



Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Working Document

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Introduction

Incorporated in 2012, the Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms (CABF) is a faith-based, volunteer, non-profit society. It carries on the intents of its predecessor organization, the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship: to bear witness to the historic Baptist principles of freedom, and to continue involvement with non-Baptist communions in joint worship, social action and ecumenical discussions.

Today CABF has a membership base of individuals and churches in Nova Scotia and Ontario. Its name implies expansion into every Canadian jurisdiction. If that is the Association’s longer-term aspiration, then strategic questions include: “What would such an expansion look like?” and “How would we do that?”

At its June 2017 business meeting, the CABF membership approved a motion to develop a strategic plan for the organization and its ongoing work.

The Development Objectives

- ✓ To create a constructive space where the participants can engage in frank dialogue;
- ✓ To develop consensus around:
 - Mission, Vision and Values,
 - Multi-year, outcome-oriented Strategic Priorities;
- ✓ To start translating those priorities into goals and actionable initiatives; and
- ✓ To establish rough timelines and accountabilities for follow-through.

The Development Process

Launch	Co-Design Session	Facilitator with CABF Council. Refining the design for and firming up initial steps in the planning process. Discussing CABF’s current directions; reviewing relevant issues and trends; agreeing on planning principles, key milestones; and a membership and stakeholder engagement strategy
Phase I	Membership Engagement	Facilitated in-person sessions with 72 members and any key partners to identify key issues and opportunities; ideas for the Association’s future. (Wolfville, Port Williams, Amherst, Burlington, and Halifax)
	Documentation	Synopsis of Membership Engagement findings prepared
Phase II	Extended Council Working Sessions	A series of 6 facilitated 2-hour Strategic Planning Sessions, with Council (and other stakeholders as applicable). Environmental Scan update for Consultation Findings + What findings suggest about Mission, Vision, Values and Strategic Goals.
	Documentation	Brief drafts as the basis for developing the Strategic Plan’s more detailed objectives and actions and to inform dialogue with full membership
	Council Debrief	Short meeting to review the draft strategy document and to agree on an approach to next steps including a full membership briefing at the AGM
	AGM Presentation	Draft Strategy + facilitated planning dialogue with full membership
Phase III	Finalization	Assemble AGM feedback, present and participate in subsequent revisions of the draft Strategic Plan to completion

The Strategic Context

A legal Memorandum of Association sets out objectives describing what the Association is for. Here is the subset that is material for planning purposes:

CBAF Core Objectives by Law



- ✓ To witness to the freedom implicit in the voluntary principle in religion, which is a fundamental tenet of historic identity.
- ✓ To affirm and celebrate Baptist participation in, and witness to, the whole visible, catholic and evangelical church of Jesus Christ;
- ✓ To promote peace and understanding amongst people of all faiths;
- ✓ To provide a forum for the discussion of doctrinal and ethical questions, and social issues and policies in that spirit of tolerance and mutual respect which issues from Christian love;
- ✓ To bear witness to these objectives with and among Baptists regionally as well as nationally and internationally;
- ✓ To provide accreditation for clergy and chaplains;
- ✓ To associate and co-operate with other like-minded organizations, such as the Atlantic Ecumenical Council, The Canadian Council of Churches, The Gathering of Baptists, and the Alliance of Baptists.

Four Fragile Freedoms

The “Baptist Freedoms “ in the Association’s name refer to basic and historic Baptist principles of local church autonomy and individual freedom of worship under the reign of Christ¹. They are consistent with what Walter B. Shurden describes in his book, “*The Baptist Identity: Four Fragile Freedoms*”:

Bible Freedom is the historic Baptist affirmation that the Bible, under the Lordship of Christ, must be central in the life of the individual and the church and that Christians, with the best and most scholarly tools of inquiry, are both free and obligated to study and obey the Scripture.

Soul Freedom is the historic Baptist affirmation of the inalienable right and responsibility of every person to deal with God without the imposition of creed, the interference of clergy, or the intervention of civil government.

