

**Role of Tactical Plans in Achieving Organizational Growth and Objectives:  
(A Case Study of Zenith Bank Plc Damaturu Branch)**

**BY**

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**Abstract**

The role of tactical plans is an activity that is said to be inherent in everything a manager does in reality. The essence of every given organization is for the organization to achieve its goals effectively and efficiently. It follows therefore that such goals or objective cannot be achieved just like that, it need all the required planning inputs to attain the targeted goals of the organization. The survey method of research design was adopted for the study, the population of study comprises of the entire staff of Zenith Bank Damaturu, (38) in total, out of which thirty five (35) respondents were selected for the study, from both the senior and junior staff. The sampling techniques use in selecting the respondents for the study is the simple random sampling, both primary and secondary sources of data collection were adopted for the study, data collected were presented and analyzed in a tabular form, and the simple percentage was the statistical tool use in data analysis and finding were made that effective planning programme leads to the achievement of the aims and objectives of the organization and recommendations were therefore proffered for effective and efficient management of this organization some of this recommendations are avoidance of short cut in planning process and manager should also make plans on daily basis so as to check mate change in Business environment.

**Key Words: Tactical Plans, Organization, Growth and Objectives.**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Planning is a major component of the management processes at all levels of organizational life, it is an activity which begins by considering or redefining the aims and objectives of

the organization, or a unit within it. This activity in itself requires organizations and their sub-units to make a thorough assessment of their external environment and their internal structure process and resources. Planning is also about taking steps (making plans) to agree on the means by which aims and objectives will be fulfilled. This is much concerned with decision making process as with the provision of resources and the allocation of time schedules as part of the planning process is concerned with the manner in which plans will be carried out. This aspect of planning has received greater prominence in recent years as organizations strive towards meeting objective associated with such concepts as "total quality", customer satisfaction and excellence. The conduct of organization is generally governed by such written document as mission statement, customer charters, policy statement and the like. It is also determined by the implicit (and unwritten) standards that underpin organizational behaviors and cultural norms.

In addition, one may wonder why some organizations have failed. Is it because managers in these organizations are ineffective in making good plans? Or is it because the stated Objectives of the organization lack credibility and reliability, therefore making plan ineffective? These arc related burning questions which have prompted this study; furthermore, the purpose of this paper is to examine the role of tactical plans in achieving organizational growth and objectives with a particular reference to Zenith Bank Plc Damaturu Branch, Yobe State.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **THE CONCEPT OF PLANNING**

Planning is a major aspect of most managerial jobs especially those at the higher level. Consequentially, it has been the object of considerable decision both written and spoken. Inner (1973) planning in the past and even today is said to be inherent in everything a manager does. It should be noted that it is futile for manager to attempt to perform the other management functions without having a plan. Rue and Byers (1977) are of the opinion that managers who attempts to organize without a plan will find them re-organize without a regular basis. The manager who attempts to staff without a plan will be constantly living and firing employees. Motivation is also impossible in organization characterized by

continuous re-organizing and excessive employees turnover. In similar vein, AAT work book (1989) highlighted that " Planning is arguable the most significant change in management thinking in modern times.

There have been various approaches to the concept of planning. Welrich and Koontz (2002) viewed planning as "that aspect of management that involves selecting missions and the action to achieve them, it require decision making that is choosing from among alternate course of action "Dam Robert and associates (1979) in their words saw planning as "preparing for the future of the firm in establishing objectives and the method for achieving them. "Evidently, when a manager plan, he or she establishes objective for the organization, and tries to determine the best way to accomplish them. Rue and Byers (1979) conceptualized planning as "the process of deciding what objective to pursue during the future period and what to do in order to achieve that objective" they further stressed that the process of planning consist of two major segments.

1. Setting objectives
2. Determining course of action to be used in achieving those objectives, adding also planning answer three (3) basic questions
  - a. Where are we now?
  - b. Where do we want to be?
  - c. How can we get there?

In reality, the first question calls for an assessment of the present situation, the second question involves determining the desired objective and the third question requires an outline of action and analysis of the financial impact.

