

Table IV:7 – Common Sources and Methods of Data Collection

Board operations:

- Review Board Bylaws, job descriptions, committee descriptions, description of Board versus employee roles, etc., to understand Board’s stated preferences for how it organizes itself, and operates and interfaces with employees.
- Review Board’s annual calendar of activities – are they on schedule?
- Review the Board’s written procedures for identifying, orienting, training and organizing new Board members to understand how the Board states that it prefers to staff itself with fully developed new members.
- Review Board meeting agendas and meeting minutes to ascertain rate of attendance, participation of members, nature of decisions, follow-through on decisions, etc.
- Administer questionnaire to members and CEO to understand each member’s perceptions of the Board’s quality of teamwork, decision-making, problem solving, implementation of procedures and plans, quality of participation of all Board members, etc.
- Observe actual Board meetings to see how Board meetings are facilitated, including adherence to the agenda, how topics are addressed, how decisions are made, etc. Do the activities match what documentation and interviews revealed?
- Interview CEO about how the Board sets direction for the organization and CEO, and how it monitors implementation of plans. Is there evidence of clear documentation about plans and status of plans?
- Review results of the Board’s self-evaluation. Were the results effectively addressed – or are there plans to address results?
- Review the Board’s written evaluation of the CEO. Was it comprehensive and focused on implementing strategic goals?
- Do members believe issues exist? How do issues affect the organization? What should be done?

Strategic planning:

- Review the most current Board-approved Strategic Plan document. At a minimum, does it describe the mission and strategic goals? If action plans (specifying who will do what by when) are not in the Plan, where are they? Did the Plan produce an annual budget?
 - Interview Board members and senior managers about how the Plan was developed, how implementation feedback was collected about implementation, how the Plan was communicated and to whom.
 - Did the planning process carefully consider external trends and needs, with input from external stakeholders?
 - Did the planning process carefully consider the quality of internal operations?
 - If a Strategic Plan is not available, interview Board members and employees to understand how they are sure they have the same mission and goals and that everyone is working toward them. Understand how they made the decision not to develop a Strategic Plan document.
 - Administer a questionnaire that asks all Board members and employees about their awareness of the mission and strategic goals.
 - Review the products and services to understand their accordance with the Strategic Plan.
 - Review the operating (annual) budget. How is it in accordance with the Strategic Plan?
 - Are there problems with strategic planning? How do they affect the organization? What should be done?
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Table IV:7 – Common Sources and Methods of Data Collection (Cont.)

Teamwork:

- Review Personnel Policies to understand how employees are supposed to be hired, assigned performance goals, rewarded and compensated for performance, and how performance issues are addressed.
- Review the Organization Chart to understand the roles in the organization and how those roles are integrated.
- Review job descriptions. Do they have specific up-to-date responsibilities in accordance with the latest Strategic Plan?
- Review written status reports about what each role does. Do the activities on the reports match the nature of work on the job descriptions?
- Interview top-level managers to understand what teams exist, and the charter for each (charter specifies purpose and specific objectives of each team).
- Administer a questionnaire about organizational climate, including respect, morale and coordination of employees.
- Observe staff meetings. Are they facilitated to an agenda? Are actions and issues recognized and addressed? Meeting minutes issued?
- Interview various supervisors to understand how tasks are assigned, decisions are made, conflict is managed and communication occurs among individual employees.
- Examine the rate of employee turnover, etc. Are activities in accordance with Personnel Policies?
- Do people believe that issues exist? How do issues affect the rest of the organization? What should be done?

Financial management:

- Review the current annual operating budget. Does it reflect priorities from the most recent Strategic Plan?
 - Review current and past year’s financial statements, including the income statement and balance sheet. Is there a budget-versus-actual and/or cash flow report? Are they complete? How often were they issued? Who reviews them and how?
 - Review the fiscal policies and procedures. Do they ensure accurate and legal collection, control and disbursement of funds?
 - Review the latest financial audit from an outside auditor. Are all accounting standards followed? Are the auditor’s recommendations followed?
 - Interview Board members. What do they know about reviewing financial information? How are they sure the information is accurate?
 - Interview the Board Treasurer. How are finances tracked and analyzed?
 - Interview the bookkeeper. How are transactions entered and statements generated? To whom do they go? What do others do with them?
 - Interview personnel regarding products and services. How were pricing policies established?
 - Interview the CEO or Board Treasurer. How do they know there are sufficient funds to pay current bills?
 - Do people perceive that there are issues in financial management? How do issues affect the rest of the organization? What should be done?
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Table IV:7 – Common Sources and Methods of Data collection (Cont.)

Business planning for each product or service:

- Review each Business Plan. Does it describe the product or service, target markets, management for the product or service, how it will be marketed and financials?
 - Interview managers about how each Plan was developed, how implementation feedback was collected about implementation, and how the Plan was communicated and to whom.
 - If a Plan does not exist, are key members of the Board and the managers aware of all of the information that should be in a Plan?
 - Did the planning process include careful market research to clarify needs and wants of various, specific target markets?
 - Did the planning process include careful market research to verify that the product or service will indeed match the needs and wants of its particular target markets?
 - Does information about management indicate that there is sufficient expertise to obtain and organize resources so that the product or service will be developed and will sell well?
 - Did the planning process include careful analysis of the financials, including costs to develop and sell the product or service, along with expected revenues and any plans to address any near-term deficits?
 - Do people believe there are issues with business planning? How do issues affect organization? What should be done?
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Advertising and promotion for each product or service, and overall public relations

- Review plans for advertising and promotions. Do they describe the target markets for each product or service, the needs and wants of each target, styles of communications preferred by each target, and how the features and benefits of each product or service are communicated to the target.
 - Interview managers about how each plan was developed, how implementation feedback was collected about implementation, and how the plans were communicated and to whom.
 - Interview managers to understand who is responsible for advertising and promotions? Are plans being implemented on schedule? If not, why not? What can be done to make the plans more useful?
 - Interview several major customers. What do they think of the organization? How could advertising and promotions be more effective?
 - If plans do not exist, are key members of the Board and the managers aware of all of the information that should be in plans for advertising and promotions?
 - Do people believe there are issues with advertising and promotions? How do those issues affect rest of organization? What should be done?
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Fill in the “Planning the Research” Worksheet



If you and your client are planning the research now, then in the worksheet, “Planning the Research,” in Appendix C, fill in the section, “Data collection method(s).”