Church Freedom is the historic Baptist affirmation that local churches are free, under the Lordship of Christ, to determine their membership and leadership, to order their worship and work, to ordain whom they perceive gifted for ministry, male or female, and to participate in the larger Body of Christ, of whose unity and mission Baptists are proudly a part.

Religious Freedom is the historic Baptist affirmation of freedom OF religion, freedom FOR religion, and freedom FROM religion, insisting that Caesar is not Christ and Christ is not Caesar.

Any strategic plan for the Association and its ongoing work should align with and uphold these 7 core objectives and the 4 freedoms.

¹ <http://fbchalifax.ca/four-fragile-freedoms/>

CABF's Proposed Mission, Vision, Values & Strategic Priorities

What follows has been informed by the Stakeholder Consultations and is a product of the Council's subsequent working sessions. These *draft* elements are considered consistent with the 7 core objectives and the 4 freedoms.

draft **Mission**

The reason CABF exists; enduring and descriptive, it sets the boundaries of legitimate activity ... i.e. who we are and what we do.

4 draft **Vision options**

The desired end-state; the clear and inspirational, long-term desired change resulting from our work.

draft **Values**

Aggressively authentic and deeply-ingrained principles that guide all of CABF's actions; cornerstones that can never be compromised and must be maintained at all costs.

draft **Strategic Priorities**

One usually has a handful of **Strategic Priorities** (a.k.a. Strategic Directions, Strategic Imperatives, Broad Goals) ... essentially broad-based platforms for change ... that guide nearer term priority setting and operational planning.

The main reason we exist is ...

To support churches, individuals, and clergy to understand and uphold the Baptist Freedoms as they express their faith.

We find it compelling to anticipate ...

Baptists freely celebrating, living and bearing witness to the Jesus way of justice, peace and love ?

Baptists loving, serving and celebrating in the freedom of the Spirit ?

Baptists freely following Jesus in the Way of justice, peace and love ?

Baptists freely seeking, sharing and celebrating life in the Jesus way of justice, peace and love ?

We value ... (N.B. full narrative to be added to final version)

Bible Freedom

Soul Freedom

Church Freedom

Religious Freedom

We will ...

Proclaim what we know about the Freedoms

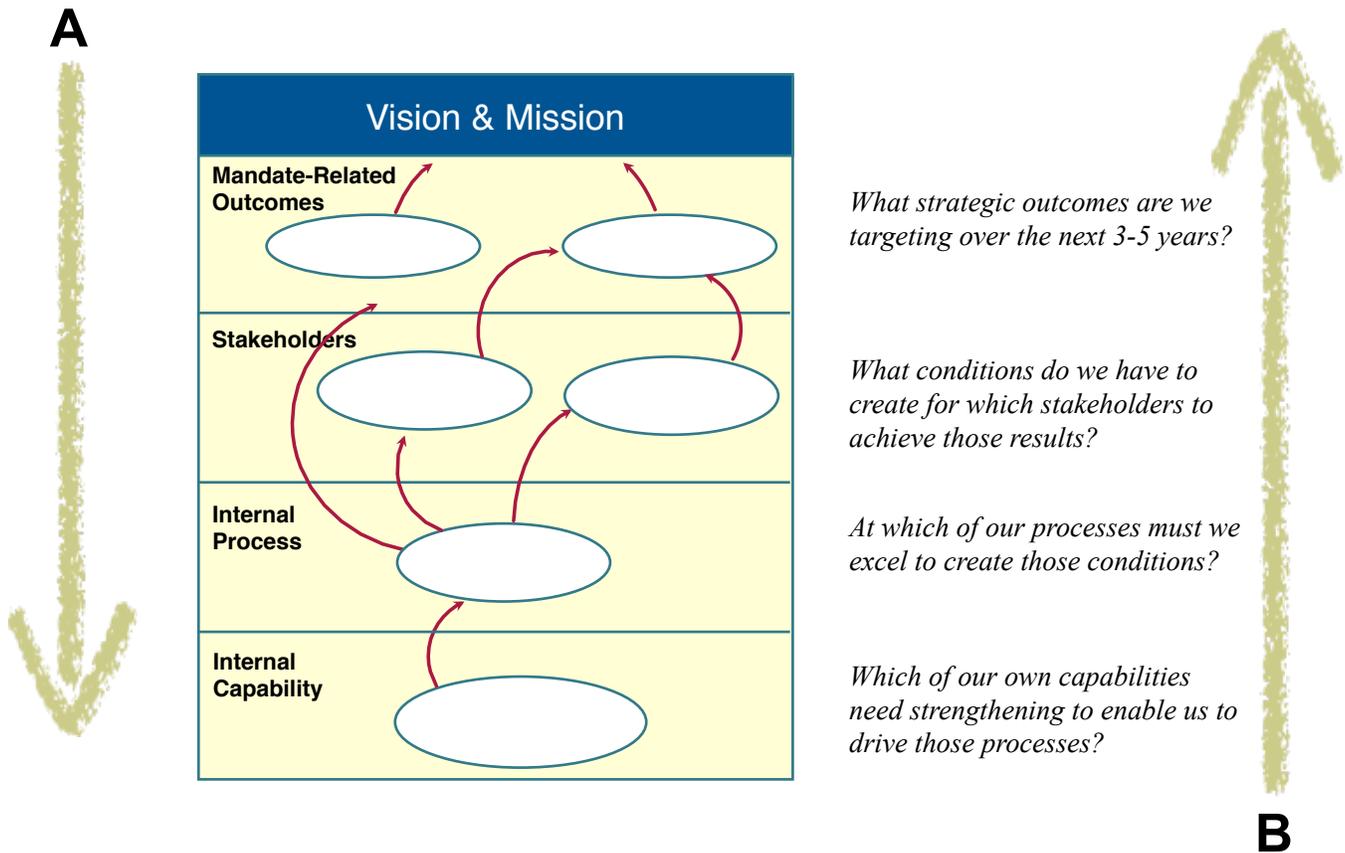
Convene for the purposes of fellowship and growth in the Freedoms

