Vanuatu 1992

Figure 19 Developing a business plan

- 1 Analyse achievements of personnel and organisation
  - direct
  - indirect
- 2 Analyse the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the internal and external environment
  - professional links
  - organisation structure
  - location
  - educational approach/philosophy
  - availability of technology
  - legal standing
  - wider economic situation
  - marketing strategy
  - competition
  - interface with funding agencies
- 3 Mission
  - parameters
  - what the organisation wishes to achieve
  - ethical standards: what will and won't do
- 4 Vision
  - where you want to be
  - what you want to be good at: generalist, specialist, target area
- 5 Goals
  - how to achieve vision
  - role
  - organisational structure/priorities
  - resources
  - marketing
- 6 Business plan to achieve the above
  - targets
  - budget
  - opportune/opportunistic

*Source:* Robin Bishop at the Commonwealth workshop on educational consultancy skills, Vanuatu 1992