

# FAILING TO PLAN IS PLANNING TO FAIL

WORDS JOHAN KRUGER

**T**his modern-day proverb is widely attributed to Alan Lakein, the writer of several self-help books on time management from the 1970s onward. This quote is well known to most of us and we probably hear it often during the HOA directors meetings that we attend, but maybe it is time to implement the “planning” part of the quote.

The regular changes to directors on the HOA board and “the new broom must sweep clean” contributes to challenging stability and continuity within the HOA team. An annual planning session could easily address this and should not be a complicated exercise. With the correct building blocks and processes in place, the benefits to the HOA team and the estate are immense.

The appropriate planning sessions should take place on an annual basis and the kick-off session must include the management team, directors, committee members, and even selected influencers in the community. Making use of a third-party facilitator and having the meeting at an off-site venue and over one to two days will create the opportunity for the estate team to set goals, craft their vision, discuss those topics that never get resolved at board meetings, such as the current hot topics on the estate, performance targets, meetings schedules, service providers, structures and key features, and take stock of the HOA as a whole. The facilitator will also be able to assist the HOA team to unblock those frosty



relationships that sometimes occur amongst the HOA team members.

This ongoing debate of executive directors, non-executive directors, management mandates, overreaching by directors on operational matters, policies, procedures, etc. should form part of the planning session. Vigorous debates on these sensitive matters and clear delegations of authority between the directors of the HOA and the management team should be agreed to. This will lay the foundation for a well-crafted vision for the HOA.

The above-mentioned planning session should then be followed up with a planning session that includes the management team, all of the staff, committee members, and service providers. This platform creates the ideal opportunity for the estate manager to communicate their vision and the HOA's plans to all of those involved with the HOA.

During the HOA member town hall meetings and AGM, time should also be allocated for the estate manager to give feedback to the members and recognise staff and service providers.

An appropriate “planning” session will greatly benefit the HOA and will reduce the impact of the annual HOA directors changes and create stability and continuity.

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