Support those facing trials because of the Freedoms

Mission, Vision, Values & Strategic Priorities (cont'd)

The Strategy Map: What it's for and How it works.

The Strategy Map² is an all-in-one view of the cause-and-effect relationships amongst elements of high-level strategy. It can help with isolating key indicators that suggest how well the strategy is performing.



A In *planning* mode, we proceed from top to bottom, answering the questions to the right for each of the model's 4 perspectives. Each answer serves as context for the question that follows.

B In *implementation* mode, we proceed from bottom to top. If our change theory is right, then investing in the specified Internal Capability optimizes our work and how we do it (Internal Processes) to deliver the conditions that Stakeholders require, which in turn delivers on overall, Mandate-Related Outcomes.

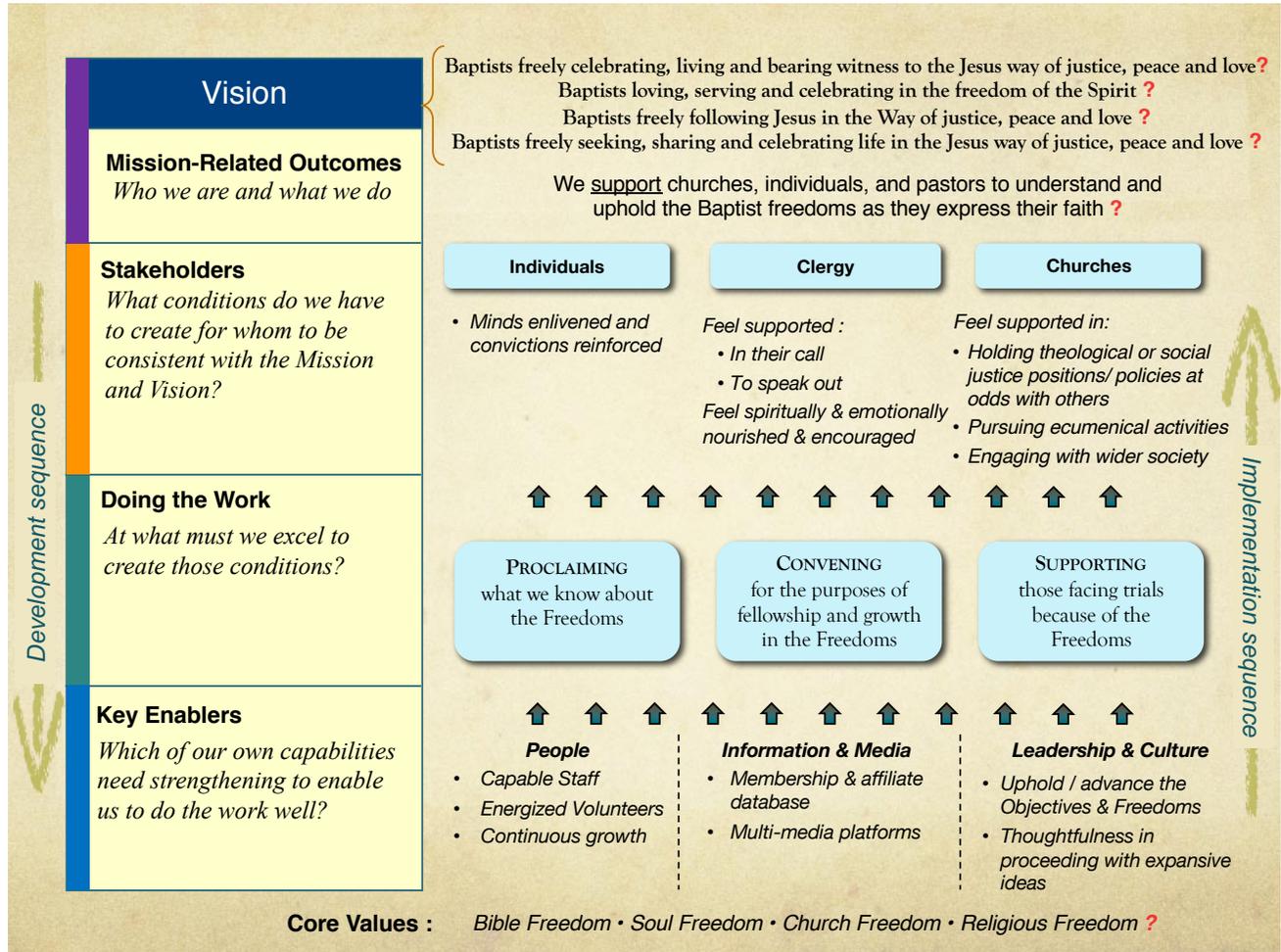
A strength of this approach not yet reflected here, is that key indicators can be associated with each of the model's 4 perspectives. This helps with monitoring progress, problems and mid-course corrections during implementation.

The next page depicts in Strategy Map form, the CABF's thinking to this point.

² Originated within the Balanced Scorecard movement in the '90s. Kaplan, Robert S; Norton, D. P. (1996). The Balanced Scorecard: Translating Strategy into Action. Boston, MA.: Harvard Business School Press. [ISBN 978-0-87584-651-4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-87584-651-4)

