



PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

UNIT 3:

Developing Mission, Goals and Objectives

Purpose:

This unit explains the purpose of conducting a needs assessment and how program assessments can be useful in documenting programs and their effects, determining gaps and unmet needs, and improving the service delivery in your community. A needs assessment helps you determine what programs and services your community needs. It also provides planners with information needed for prioritizing goals according to the needs identified.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this unit, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Explain why mission statements are essential.
- ✓ Write an effective mission statement.
- ✓ Explain why program goals are necessary.
- ✓ Explain how to write realistic, time-framed and measurable goals.
- ✓ Write realistic, time-framed and measurable goals.
- ✓ Write attainable program objectives.

I. The Mission Statement

After completing a needs assessment, you will have the information you need to develop reasonable goals. You should establish goals that accurately reflect potential solutions to the problems found during the needs assessment. After successfully completing the needs assessment, you should be ready to define the underlying assumptions and expectations on which the program depends for its success. You should be able to answer the questions of “how” and “why” the program’s concept will bring about the intended results. Once stakeholders have agreed on the basic premise of the program, they should develop a formal mission statement. The program mission is the fundamental guide for all future program-development decisions. The mission statement must be written so that it reflects the ideals of the people working in and for your organization. Everyone should feel ownership in, value and be committed to the mission of the organization.

The mission statement should be brief, clear and concise. It should state the organization’s name, that it is a nonprofit, the type of organization, what it does, for whom and where.

Example: BMCC is a community-based, 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency committed to reducing the incidence of HIV/AIDS by delivering comprehensive education and outreach services to all Jacksonians infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.

Effective mission statements have four parts:

- ✓ Purpose or needs that the your group will address
- ✓ The business of your group
- ✓ Your guiding values
- ✓ Who will benefit from your work

Purpose

Usually indicates a desire to effect a change in status and identifies the problems or conditions to be changed. It generally focuses on outcomes and results. Key words are reduce, improve, decrease, increase and enhance.

Example: To reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS.

Business

This statement outlines your business activity or program. It should include action words such as provide and may include linking words such as by or through.

Example: By educating and advocating HIV/AIDS prevention.

501(c)(3)

The section of the US tax code that defines nonprofit, charitable and tax-exempt organizations; 501(c)(3) organizations are further defined as public charities, private operating foundations and private nonprofit foundations.

Values

This statement communicates what your group members hold in common and are attempting to implement. It is the basic shared belief of an organization.

Example: We are committed to reducing the incidence and spread of HIV/AIDS.

Beneficiaries

This part of the mission statement identifies who will receive the services and who will benefit from the implementation of those services.

Example: Among high-risk populations.

Your Mission Statement Should:

- ✓ Communicate your purpose in a way that inspires support and ongoing commitment.
- ✓ Motivate those who are connected to the organization.
- ✓ Articulate a concept in a way that is convincing and easy to grasp.
- ✓ Use proactive verbs to describe what you do.
- ✓ Be free of jargon.
- ✓ Be short enough so that anyone connected to the organization can readily repeat it.

Mission Statement Exercise

Write your mission statement. Be sure to include the purpose, business, guiding principle(s) and beneficiaries.

Purpose: _____

Business: _____

Guiding Principles: _____

Beneficiaries: _____

II. Setting Goals

Establishing realistic goals that describe how a program will affect its target population is essential to solving the identified problem. You must develop specific strategies to achieve those goals based on evidence about methods that have demonstrated success with the program's target population.

Next, state your program's ultimate objectives in measurable terms. This sets the stage for analyzing program results later on. The project goal statement should be the driving force behind the project. It should be the cornerstone against which everything done on the project is measured. A good project goal statement is SMART:

- ✓ Specific
 - ✓ Measurable
 - ✓ Achievable
 - ✓ Realistic
 - ✓ Time-framed
-
- ✓ **Specific:** A specific goal is usually better than a general goal. The specific goal should be as precise and detailed as possible, stating exactly what the project aims to achieve. It should be phrased using action words such as "plan," "construct" and "execute." A specific goal should answer the questions who, what, where, when, which and why. As an example, a general goal would state, "Get your education." A specific goal would state, "Get accepted and enroll in a four-year university and take at least twelve hours of classes per semester."
 - ✓ **Measurable:** If you cannot measure it, you cannot control it. In other words, a goal must be quantifiable. The goal statement is a yardstick for the project; if the goal is completed, the project is a success. Measuring progress keeps you focused on the goal. A good way to measure your goal is to ask questions such as "How much?" and "How many?" and "How will I know when my goal is accomplished?" There are usually several temporary or small measurements that can be built into your goal. Since words such as "improve," "increase" and "reduce" can be misinterpreted; whenever you include them, be sure to incorporate the ways in which they will be measured. For example, you may want to state the number of persons targeted for services. It is also important to avoid jargon because this also is easily misinterpreted. When your progress is measured properly, it becomes easier to stay on track and meet target dates.
 - ✓ **Agreeable:** Your goal should be achievable, acceptable and agreed upon. You should be able to recognize its strong points and weak points. These things can be used to increase your level of achievement. Everyone in the organization does not have to agree that the project is essential and pleasing. But those who have made a commitment to

