Project Planning and Evaluation

Adapted from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, 2007.

"If you don't know where you're going, how are you gonna' know when you get there?"   Yogi Berra

Planning *is how we get from where we are, to where we want to go.*
Problem: the current state of things. Why is it a problem?
Goal: the end state of things. What is it that we want to be different?
How do we get from the problem to the goal? Make a plan.
Key is choosing the *right* goals, goals that accomplish the desired end state.

Baseline Data *are factual descriptions of the current state of things.*
Before beginning a change process, need to know what is present reality.
Such data provides discipline toward accomplishing change,
keeps us honest about what change is
actually occurring,
and provides initiative to make change.
Two kinds of data:
1. Quantitative information that are objective measurements of reality.
2. Qualitative information in the form of narrative descriptions.

Activities *are those tasks that need to be done in order to achieve the goal.*
Identify tasks that will move the project from problem to goal.

Outcomes *are the results from the list of activities.*
The problem is stated and a goal for resolution is made.
Outcomes are the actual evidence that activities are being done,
and that progress toward the goal is being made.
Two kinds of outcomes:
1. Clear accomplishments that demonstrate progress toward the goal.
2. Trends that indicate direction toward the goal.

Indicators *are the objectives that measure change.*
How much? (amount of change)
Who? (who/what groups are measured)
What? (what is measured)
When? (when will change occur)
Indicators *collectively* give a mental picture of a project's success.

Evaluation *is a systematic collection of information*
that assists in determining whether outcomes are being met.
Evaluation *used to be* proving whether a program worked, success or failure.
Usually done by outsiders.
Usually only quantitative.
Evaluation *should be* a learning experience for continuous improvement.
What was done?
What results were realized?
What do we know now that we didn't when we started?
Why are some things successful?
What inhibited the accomplishment of goals or desired change?
How have we changed because of the activities?
In what ways is the effort worth the time, people and funding?
Quantitative to demonstrate progress.
Qualitative to interpret progress.
Keep a committee notebook of what worked best, what did not work well,
and recommendations for future projects.

Genesis 6:11-22

Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. [12]And God saw that the earth was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its ways upon the earth. [13]And God said to Noah, 'I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; now I am going to destroy them along with the earth. [14]Make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. [15]This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. [16]Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above; and put the door of the ark in its side; make it with lower, second, and third decks. [17]For my part, I am going to bring a flood of waters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. [18]But I will establish my covenant with you; and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. [19]And of every living thing, of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. [20]Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground according to its kind, two of every kind shall come in to you, to keep them alive. [21]Also take with you every kind of food that is eaten, and store it up; and it shall serve as food for you and for them.' [22]Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

Problem: (11) the earth was corrupt and filled with violence.
Goal: (13) end all flesh [and restore a righteous creation].
        The Bible argues that this was not a "right" goal and that it did not work in the long run.
        Thus, God tried again through Jesus.
Baseline data: (verses 5-8) "wickedness of man was great in the earth," God was sorry, Noah was favored.
Activities: (13-17, 19-21) God will destroy all flesh except for Noah's family. Noah is to build an ark.
        God will flood the earth to drown all animals and people. Noah is to bring on two of every creature
        to create a new future, and food to feed them all.
Outcomes: (22) Noah does his part.
        (Genesis 7-10) God floods. Those on the ark survive.
        God restores the earth from those preserved on the ark. Noah has descendents.
Indicators: An ark is built. Animals and birds are gathered.
        All creatures and people left on land are destroyed.
        Two of every creature are preserved on the ark.
        Animals and people disembark after 40 days
        Creatures and people repopulate the earth.
        Rainbow stands as a sign of God's covenant with Noah's descendants.
        However, righteousness over the long run is not indicated!
Evaluation: The rest of the Bible tell how this act of God was not ultimately successful.
        Another intervention eventually had to occur (Jesus).
        A "notebook" was kept as our Bible to record what did and did not work, and recommendations
            for the future.