

(Agency Logo)

**GREAT IDEAS REPORT**

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## GREAT IDEAS

What *could* we do next?

Warren Bennis proclaims that the “single defining quality of leaders is the capacity to create and realize a vision.”<sup>1</sup> Indeed, superior leaders are often synonymous with great visionaries, as in the case of Walt Disney and Winston Churchill. Further proving vision’s validity, research confirms that 88 percent of executives use vision to guide their firms.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, this report seeks to empower our company with a strategic process that enables us to better articulate our vision.

### Vision Statement

To paint a picture of the *best* future, leaders must consider what is achievable based on what holds the organization back and what propels it forward.<sup>3</sup> Brainstorming around these issues will identify our driving forces. Subsequently, we will generate a new vision statement, as well as several other ideas that might be advantageous strategies.<sup>4</sup>

### Ideate

The first step to determine our vision is ideation. Because this process is so vital, we used four tools to develop a myriad of options that the organization collected and prioritized: Stakeholders, BOBs, Stop Fix, and Great Questions..

### Stakeholders

Who are our internal and external stakeholders? Identifying these key constituents is an important part of the strategic process. Once established, strategic planners should identify the goals and influence of each group.<sup>5</sup> We summarized our identified stakeholders below:

Stakeholder Analysis			
Stakeholder	Principal Goals	Interest	Influence
Theatre Patrons: 25,000 in the Chicago metropolitan area	Experience excellent and enlightening theatre	Mid	High
Staff: 13 nonprofit employees	Valuable work experience and financial compensation	Mid	High
Company Artists: 40 actors, artisans, and directors	Enhanced artistic experience and stake in the organization	High	Low
Funders: foundation, corporate, government and individual donors	Return on investment	High	High
Board: 21 Chicago-area members	Ensure proper governing of theatre	Mid	High
CPS Students: 500	Become better students using drama-based strategies	Mid	Low
Partners: space rental	Generate a portion of revenue from the theatre’s audience	Low	Low

URTurn: Complete the chart below with your agency's stakeholders and their respective goals and influence. Once you've done this, delete the example table above and these directions.

Stakeholder Analysis			
Stakeholder	Principal Goals	Interest	Influence
	•		
	•		
	•		

To prioritize communication strategy with stakeholders, Bryson's influence versus interest grid will allow us to understand our constituents and the level at which information must be managed.<sup>6</sup> To do so, we inserted the stakeholders into the tool below:

Stakeholder Management	
High Influence – Low Interest	High Influence – High Interest
Keep Satisfied • Theatre patrons; staff; board	Manage Closely • Funders
Low Influence – Low Interest	Low Influence – High Interest
Monitor • CPS students	Keep Informed • Company artists; space-rental partner

URTurn: Complete the chart below with your agency's stakeholders and their interest. Once you've done this, delete the example table above and these directions.

Stakeholder Management	
High Influence – Low Interest	High Influence – High Interest
Keep Satisfied •	Manage Closely •
Low Influence – Low Interest	Low Influence – High Interest
Monitor •	Keep Informed •

Using the information we discovered about stakeholders and their varying interest, we brainstormed the following ideas to help us better serve these different groups:

Stakeholders Ideas	
External Stakeholders	Internal Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a box office and make exterior look more like a theatre (to ease patron confusion)</li> <li>Provide annual reports to funders</li> <li>Invite major funders to opening performances and rehearsals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase administrative space</li> <li>Search for new hires with diverse backgrounds</li> <li>Invest in staff human resource benefits</li> </ul>

URTurn: Complete the chart below with your agency's stakeholder ideas. Once you've done this, delete the example table above and these directions.