Mission, Vision, Values & Strategic Priorities (cont'd)

CABF's Strategy in Map form



The balance of this document describes Key Initiatives we plan to undertake over the next 3 to 5 years in support of the 3 Strategic Priorities.

Strategic Priorities	Key Initiatives
1. Proclaiming what we know about the Freedoms	1.1. TELLING OUR STORY
2. Convening for the purposes of fellowship and growth in the Freedoms	2.1. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT – YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS
3. Supporting those facing trials because of the Freedoms	3.1. ACCREDITATION 3.2. ACCESS TO PENSION & BENEFITS 3.3. CLERGY RECRUITMENT 3.4. JOINT EFFORTS / ASSOCIATING / NETWORKING

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1 : PROCLAIMING
 Key Initiative 1.1 : TELLING OUR STORY

WHAT WE'RE BUILDING ON

- ✓ The Bulletin, The Rushton Lecture & Luncheon, The CABF Web Site and Facebook
- ✓ Relationships founded and built on over the years

We assume that:

- a. 'Proclaiming' is needed because the Freedoms have been lost, taken, given up or forgotten.
- b. In addition to specific projects, we will need an ongoing, overall communication strategy to not only convey our message and goals, but also to declare that we are growing our capacity
- c. Our historic means for communication have been predominantly passive and we'll have to become more strategic, deliberate and active in our communications.

