**Strategic Objective Question and Guidelines**

1. Narration. See Centratel sample (and feel free to copy all or part of it). Give an overview of the reason for the Strategic Objective, state overall what it is and why it is important.

2. Begin the Strategic Objective and be concise, one or two sentences will, in most cases, suffice. Start by stating exactly what the overall goal is. Avoid feel-good generalities (here, and throughout your Strategic Objective) such as "We want to be the best!" Can you be the best in your field or in your region? You know this already: Almost always, having the highest quality of product and/or level of service is the easy ticket to long-term success. As an aside, you will need to be able to objectively measure this expertise somehow.

3. What is the fundamental strategy? I recommend you state that reaching company goals will be accomplished by making the systems of the company the day-to-day focus. Point out that the three documents are the guiding principles in the moment and in the long term. If you think it is important, in order to stimulate the acceptance of the new mindset, state that you do not focus on fixing problems. You focus on perfecting systems that will prevent problems in the first place

4. Here, at the beginning, say that you have three guiding documents. List them.

5. Define exactly what you do. What exactly is it that you sell or provide? If necessary add geographical region in which you do this. Are there other objective constraints or limitations?

6. Flesh-out your systems thrust by stating that the people, systems and guiding/supporting documentation will be the focus. Say that by having a clear path supported by enthusiastic people who know exactly what is expected of them, goals will be met and customers will be happy. Add other attributes that you feel are critical. You may need a full paragraph in order to be thorough. You will tweak this over time in order to get it right.

7. What are your competitive advantages? This could be a relatively long list.

8. State your special efficiencies or other outstanding advantages? Is there some unique sales positioning or other unique attribute that you have?

9. Again state the importance of procedural documentation and that it *must* be followed exactly. Then – this is important – temper that statement by stating that procedure documentation will be changed instantly if it can be improved and that anyone can solicit a change ("…a rigid steel structure that can be instantly adjusted."). You will define in a Working Procedure exactly how this will work.

10. .Describe briefly your organizational layout and, generally, how the organization is put together. You will back this up with a Working Procedure showing your organizational chart

11. Describe in detail other points that you feel are important enough to be here at the very end of THE master document of your business, the Strategic Objective.

**Centratel's Strategic Objective**

We are the highest-quality telephone answering service in the United States.

Our fundamental strategy is to relentlessly "work" the systems of the business to perfection.

Our guiding documents are the Strategic Objective, 30 Principles, and the collection of Working Procedures.

Centratel's primary offering is 24/7/365 telephone answering service for business and professional offices throughout the United States. Peripheral services are voice mail and paging for the Central Oregon region only.

Through intense commitment to our employees, we will contribute to the success of our clients. The consequence of having loyal, smart, hardworking, long-term, and well-compensated employees is superb quality service to customers.

Our business is complex, with many human, mechanical, and computer systems in simultaneous motion. Success depends on refined communication and organizational systems, dedicated staff, documented point-of-sale procedures, first-class office space and equipment, rigorous quality control with continuous measurement, assertive innovation, intense system maintenance/system improvement, aggressive and measured marketing, and relentless attention to detail in every nook and cranny.

Competitive advantages include a near-flawless level of message processing accuracy, products designed around the unique needs of the customer, thoughtful customer service that is immediate and consistent, the latest high-tech equipment, and personal/corporate integrity. We use extraordinarily efficient communication tools and protocols. We constantly refine and improve all internal systems.

To grow, we proceed with an "if we build it, they will come" philosophy, juxtaposed with assertive marketing efforts.

Although we tightly control Centratel's operation through guiding documentation, we will modify that documentation immediately if an improvement can be made: "Our operational framework is rigid, but that framework can be modified instantly." We segment responsibilities into specialized "expert compartments" with appropriate cross training among departments. We have backup personnel for all management and staff positions.

Primary vertical markets include medical, veterinary, home health/hospice, funeral home, HVAC, property management, hi-tech, 24/7 on-call, front office/virtual receptionist, and utility.