Stakeholders Ideas	
•	•

## BOBs

Investigating the best of the best (BOBs) in our industry reveals our competitor's strengths and stimulates ideas for our own organization.<sup>7</sup> We could have examined numerous competitors, but the trick is choosing ones that truly excel at similar things that our business is trying to accomplish and that are financially strong. Below is a chart that compares our agency to two others:

Best of the Best		
A Stage	BOB 1	BOB 2
Lines of Business		
• Annual Season of 4 Plays	• Annual Season, 8-9 Plays	• Annual Season, 8-9 Plays
• Subscribers	• Subscribers	• Subscribers
• Young Audience Program	• Student Subscriptions	• Young Professionals
• Student Programming	• General Theatre Studies	• Young Playwrights
• Scholar Program	• Audience Discussions	• Post-Show Discussions
• Company Artists	• The Artistic Collective	• Acting Company
• Research (Dramaturgy)	• Creative Partners	• Conservatory
• New Work Reading Series	• New Work Readings	
• Annual Fund	• Annual Fund	• Annual Fund
• Special Events	• Special Events	• Special Events
• Sponsorship	• Sponsorship	• Sponsorship
• Foundation Support	• Foundation Support	• Foundation Support
	• Planned Giving	• Planned Giving
	• Adult Writing Workshop	• Capital Giving
	• Youth Arts Council	• Student Matinees
	• Access Performances	• Access Performances
Financials		
Revenue: 1,360,995	23,291,558	15,388,217
Expenses: 1,371,786	23,107,444	15,338,000
Net Revenue: -10,791	184,114	49,417
Net Assets: 632,951	38,715,519	43,375,356
<i>We have, but they don't</i>	<i>They have, but we don't</i>	<i>They have, but we don't</i>
• Chicago's only theatre devoted to work inspired by history	• One of the nation's largest and oldest nonprofit theatres • National and international recognition	• One of the nation's most successful regional theatres • Revenue-generating education programs

URTurn: Complete the chart below with your agency's BOBs comparison. Once you've done this, delete the example table above and these directions.

Best of the Best		
Your Agency	BOB 1	BOB 2
Major Lines of Business	Major Lines of Business	Major Lines of Business
•	•	•
Financials	Financials	
Revenue: xxx,xxxx,xxx	xxx,xxxx,xxx	xxx,xxxx,xxx
Expenses: xxx,xxxx,xxx	xxx,xxxx,xxx	xxx,xxxx,xxx
Net Revenue: xxx,xxxx,xxx	xxx,xxxx,xxx	xxx,xxxx,xxx
Net Assets: xxx,xxxx,xxx	xxx,xxxx,xxx	xxx,xxxx,xxx
We have, but they don't	They have, but we don't	They have, but we don't
•	•	•

Learning from the best in our industry, we generated the following additional ideas for our own agency:

BOBs Ideas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase season of work</li> <li>• Raise endowment funds</li> <li>• Create a festival</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have teachers, students, subscribers and donors write monthly blog</li> <li>• Start a theatre camp</li> </ul>

URTurn: Complete the chart below. Once you've done this, delete the example table above and these directions.

BOBs Ideas	
•	•

### Stop Fix

In the Great Start process, our agency learned that choosing what *not* to do is essential to strategy.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, it is crucial to consider what to stop or fix. In building an ideal portfolio of LOBs, we must strive to maintain attractive programs with a strong position. These robust programs should support mission-critical endeavors that are less attractive.<sup>9</sup> In the table below, the MacMillan Product Matrix<sup>10</sup> analyzes the organization's current portfolio in terms of attractiveness, alternative coverage, and competitive position:

MacMillan Matrix	
1. Program Attractiveness	
High	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Season</li> <li>• Subscription</li> <li>• Fundraising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lobby Displays</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Company Artists</li> </ul>

		2. Alternative Coverage			
		High	Low	High	Low
3. Strong Competitive Position	<b>Aggressive Competition</b>	<b>Aggressive Growth</b>	<b>Build Up Best Competitor</b>	<b>Soul of the Agency</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual Season</li> <li>Subscription</li> <li>Fundraising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lobby Displays</li> <li>Research</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Company Artists</li> </ul>	
4. Weak Competitive Position	<b>Aggressive Divestment</b>	<b>Build Strength or Sell Out</b>	<b>Orderly Divestment</b>	<b>Foreign Aid, Joint Venture</b>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programming for audiences under 35</li> <li>Scholar Sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Work Reading Series</li> </ul>		

URTurn: Complete the chart below. Once you've done this, delete the example table above and these directions.