Nwachukwu, (2006) looked at planning as "something that goes beyond attempting to attain stated organizational objective. It involve the development of strategy and the procedure require for effective realization of the entire plans. It entails determination of control, direction, and methods of accomplishing the overall organizational objective. He further stressed that: planning involves the establishment of strategies to achieve the objective and step-by-step determination of the activities and resource necessary to achieve them. The above author have similar view, their definitions indicate that planning

is the process of establishing objectives and how to determine the best way of achieving these established objectives. Stoner and Freeman (2009) define planning as the process of establishing objective and suitable course of action.

In the work of Hell Regal and Slocum (1996) planning is seen as the management function that involves defining goals and objectives for future performance and deciding on how to reach them. On a more comprehensive note they argued that planning is the formal process of:

1. Choosing an organization mission and overall goals for both the short run and the long run.
2. Devising divisional department and even individual goals based on the organizational goals, choosing strategies and tactic to achieve those goals and
3. Allocation of resources to achieve the various goals strategies and tactics. Gale wood, Taylor and Ferrel (1995) posited that planning involve determining what the organization will specifically accomplish, deciding on how to accomplish these goals and developing methods to reach them. Taylor and Sparke (2005) argued that "Planning is the systematic exercises in determine the total resource of the organization to the achievement *of* its quantified objectives within a specified time frame. Taylor and Sparkes (2005) in Osaze (1991) argued that “planning is the systematic exercise in determining the total resources of the organization to the achievement of its quantified objectives within specific time frame.”

Lucey (1991) defined planning as the establishment of objective, the formulation, evaluation and the selection of policies, strategies, tactic and action required to achieve these objectives. In a nutshell, the research shows similar view with the above authors, planning is generally a process of determining organizational objectives or goals and how best those objective can effective by be attained. The essence of every plan is to facilitate the accomplished purpose and objectives and most importantly to reduce business risk.

## **TYPES OF PLANNING**

A plan is a course of action and outcome of every planning process depends on the need at

hand. This then implies that there are many types of plan: depending on the need and nature of the business. We shall examine various types of plan as identified by Hellrich and Slocum (1996)

1. Long - range plan
2. Medium - range plan
3. Short - range plan.

**LONG - RANGE PLAN:** This type of planning is commonly referred to as strategic planning, it determines the major objective of the enterprise and the policies and strategies for obtaining and employing resources to achieve predetermine goals. It should be noted that strategy planning is a function of top management.

**MEDIUM - RANGE PLAN:** Medium, range plan is the preparation of alternative course of action that may be used if the primary plans do not achieve the objective of the enterprise. Such plans are made in anticipation of future change.

**SHORT - RANGE PLAN:** Short range plan is the process of making detailed decision about what to do, who will do it within normal time horizon of one year or less. It takes care of intermediate and immediate plans of the firm and is usually done at the lower level of management such as annual budgets.

## **FEATURES OF TACTICAL PLANS**

Certain features distinguish a good plan from a bad one. Nwachukwu (2006) identified the following distinguishing features of tactical plan.

- a. Tactical plans, most have clearly defined objective in terms of scope, accuracy, clarity and definitiveness.
- b. Tactical plans must be reasonably economical and should consider the resources available.
- c. Tactical plans must be flexible plan that can be adjusted smoothly without delay or serious loss of economy.
- d. Tactical plans should be realistic and capable of implementation.
- e. Tactical plans should be comprehensive. This makes it possible to take a

system view of the entire organization.

- f. Tactical plans should contain alternative course of action to meet possible change as they arise.
- g. Evidently, effective plans should be such that all members of the organization will see as "real and worth implementing. Secondly plans should be flexible so as to accommodate new change.

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF TACTICAL PLANS**

Tactical plans as earlier noted are a core aspect of management in the achievement of the overall objective of an organization. It should be noted that tactical plans are performed at the levels of management. It is important in the day-to-day activities such as the one that is done at departmental and operating personnel. However, Saleh (2001) identified the following important of tactical plans.

1. Tactical plans serve as a guide to action through the establishment of policies, rules and procedures. Any organization without defined policy lacks proper direction.
2. In tactical plans, objectives are established which do not only offer a means of measuring the performance, but are also means of achieving any improvement in what has been done before.
3. Tactical plans ensure unity of direction because stated objectives are lay down policies as a means of coordination between different segments of an organization.
4. Tactical plans serve as a guide to action through the establishment of policies, rules and procedures. Any organization without well-defined policies lacks proper direction.
5. Tactical plans eliminate bottle necks in operations, for example it ensures that required resources are available when needed and thus ensuring continuity of operation.
6. The tactical plan considers time factors especially in terms of operation and other activities that are involved.

