



VIA Tool: Strategic Plan Checklist

Like everyone else, campus community organizers often dream about goals they would like to accomplish, such as an end to high risk drinking and sexual assault; every student is successful and healthy, unintended pregnancies don't happen; enough food for everyone; peace in our lifetime. These are just a few of many people's visions for our community. Unfortunately, like many individual dreams, we think these objectives are too lofty and unattainable to ever be realized.

But, in fact, realizing these dreams is possible. Look, for example, at our global success in eradicating small pox, reducing cigarette smoking by over 50% since 1965 or how far we have come since the 1950s in the United States towards reaching racial and gender equality. As Henry David Thoreau said over a century ago, "If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; there is where they should be. Now, put foundations under them."

Building foundations for your campus community dreams is what VVMOSA, the strategic planning process that is the focus of Standard 1.1 is all about. It's about groups of people deciding together what they want to accomplish, and how they are going to get there.

1. An Overview of Strategic Planning or "VVMOSA" (Values, Vision, Mission, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Plans)

- Values (the underlying guidelines for our work)
- Vision (the dream)
- Mission (what and why)
- Data and Trends (assessments and evaluations)
- Top five to 10 health issues
- SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats)
- Objectives (how much of what by whom)
- Strategies (how)
- Action plans (who will do what by when)
- You understand when to use VVMOSA, the strategic planning process

2. Proclaim Your Dream: Developing Values, Vision and Mission Statements

- You have shared your understanding of values, vision and mission statements with members of your organization
- You understand what is important to people in your community
- You have decided on the general focus (topic and scope) of your organization
- You have developed your values, vision and mission statements
- You have obtained consensus on your values, vision and mission statements
- You have decided how to use your values, vision and mission statements

3. Creating Objectives

- Your organization understands what objectives are, and when you should develop them
- Your organization understands that objectives should be "SMART +C"
- You have defined and reaffirmed your vision and mission statements
- You have determined the changes to be made
- You have collected baseline data on the issues to be addressed
- You have decided what is realistic for your organization to accomplish
- You have set objectives for the organization or initiative
- You have reviewed the objectives your organization has created

4. Developing Successful Strategies: Planning to Win

Develop successful strategies:

- You can form a planning group to develop strategies

Find potential members:

- Campus Community leaders
- Members of other local organizations
- Those affected by the issue or problem
- Representatives of local ethnic and cultural groups

Create a supportive environment:

- A safe and comfortable building, neighborhood site
- Create an open forum for all to participate

Determine/review targets and agents of change:

- Be inclusive of those experiences, at risk for, and contributing to the issue
- Determine risk and protective factors affecting the issue
- Review vision, mission, and objectives

Brainstorm the best strategies:

- Determine potential obstacles
- Strategize to get around obstacles
- Identify how agents of change will help
- Decide when strategies will affect targets of change
- Determine if you will work on repairing or preventing problems
- Ensure strategies decrease risk factors, and increase protective factors and operate on multiple levels of the system
- Make sure strategies will address entire problem or issue

Do the strategies meet the criteria?

- Give overall direction
- Fit resources and opportunities
- Minimize resistance and barriers
- Reach those affected
- Advance the mission

5. Developing an Action Plan

Getting started:

- You can determine what people and sectors of the community should be involved in finding solutions
- You have convened a planning group in your community to design the action plan

Invite these people to help prepare an action plan:

- Influential people from all groups affected
- People directly involved in the problem or issue
- Members of grassroots organizations
- Members of ethnic and cultural groups of the community
- Different sectors of the campus community: media/community relations/religious groups/student affairs partners/faculty/staff/student organizations/government

Be sure you are able to:

- Review vision, mission, objectives, strategies, targets and agents of change, community sectors to be involved
- Develop action plan with steps for all changes to be sought
- Review action plan: Is it complete, clear, current?
- Follow through
- Keep members informed about progress
- Keep track of what (and how well) you've done
- Celebrate accomplishments

Tips for successful planning meetings:

- Be inclusive
- Create a safe, comfortable environment
- Prepare for possible conflict
- Be efficient
- Record what happens
- Communicate the products of planning (distribute the plan after review by the group)
- Support and encourage group members

For each action or change to be accomplished, list:

- What action or change will occur?
- Who will carry it out?
- By when (for how long)?
- What resources are needed?
- Communication: who should know what?

Does the action plan meet the criteria?

Complete

Clear

Current

To finish up:

Review your completed action plan carefully

Follow through!

Keep everyone informed about what's going on

Keep track of what (and how well) we've done

Keep members accountable:

Regular phone call check-ins

Reports on progress at meetings

Celebrate accomplishments

6. Obtaining Feedback from Constituents: What Changes are Important and Feasible?

You know what it means to obtain feedback from constituents

You decided whether to use formal or informal feedback

If using formal feedback:

You have decided whether to use personal interviews, phone surveys, written surveys and questionnaires

You have determined how to obtain feedback from constituents

You know what I want to know

You know who has already done this

You know who I want to ask

You decided if you want to obtain information in an open or closed manner

You know how many people you would like to ask

You know how you want to ask people

You have decided how you'd like to conduct your survey: written or oral

You have decided on the format of your questions: open or closed

- ___ You have removed all possibility of bias from your survey
- ___ You know you should thank respondents ahead of time, let them know how you'll use any information that you gather, and thank them again afterwards
- ___ You understand you shouldn't ask questions you're not going to use

7. Identifying Action Steps in Bringing About Community and System Change

- ___ You know what action steps are
- ___ You understand why you should identify action steps
- ___ You know when you should identify action steps
- ___ You know how to identify action steps
- ___ Determine what your group, as a whole and individually, is really good at
- ___ Brainstorm different, specific ways that these strengths can be used to carry out the changes that you have decided upon
- ___ Consider the possible barriers to implementing your proposed changes
- ___ Consider possible ways to remove these barriers
- ___ With all of the above information in mind, brainstorm different ways to go about implementing the proposed changes in each sector that you have chosen
- ___ Make sure each action step includes:
 - What will occur
 - How much, or to what extent, these actions will occur
 - Who will carry out these changes
 - When these changes will take place, and for how long
 - What resources (such as money and staff) are needed to carry out these changes
- ___ Determine a final list of action steps for each community sector from the ideas that came from your brainstorming
- ___ Pat yourself on the back for getting all your planning done, take a deep breath, and go do what you've said you are going to!

Reference

KU Work Group for Community Health and Development. (2015). Chapter 8, Developing a Strategic Plan. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas. Retrieved April 9, 2015, from the Community Tool Box: <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/structure/strategic-planning>