



Scenario Planning Step by Step

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1. **Define your Big Question:** What are you trying to find out through your scenario planning process? What do you need to be prepared to do?

 2. **List the unknowns about the current situation that make it difficult to make a decision.**
 - a. For example: We don't know how long physical distancing practices will last.

 3. **What events would provide new information that we should take into account?**
These are our *trigger events*.
 - a. For example: The state issues new guidelines for physical distancing.

4. Describe Your Unknowns.

Look at the list of unknowns that you made in Question 2. Select the three that seem most important to your organization right now.

Describe each Unknown in three ways:

- The best outcome that we could realistically hope for – not a dream, but the best thing that might actually happen.
- The worst outcome that we might realistically have to face – not a nightmare, but the worst set of conditions that might actually happen.
- The outcome that seems most likely to happen.

	Best Case Scenario	Worst Case Scenario	Most Likely Scenario
Unknown #1			
Unknown #2			
Unknown #3			

5. Build A Scenario

Combine one to three of your potential outcomes for your unknown factors into a scenario that might actually happen.

For example, you might imagine a best case scenario where physical distancing reduces by this summer...but a worst case scenario where the stock market remains weak and affects charitable giving. Think about how these two external conditions might interact.

6. Determine Your Scenario Strategy

Think about what you could do if this scenario comes to pass. What strategies could you use to get the best possible outcome for your mission and goals in spite of difficult external conditions? If you have goals and objectives from a current strategic plan, refer to them while you work on this. Set a Trigger Event for each strategy, so you know when to act.