7. Its importance also lies in its pervasiveness in the implementation of the result of planning which affects the other functions of management, for example, if one doesn't plan well, it can affect organizing, directing and controlling. Evidently, the importance above is undoubtedly obvious axons.
8. These are obvious because, the essence of any planning activity is to offset uncertainty and mission. It also helps an organization in gaining economy of operation and finally, it provides room for co-ordination, growth sustainer and development.

### **ESSENTIAL STEPS IN TACTICAL PLANS**

Tactical plans are meant to increase probability that the organization will achieve its objective. This follows therefore that steps in tactical plans should not be violated in tactical plan, the more likely that the objectives of the organization will not be achieved.

Gate wood, Taylor, Ferrel (1995) have identified eight (8) steps of tactical planning, this include creating the mission statements, assessing the current situation, stating goals, specifying assumption, creating the plan, implementing the plan and finally evaluating the results.

Gate wood, Taylor and ferrel were of the opinion that, in tactical plans, the organization should define their fundamental purpose taking into cognition its present situations. After this, the other steps should instantaneously be followed until it reaches evaluation stage.

Similarly Nwachukwu (2006) gave six (6) steps in the tactical planning process. These include organizational objectives, identification of opportunities and selection of course of action, formulation of specific targets, implementation and finally feedback.

Gate wood, Taylor, Ferrel and Nwachukwu view revealed that in tactical plans the current situation should properly be assessed, secondly, organizations should always shift from thinking mode to doing mode. That is, they should see that plans are implemented.

In another related development; Freeman and Stoner (2009) identified four (4) basic

steps: these include:

- i. Establish a goal or set of goals
- ii. Define present situation
- iii. Identify aid and barriers
- iv. And finally develop a course of action.

The researcher is of the view that Gate wood, Taylor, Ferrel and Nwachukwu's steps in the tactical planning process are the most appropriate steps, though the above authors have similar views. Free man and Stoner have neglected the usefulness of feedback or evaluation of plans as put forward by Gate wood, Taylor, Ferrel and Nwachukwu. This step of feedback or evaluation of plans is very important in any planning process because after comprehensive plan is made, there is the need therefore to review the plans to see whether the result is in line with the objective of the organization or not.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

The survey method of research design was adopted for the study, the population of study comprises of the entire staff of Zenith Bank Damaturu, thirty eight (38) in total, out of which thirty five (35) respondents were selected for the study, from both the senior and junior staff. This is because the entire population cannot be studied. The sampling techniques used in selecting the respondent for the study is the simple random sampling; this is because every member of the population has an equal chance to be selected for the study. Both primary and secondary sources of data collection were adopted for the study, data collected were presented and analysed in a tabular form, and the simple percentage method was the statistical tool used in data analysis.

#### **Research Questions**

1. What is the role of tactical planning in achieving organizational growth and objectives'?
2. Does tactical planning have a significant effect on organizational growth and objectives?
3. What is the nature of tactical planning in organizations?
4. Of what importance is tactical planning in an organization?

5. What is the procedure or steps involved in tactical planning?
6. What are plausible ways of rectifying anomalies identified in planning process?

#### 4. DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

Table 4.1 Effectiveness and role of the methods of planning adopted in an organization

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
DAILY	18	60
MONTHLY	2	7
ANNUALLY	10	33
TOTAL	30	100

**Source:** Field Survey, 2014

The table above indicates that 18 respondents, representing (60%) of the respondents agreed that the planning method of the organization under study is effective while, the remaining respondents constituting (40%) do not think so in their responses. This implies that the achievement of the aims and objectives the organization depends on the planning method adopted by organization.

Table 4.2 Period of tactical plan and its effect on organization

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
DAILY	18	60
MONTHLY	2	7
ANNUALY	10	33
TOTAL	30	100

**Source:** Field Survey, 2014

The above table shown that 18 respondents constituting (60%) were of the view" in their responses that planning should be a daily task, while 2 respondents (7%) were of the opinion that planning is a monthly task, 10 respondents (33%) on the other hand responded that planning should be an annual task. This simply means that for a business to operate successful in the world of dynamic and complex environmental changes in business, planning should be on daily bases.

