

# INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL INFORMATICS ASSOCIATION

Special Interest Group of the International Federation for Information Processing

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EC/JW/vd/91-188

Leuven, 18/04/91

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to you on this occasion to invite you to work with our IMIA board colleagues to put together a draft of a strategic plan to be presented at the IMIA General Assembly in Washington. This meeting is dependent upon the success of a one day meeting prior to the Goettingen Working Group conference on Hospital Information Systems and during our Board meeting prior to the General Assembly meeting in Washington.

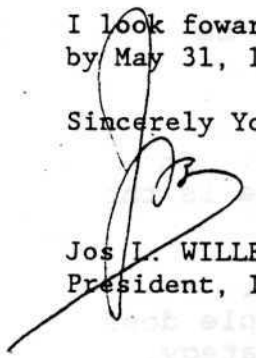
I am enclosing a document that might be helpful in putting a master program/strategic plan together for our direction over the next four to five years.

It is my hope that I will be able to give you the financial part of our strategy. Ab Bakker will be preparing this with his subcommittee as a major piece of the overall vision and mission statement which we would like to prepare. We would like to incorporate one or two specific tactical approaches that could result from our overall direction or mission statement, for review and approval by the Board and our General Assembly.

I would like to appoint B. Solheim and A. Bakker to be the co-chairmen of this group. They will work closely in providing us with the leadership to reach some closure for my review as a result of the September meeting and to work with the team listed on the attached page through EMAIL, FAX and personal communication in preparation of the September meeting.

I look forward to receiving your input and agreement to serve on this task force by May 31, 1991.

Sincerely Yours,

  
Jos L. WILLEMS, M.D.  
President, IMIA

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## THE TEN GOLDEN RULES OF STRATEGIC PLANNING\*

1. **The doers must be the planners.**  
Strategic planning is a task to be undertaken by those responsible for the plan's implementation. Consultants can help, but the organization's management must be heavily involved.
2. **The "soft" issues (e.g., vision, beliefs, mission and values) are more important than the "hard" ones (e.g., costs, headcounts, and growth projections).**  
In a world of accelerating change and unprecedented competition, issues that were once considered "hard" are now "soft," (i.e., erratic, unreliable, and subject to unpredictable change). To create a foundation for planning and adjusting to change, we must make the "soft" issues "hard" (i.e., predictable, consistent, and stable).
3. **Measurement is essential to recognizable achievement.**  
Missions and goal statements are only practical if they have quantified objectives that define their accomplishment in any given time period. These objectives are unlikely to be reached unless they have equally specific strategies (i.e., resources commitments) focused on their achievement.
4. **If the effort does not result in action plans, it is probably wasted.**  
An action plan consists of a task, a time frame in which to accomplish it, and the responsibility for undertaking it.
5. **Strategy development is more about choice than analysis.**  
The determination of strategy is ultimately a choice in the face of uncertainty (i.e., the absence of perfect information).
6. **Strategy implementation is more about commitment than correctness.**  
When a plan has commitment, minor imperfections will be overcome by the sheer momentum of the organization.
7. **Change will occur, either by choice or design.**  
Strategy is the deliberate attempt to beat evolution. In today's dynamic environment, the management of change is the central purpose of strategic planning.
8. **Strategic change is about managing people, not money.**  
If the day-to-day behavior of the organization's people does not change, then neither will the organization's strategy.

\*Excerpt from *The Ten Golden Rules of Strategic Planning and Why You Should Subscribe*, *Outlook - Business News for the Not-for-Profit Management*, Fall, 1990, pp. 1-2.

The Ten Golden Rules of Strategic Planning  
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9. **Practice works; preaching does not.**  
The organization's people must be shown that there is no gap between words and actions. Only consistency of actions and statement, beginning at the highest organizational levels and consistently applied over a period of time, will result in fundamental change.
10. **There is no one, right dogma for anything.**

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(International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA))

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