THE PATH AS WE SEE IT

Over the next # months, we intend to:		We'll know we've been successful when:
1. Distinguish amongst current and potential members, who will be among the INFORMED vs. those most likely to be among the INVOLVED vs. those who must be the INVESTED. 2. Make an attractive, compelling case for the Freedoms in a contemporary context; i.e. provide information and education that builds understanding (via the Freedoms) of what it means to be Baptist in today's context. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconnect with existing relationships • Cultivate new relationships through ecumenical and like-minded social justice channels 	TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Whole new generations of people who had walked away from the church or for whom polity and governance don't fit, are cultivating a functional belief in God ✓ A deeper sense of identity (around the Freedoms) is emerging ✓ We're known as a fellowship that supports and enables ✓ We have tapped into latent capacity that is able to be responsive, helping to advance the CABF Mission, Vision and values

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

1. Delivering the right messages to the right audiences using the right media, with the right timing.
2. Being prepared to speak clearly to the matter of whether CABF is a denomination or a movement. Being comfortable and clear about the difference between the mission of CABF and the missions of a denomination or a church. (See also Priority Initiative 3.4 re: what might be the CABF's theological framework.)
3. Shifting authentically from being rebellious and oppositional to being welcoming and inclusive
4. Watching for opportunities to combine proclamation with initiatives under our 2nd Strategic Priority (CONVENING) to build community.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: CONVENING

Key Initiative 2.1 : LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT – YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

WHAT WE'RE BUILDING ON

- ✓ Two yearly meetings: The AGM & Fall Assembly; and The Rushton Lecture & Luncheon
- ✓ Relationships founded and built on by convening over the years
- ✓ The CABF Web Site and Facebook

We assume that:

- a. Effectiveness with this strategic direction will require focus, purpose, and shared expertise (i.e. in the Baptist Freedoms) with leadership/mentoring
- b. We will stimulate openness and inquiry, not indoctrination
- c. In creating meaningful, common, shared experiences, both hi-touch and hi-tech could be relevant or useful
- d. Convening could be instrumental in informing CABF decisions, actions and messages
- e. It might also facilitate others' deliberations, in generating *their* decisions, actions and messages

THE PATH AS WE SEE IT

Over the next # months, we intend to:		We'll know we've been successful when:
1. Convene young adults, parents of youth, and current leaders to consider next steps	Hugh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ There are engaged members and churches feeling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Connected to one another; ○ Unified in purpose; ○ Enlivened with reinforced convictions; and ○ Supported. ✓ Resources are being shared ✓ Joint action is a reality ✓ Understandings are challenged, deepened and broadened ✓ We are helping/supporting the efforts of others who take the lead in convening
2. Plan a Youth Event around the Next Steps identified in #1	TBA	

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

1. Determining the Web's potential as a platform for convening. How does the answer vary with demographic differences? Should access be open or closed (i.e. using portals)?
2. The usefulness of videoconferencing/Zoom/ Skype.
3. By what means there could best be meaningful theological conversations.
4. Our ability to effectively distinguish strategic, theological imperatives with which the Mission & Vision align, from simply relevant issues or topics.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3 : SUPPORTING
 Key Initiative 3.1 : ACCREDITATION

WHAT WE'RE BUILDING ON

- ✓ The Credentials Committee and model, with its policies, processes and procedures;
- ✓ People CABF has accredited and those who wish to be;
- ✓ Our access to expertise (i.e. education, legal);
- ✓ Our working relationships with AST

We assume that:

- a. This has been created for and will continue to serve those pursuing seminary training in other than Baptist settings
- b. Collaboration with ADC is not precluded

THE PATH AS WE SEE IT

Over the next # months, we intend to:		We'll know we've been successful when:
1. Update credentialing policies and procedures	The Credentials Committee, by (date TBA)	✓ There is confidence in the quality and credibility of the accreditation process and those accredited
2. Address capacity and scale issues	The Credentials Committee, by (date TBA)	✓ The accreditation process is streamlined and efficient
3. Design, develop and deliver a <i>Denominational Formation</i> course at AST	The Credentials Committee, by (date TBA)	