		MacMillan Matrix			
		1. Program Attractiveness			
		High	Low		
		•	•	•	•
		2. Alternative Coverage			
		High	Low	High	Low
		•	•	•	•
3. Strong Competitive Position	<b>Aggressive Competition</b>	<b>Aggressive Growth</b>	<b>Build Up Best Competitor</b>	<b>Soul of the Agency</b>	
	•	•	•	•	
4. Weak Competitive Position	<b>Aggressive Divestment</b>	<b>Build Strength or Sell Out</b>	<b>Orderly Divestment</b>	<b>Foreign Aid, Joint Venture</b>	
	•	•	•	•	

Using the MacMillan Product Matrix, we found the following LOBs to cut and build up:

MacMillan Matrix Ideas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cut new work reading series</li> <li>Ramp up education programs</li> <li>Increase program of work to increase subscriptions</li> <li>Improve strategies for scholar events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report dramaturgical research and audience impact findings to funders</li> <li>Invite teachers and students to performances that feature scholars</li> <li>Ramp up programming for audiences under 35</li> </ul>

URTurn: Complete the chart below with what your agency wants to stop and fix. Once you've done this, delete the example table above and these directions.

MacMillan Matrix Ideas	
•	•

## Great Questions

### Schumpeter Five

The great Joseph Schumpeter<sup>11</sup> who coined the term creative destruction offers five categories of questions that are valuable for generating ideas:

1. Creating a new or improved product, service, or program – one with which the users are not yet familiar.
2. Introducing a new or improved strategy or method of operating [including] how the product, service, or program is designed, tested, produced, and assessed.
3. Reaching a new market, serving an unmet need – making a product available to a group that did not otherwise have access to it.
4. Tapping into a new source of supply or labor.
5. Establishing a new industrial or organizational structure [including] mergers, spinoffs, alliances, and other contractual arrangements.<sup>12</sup>

Using these five questions, we came up with the following ideas:

Schumpeter Five	
New or improved product, service or program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved student programs</li> <li>• Improved new works program</li> <li>• New scholar programs</li> </ul>
New or improved strategy or method of operating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better marketing to support new works</li> <li>• Hire a PR firm for increased visibility – local and nationally</li> <li>• Formalizing audience feedback and surveys</li> </ul>
New market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with history classes, as well as drama classes</li> <li>• Wine and theatre pairing events</li> </ul>
New source of supply or labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with DePaul and other local universities to create work-study programs and internship opportunities</li> </ul>
New organization structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looking for additional venues to rent space from to expand our season of work</li> </ul>

URTurn: Brainstorm ideas for answers to Schumpeter's questions and fill in the table below. Then delete the chart above and these directions.

Schumpeter Five	
New or improved product, service or program	•
New or improved strategy or method of operating	•
New market	•

Schumpeter Five	
New source of supply or labor	•
New organization structure	•

### Ansoff Four

Another tool for our ideation is the Ansoff matrix,<sup>13</sup> which stimulates ideas by considering opportunities around the table's four quadrants. Additionally, it's helpful to think about the quadrants in the form of questions. Joseph Schumpeter suggests considering what your organization can create, improve, reach, tap, and establish.<sup>14</sup>

Ansoff Four Ideas		
	Current products	New products
	Market Penetration	Product Development
Current Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase annual productions</li> <li>• Expand education programs</li> <li>• Apply for more funding/sponsorship</li> <li>• Expand young audience programming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Festival around historical holidays</li> <li>• Student matinees</li> <li>• Digital study guides and playbills</li> <li>• Resource center for further study</li> </ul>
New Markets	Market Development	Diversification
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a larger theatre in a new neighborhood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with universities</li> <li>• Screen films inspired by history</li> <li>• Start a playwriting contest</li> <li>• Build neighborhood partnerships</li> <li>• Create student productions</li> <li>• Start a theatre camp</li> <li>• Sell vintage clothes</li> </ul>

URTurn: Complete the chart below. Once you've done this, delete the example table above and these directions.

Ansoff Four Ideas		
	Current Products	New Products
	Market Penetration	Product Development
Current Markets	•	•
New Markets	Market Development	Diversification
	•	•

When looking at the results of the Ansoff Matrix, it's clear that the ideas generated in market penetration are low hanging-fruit. However, market development and product development are the "sweet spot" of our ideation.<sup>15</sup> This is because the ideas in this quadrant are much easier than diversification, but still allow our organization to branch out.



