

2012 Goals and Strategy

We spent a good part of last year discussing our goals and aspirations – who we wanted to be, what we wanted to accomplish, and how we wanted to do those things. As we started aligning around a big picture, Rebecca [led us](#) through a more formal planning process to think through our goals and strategy for 2012. We'd like to share what we came up with, and we'd love to hear your thoughts.



Vision and Mission

All of our thinking starts with our [big picture vision](#) for a world that is alive.

A world that is alive is a **world** that is *humane, just, and sustainable*...

... where **groups** are *open, high-performing, and always improving*...

... where **individuals** are *healthy, curious, courageous, connected, and fulfilled*.

Groupaya's mission is to help groups – be they teams, organizations, networks, or nations – work together more skillfully to create their desired future.

We think we're unique in a lot of ways. For starters, while

our vision of the world is far-reaching and soulful, our orientation is around activation, action, and learning-by-doing. Our path to achieving the unimaginable is to start moving.

We've worked with traditional organizations – both large and small – and we've worked with grassroots communities. This diversity of experience has helped us understand some fundamental truths about groups and group work, and it's also made us realize how much we still don't know. We have to constantly challenge our assumptions and seek wisdom from others to do our best work. Our success, ultimately, is dictated by how effective we are at learning with others and acting on what we learn.

Having a learning orientation isn't enough. We think it's critical to share what we learn as broadly as possible. By acting, we impact groups directly, and we learn in the process. By sharing that learning, we have the potential to impact the world in much bigger ways.

On the surface, we are a consulting firm. Ultimately, we want to be a place where people – be they clients or peers – go to learn how to work more skillfully with groups.

Goals and Strategy

We want to be great consultants, and we want to share our learnings widely and usefully, but we also want to build a great organization. It's not enough to help groups be good at working together to create their future more skillfully. *We* have to be good at doing those things ourselves. Groupaya needs to be a shining example of a high-performance, soulful, learning organization.

In this vein, our focus for 2012 is to build our capacity as an organization and to start building the capacity of our network, our community. We have three goals:

- Do meaningful, sustainable, and learningful client work
- Share our learning, both internally and externally
- Create space for renewal, learning, and play

Meaningful, Sustainable, Learningful Client Work

We have been extremely fortunate to work on some amazing, important, and innovative projects over the years with people whose values strongly align with ours. That's only made us hungrier. We don't want to sit on our laurels and simply do work that's safe. We want to do meaningful, learningful (a Rebecca word that I love) work.

(If you have such a project, we want to [hear from you!](#) Don't be shy!)

These projects need to sustain us without overwhelming us. Our goal is to devote 40 percent of our working hours to client work, while bringing in enough revenue to sustain ourselves and slowly grow.

Sharing our Learnings Internally and Externally

I've worked closely with Kristin for two years now, and I talk with her just about every day. As you might imagine, I've learned a ton from her. And yet, what I've learned so far has only scratched the surface of what I want to learn from her.

We have much to share as an organization, but we need to start by being good at sharing within our own organization. Plus, we're small, so we have no excuse! We've already developed some great tools and processes, and we plan on improving these throughout the year.

I'm personally really excited about this. It's one thing to help clients with their knowledge sharing practices, it's

another thing to do it with your own group. We're using some simple tools internally with some light customizations here and there, but our secret sauce so far has been around our processes and practices.

One of those processes is our weekly brown bag, which we [started last year](#) and plan to continue more regularly this year. The intent is to share knowledge internally, but we advertise and do these brown bags openly so that they act as a way to share our knowledge externally as well.

In this vein, we also plan on leveraging this web site and blog in our efforts to share knowledge externally. The goal is less about building an audience and more about building our muscles in public: practicing regular, useful synthesis and communicating with our network. We want to tell both our stories and the stories of our community.

Despite our focus on content over distribution, in the three months our web site has been up, we've had over a thousand unique visitors from all over the world, 43 percent of whom visited more than once. We've noticed a growing number of people sharing our content over [Twitter](#) and other social networking sites, and we hope that trend grows this year. (And if you're one of those who have shared, thank you!)

Finally, as I noted earlier, I truly believe that we have a unique philosophy and approach to how we do our work, which we're calling "The Groupaya Way." It's a philosophy that's evolved from our experiences and that's been strongly influenced by our peers – all of you!

We want to articulate that approach and continue to refine it openly and with our community. This will help us be better at what we do, and it will also help our clients and peers better understand us.

Most importantly, it will help us build the capacity of our network. At our core, we are a networked organization, and we

draw heavily from our community to punch above our weight. As our projects get bigger and harder, it's critical that we not only build our own capacity, but the capacity of our peers as well. We hope articulating The Groupaya Way helps us do that.

Space for Renewal, Learning, Play

This is my favorite goal, and it will be the hardest one for us to achieve successfully. When you're action-oriented, it's very easy to spend all of your time, well, doing stuff. But it's not necessarily healthy nor good for business nor good for the world.

In order to learn, you need space to reflect. In order to innovate, you need space to play. In order to help the world, you need to be whole.

We're committed to making and holding this space for each other. We've already started putting some structures into place. Kristin designed an amazing personal development process, and we will hold each other accountable for meeting our personal goals. We're also monitoring each other's time closely.

If we're successful, we'll be healthier and happier, and we'll do more, better work.

Feedback

A lot of our goals and strategy are about community – all of you. We hope you'll stay engaged with us as we pursue these goals. As always, we'd love to hear your thoughts as well!

Wishing you all a happy, healthy, New Year!