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

1. Having adequate capacity to do the AST-related work.
2. Re: the potential for increased tensions with Convention regarding dual accreditation, having a response that is anchored in our Mission, Vision and Values.
3. Our size and ability to maintain and administer the relevant policies and procedures.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3 : SUPPORTING
 Key Initiative 3.2 : ACCESS TO PENSION & BENEFITS

WHAT WE'RE BUILDING ON

- ✓ The experience of 1st Baptist Church, Halifax;
- ✓ HR expertise.

We assume that:

- a. Staff can be covered whether Baptist or not
- b. This is for (member?) churches and those whom we credential

THE PATH AS WE SEE IT

Over the next # months, we intend to:		We'll know we've been successful when:
1. Explore options for churches that can't get coverage otherwise. Criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale (# of lives) • Benefits included • Premiums (including pooling potential) 	A Task Force reporting to the Council, by (date TBA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ There are viable pension and benefits options for church staff ✓

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

1. Being prepared if and when Convention decides to restrict access to their plans (i.e. as a form of punishment to the clergy or church)
2. Whether our scale, in terms of the number of insured lives, precludes access to viable options
3. The possibility that this might be a career limiting move for some clergy

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3 : SUPPORTING
 Key Initiative 3.3 : CLERGY RECRUITMENT

WHAT WE'RE BUILDING ON

- ✓ CABF churches that have recently recruited;
- ✓ Those who have taken the *Intentional Interim Ministry* course.

We assume that:

- a. This is a service offered and is not mandatory.
- b. Although some members might draw on their experiences and coach or consult, consistency of approach and resources across recruitment support situations over time would add value.
- c. We're not in competition with CABF.

THE PATH AS WE SEE IT

Over the next # months, we intend to:		We'll know we've been successful when:
1. Hold a workshop to solicit stories about positive and negative recruitment experiences. Use learnings to inform: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What CABF resources should look like • The design and delivery of our service offering and associated education 2. Consider when and how best to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help churches discern optimal leadership that aligns with/is fueled by the freedoms • Support interim clergy • Aide in transitioning 	A Task Force reporting to the Council, by (date TBA)	✓ CABF is seen as a credible support to churches seeking clergy ✓

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

1. TBA

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3 : SUPPORTING
 Key Initiative 3.4 : JOINT EFFORTS / ASSOCIATING / NETWORKING

WHAT WE'RE BUILDING ON

- ✓ Recent dialogue with among others, the Gathering in Ontario;
- ✓ Our own experience (in the extreme, that of 1st Baptist Halifax)

We assume that:

- a. There are churches that are scared to death that they are dying; they need to grow enough to survive.
- b. This is more than denominational; i.e. would involve anyone who embraces the Freedoms and aligns with the CABF Mission and Values.
- c. We can connect with³ those who (a) are doing what they believe to be the call and mission of Christ in their context; and (b) have run into barriers that exist for institutional reasons ... barriers that they cannot overcome on their own.

THE PATH AS WE SEE IT

Over the next # months, we intend to:		We'll know we've been successful when:
1. Consider what might be the CABF's theological framework ⁴ 2. ???	TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Majority of our members embrace and value our partnerships/networks as serving the CABF Mission ✓ We have helped to create a climate in which churches can grow to be who they are, and to live into that ✓ We're known as a fellowship that supports and enables.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

1. Clear and useful definitions for what we mean by 'joint efforts', 'partnerships', 'networks', and 'association'.
2. The ability to explain how these relationships tie back to the CABF Mission, Vision and Values.

³ God will lead us to them, or them to us.

⁴ Consider the resource material concerning the Alliance.

Overall Critical Success Factors

1. Succession planning. A replacement identified/recruited for every Executive Council Member over the next 5 years.
2. Member Engagement, to help lead, do and support the work
3. Seeing the 'fruits of the freedoms' from disciplined, focused effort.
4. ???