## Drucker Two

Peter Drucker uses two key questions when he, “genuinely entrepreneurial businesses have two ‘first pages’ – a problem page and an opportunity page – and managers spend equal time on both.”<sup>16</sup> **Put simply, *what holds you back and what takes you forward?*** Below are the dozens of ideas that we generated using these questions and the BAM tool:

Ideas*	Vision Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increase administration space; make exterior look more like a theatre; generate a larger audience by having more seats to sell; increase season of work; add more shows to meet demand; increase available seating; implement a box office; obtain a liquor license; create a resource center for students/life-long learners; expand current programming; build a larger theatre in a new area; gain new donors through a capital campaign (19)</li> </ul>	A New Home
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>go after a Regional Tony Award; increase advertising; strengthen branding; advertise Jeff Awards; promote strength of artistic staff; leverage reputation as the only theatre devoted to plays inspired by history; tour productions; report dramaturgical research and audience impact findings to funders (17)</li> </ul>	Strengthen Reputation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>create a festival of plays around a historical holiday</li> <li>partner with other social/health causes</li> <li>begin an annual playwriting competition (15)</li> </ul>	Extraordinary Events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>search for new hires with diverse backgrounds; cut new work reading series; increase program of work to increase subscriptions</li> <li>identify additional funding opportunities; raise endowment funds; provide annual reports to funders; invite major funders to opening performances and rehearsals;</li> <li>ask bigger theatres for advice; partner with other storefront theatres on events to lessen financial burdens (15)</li> </ul>	Get in the Black
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cut unnecessary programs; implement staff incentives; create a structured volunteer program; hire additional interns; invest in HR, develop employee reviews (10)</li> </ul>	Prevent Staff Burnout

\* Participants used a type of voting (multi-voting) to prioritize the results shown parentheses.

URTurn: Complete the SWOT Simple 2 and then complete the chart below. Once you’ve done this, delete the example table above and these directions.

Drucker Two Ideas	
Ideas (Affinity Grouped)*	Vision Ideas
•	
•	

Drucker Two Ideas	
Ideas (Affinity Grouped)*	Vision Ideas
•	
•	
•	
•	
•	
•	

\* Participants used a type of voting (multi-voting) to prioritize the results shown parentheses.

**Statement**

Based on all of our brainstorming and the results of the voting in the BAM process, we can identify the strategic priorities of our organization and are able to define a vision that feels right for our organization. The following statement will be our “guidepost showing the way”<sup>17</sup> and direct our efforts as we narrow down our ideas and create our strategies:

**A preeminent nationally recognized  
Chicago arts organization**

URTurn: Create your new vision statement, delete the statements above, and replace it with your own.

**Vision Ideas**

**Collect**

Now that we have used four tools to ideate, the next step is to collect the credible ideas from that process. The chart below lists several achievable, yet idealistic suggestions:

All Ideas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new venue</li> <li>• Advertise subscriptions</li> <li>• Ask bigger theatres for advice</li> <li>• Become part of the citywide cultural plan</li> <li>• Cut new work reading series</li> <li>• Cut unnecessary LOBs</li> <li>• Festival around historical holiday</li> <li>• History trivia nights</li> <li>• Identify low-cost, low-staff LOBs</li> <li>• Identify PR opportunities to capitalize on being the only theatre solely dedicated to presenting plays inspired by shared history</li> <li>• Implement staff incentives</li> <li>• Improve strategies for scholar and young</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with universities and city colleges</li> <li>• Apply for more funding</li> <li>• Patron/student blog</li> <li>• Revamp education program</li> <li>• Seek additional sponsorships</li> <li>• Set up patron resource center to visit the theatre outside of scheduled shows to encourage further learning</li> <li>• Start a theatre camp</li> <li>• Start an administration volunteer program</li> <li>• Strengthen reputation</li> <li>• Student matinees</li> <li>• Tour productions</li> <li>• Update box office and ticketing system</li> <li>• Update website</li> </ul>

All Ideas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>audience programming</li> <li>Increase season offerings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Late night historical satire</li> <li>Partner with other causes</li> </ul>

URTurn: Complete the chart below. Once you've done this, delete the example table above and these directions.