Table 4.3 Effective planning leads to the achievement of organizational goals.

VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	30	100
NO	-	-
TOTAL	30	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

The above table indicates that 30 respondents constituting (100%) of the respondents were positive in their responses as to whether effective planning will lead to the achievement of organizational goals. This implies that if plans of an organization are effective, then the organization stands the chance of achieving its goals successfully.

Table 4.4 Poor communication on plan and action to members leads to failure of organizational plan.

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	20	67
NO	10	33
TOTAL	30	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

The above table shows that 20 respondent constituting (67%) respondents positively state that lack of communication of goals plan and action to organizational members is the reason why most organization fail in the planning activities, while 10 respondents constituting (33%) of the respondents were negatively inclined. The researcher however, shares the view with the higher percentage because of the fact that for an organization to have an effective planning process the goals must be communicated to all the member of the organization.

Table 4.5 whether organization encounter problems before making plans to deal with such problem

VARIABLES	FREQUENC	PERCENTAGE
YES	10	33
NO	20	67
TOTAL	30	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

The above table indicates that 10 respondents constituting (33%) of the respondents were of the opinion that an organization should wait until it encounters problems before making plans to deal with such problems, while 20 respondents (67%) were positively inclined.

This signifies that planning is a futuristic activity and therefore does not condole waiting to encounter problem before planning to deal with it.

Table 4.6 Responses on those involved in planning in an organization

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Board managers	10	33
Functional managers	2	7
All of the levels of	18	60
Total	30	100

**Source:** Field Survey: 2014

In the above table, 10 respondents constituting (33%) of the respondents responded that, the planning activity of an organization is purely for the board of Directors while 2 respondents representing (7%) are of the view that planning activities is the responsibility of the functional manager, while an overwhelming majority of the respondents are of the opinion that planning activity should be done at all level of management this is represented by 60% of the respondents. The researcher however, shares the view with the higher percentage which indicates that planning activity is at all levels of management. This is in consonance with every ideal organization of which the organization under study is by no exemption.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS"**

Questionnaires, which were the main source of data collection instruments, were obtained from the respondents and checked for completeness. Only questionnaires that were 90% complete were considered for data analysis and the overall response rate was checked if it was over 90% of the total sample size. The data obtained from the questionnaires was examined to detect errors and questions that were not answered properly, all the mistakes were analyzed and poorly answered questionnaires exempted from the analysis process. This increased accuracy, consistency and reliability of the gathered facts. Data completeness and uniformity was maintained and this facilitated application of other data analysis techniques such as data organization, data classification and tabulation. As such at the course of the study it was noticed that:

1. There is also lack of communication of good plans and action to the organizational

members by the top management which often at times render their plan ineffective.

2. In addition, it was also noticed that the method of plan adopted by the bank is effective which in turn leads to the achievement of the organizational goals of the bank.
3. At the course of the study it was also observed that managers and organization that plan tend to perform better in the realization of the organizational goals.
4. It was again noticed, that environment also affects the effectiveness of plan adopted by an organization.
5. The research equally revealed that planning activities in an organization is mostly carried out by all levels of management.

## **5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Planning is a major aspect of most managerial jobs especially those at the higher level. Consequentially, it has been the object of considerable decision both written and spoken. Inner (1973) planning in the past and even today is said to be inherent in everything a manager does, it should be noted that it is futile for manager to attempt to perform the other management function without having a plan. Base on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made for the organization under discussion and any organization interested in improving the quality of planning activity and as well as improvement of workers performance.

1. The organization under discussion should as a matter of fact make plans on a daily basis, this is to checkmate change in business environment.
2. Managers should always specify objectives to all members of the organization which will serve as guide to action.
3. Short cuts in planning process should be avoided by managers. This matters a lot for greater success in making plans.
4. Managers should not always wait until when a problem surface before making plans to deals with it; if they do, it may spell doom for the organization.
5. Managers should carry everybody along if their plans are to be effective. This can be done by way of involving all the process.
6. Managers should also as a matter of fact always communicate goals plans and action to all members of the organizations if they have to achieve effective planning.

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