All Ideas	
•	•

## Evaluate

It turns out that decisions made quickly can be as valuable as decisions made cautiously and deliberately.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, intuition is the first step in evaluating the credible ideas generated in the collection process. We were able to cut our list of ideas in half in the chart below:

### First Cut

First Cut	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new venue</li> <li>Festival around historical holiday</li> <li>Increase season offerings</li> <li>Strengthen reputation</li> <li>Cut unnecessary LOBs</li> <li>Partner with other causes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student matinees</li> <li>Start an administration volunteer program</li> <li>Become part of the citywide cultural plan</li> <li>Identify PR opportunities</li> <li>Late night historical satire</li> <li>Obtain more funding</li> </ul>

URTurn: Complete the chart below. Once you've done this, delete the example table above and these directions.

First Cut	
•	•

## Contenders

The Contenders process puts our top ideas into the Payoff Matrix.<sup>19</sup> The four quadrants in the chart below separate ideas based on big or small pay-off and easy or hard to implement. As a result, our organization chose six contenders (bolded and italicized in the chart below). These ideas represent a mix of easy and hard to do, but all with a big pay-off.

		Contenders	
		Hard to Do	Easy to Do
Big Pay-off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>A new venue</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Festival around historical holiday</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Increase season offerings</i></b></li> <li>• Strengthen reputation</li> <li>• Partner with other causes</li> <li>• Obtain more funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Cut unnecessary LOBs</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Student matinees</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Start an administration volunteer program</i></b></li> <li>• Identify PR opportunities</li> </ul>	
Small Pay-off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Late night historical satire</li> <li>• Work with the city to become part of the citywide cultural plan</li> </ul>	

URTurn: Complete the chart below and remember to put your six contenders in bold and italics. If you need help formatting your text, call Mark or one of the coaches. Once you've completed the chart, delete these instructions.

		Contenders	
		Hard to Do	Easy to Do
Big Payoff	•		•
Small Payoff	•		•

### Finalists

To select six finalists, we narrowed down the contenders and selected only ones expected to deliver a big pay-off. Reaching beyond intuition, our organization used the Weighted Decision Matrix<sup>20</sup> to measure the finalists:

Finalists							
Criteria	W T	A New Home	Student Matinees	Increase PR	Cut LOBs	Admin. Volunteer Program	Historical Holiday Festival
Serves our primary customers	5	20	15	15	25	5	25
Supports their transformation	5	25	25	25	5	10	25
Plays to competitive advantage	4	4	20	4	12	4	20
Profitable	3	15	9	12	15	15	15
Fundable	4	20	20	4	4	4	20
Achievable	3	12	12	12	15	12	12
Total		96	101	72	76	50	117

URTurn: Use the [decision matrix template](#) to complete the final chart for this report below. Once you've done this, delete the example table above and these directions.



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## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> (Bennis, 1989, p. 194)
- <sup>2</sup> (Light, 2017)
- <sup>3</sup> (Light, 2017)
- <sup>4</sup> (Light, 2017)
- <sup>5</sup> (Light, 2017)
- <sup>6</sup> (Bryson, 2011, p. 408)
- <sup>7</sup> (Light, 2017)
- <sup>8</sup> (Porter, 1996)
- <sup>9</sup> (MacMillan, 1983, p. 81)
- <sup>10</sup> (MacMillan, 1983)
- <sup>11</sup> (Schumpeter, 1983)
- <sup>12</sup> (Dees, 2001, p. 163)
- <sup>13</sup> (Ansoff, 1957)
- <sup>14</sup> (Schumpeter, 1983)
- <sup>15</sup> (Light, 2017)
- <sup>16</sup> (Drucker, 1985, p. 68)
- <sup>17</sup> (Nanus, 1992-9)
- <sup>18</sup> (Light, 2017)
- <sup>19</sup> (Ulrich, Kerr, & Ashkenas, 2002)
- <sup>20</sup> (Nanus, 1992)