the project must agree that the project is needed. Recognizing goals that are of significance to you amplifies your likelihood of accomplishing them. You can achieve almost any aim when you set specific and measurable goals. Those goals that you thought were impossible soon become possible.

- ✓ **Realistic:** A goal must correspond to a task that you have the motivation and capability to complete. A goal must be doable. Do not plan to do something if you cannot follow through. In addition, make sure you set your goals high. The higher the goal, the greater the motivation, and the greater the motivation, the higher your chances of completion. But, make sure the skills required to perform the work are obtainable. A good way to determine workable goals is to look back on past projects and see whether they were possible, or so farfetched that they would never have worked.
- ✓ **Time-framed:** A goal must have a beginning and an end. Very little is ever accomplished without a deadline, and one of the easier parts of setting a goal is establishing the deadline. This is particularly true of work that is piled on top of everything else you do on a daily basis. Building the delivery deadline into the project goal keeps it in front of the team and lets members of the organization know when they can expect to see results.

Exercise: Set Your Organization's Goal Using the SMART Technique

Write your organization's goal: _____

Characteristic	Variables to Achieve	Your Goal
Specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Who — is involved? ✓ What — do we want to accomplish? ✓ Where — is the program located? ✓ When — do we expect to complete? ✓ Which — requirements and constraints? ✓ Why — specific reasons, purpose or benefit of accomplishing the goal? 	
Measurable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How much or how many? 	
Agreeable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Do team members agree with the goal? 	
Realistic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Is it doable? 	
Time Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Timeline 	

III. Developing Objectives

People tend to think of goals and objectives as the same thing. But in planning, these words carry different meanings. A **goal** is the final outcome of a long period of activity. It sets the directions for the work to be performed. An **objective** is a specific accomplishment to be achieved during a given period. It helps attain the goal by translating a general purpose into a series of specific, manageable steps. For example, the basic question in developing objectives for preventing HIV/AIDS is, "What quantifiable results can be achieved in the near future?" In effect, the objectives associated with a given prevention goal are really the milestones that must be attained in reaching that goal.

Objectives are written in quantifiable terms so there is no question about when and whether they have been achieved. For example, if an HIV/AIDS-prevention program proposes to distribute materials to at-risk groups, it is useful to specify a set number of at-risk people designated to receive the literature. Without a target number, the objective might be perceived as fulfilled if two-dozen people received brochures or seen as unmet even though half the community received the pamphlets.

OBJECTIVE

A specific accomplishment to be achieved during a given period of time. An objective helps attain goals by translating a general purpose into a series of specific, manageable steps.

Setting Goals Identifies the Amount of Work Needed

Specifying a quantifiable target to reach in a given amount of time also helps planners select objectives that are realistic and attainable. By using specific numbers, a list of objectives identifies exactly how much work has to be completed to meet your goals.

Setting Objectives Allows You to Divide the Work into Manageable Amounts

Dividing the work into manageable amounts will help planners identify the resources required and establish deadlines for obtaining them.

Setting Objectives Requires Careful Thought

Begin with a goal that has a high priority for the community. List all the short-term conditions that must be attained to reach that goal. Next, select those results from the list that can be achieved during the first six months of the program's operation; during this process, it is better to underestimate rather than overestimate what can be accomplished. When this short list of results is completed, select the results that could not be achieved during the first six months but could be achieved during the first 12 months. This produces a list of six- and 12-month objectives; items on the list that cannot be achieved during the first year are

classified as long-term objectives. Compare each six-month and 12-month objective against the following checklist:

- ✓ Does the objective specify a single quantifiable result?
- ✓ Are there ways to determine that the quantifiable result has been met?
- ✓ Does achievement of the objective contribute to meeting the goal?
- ✓ Can the objective reasonably be achieved within the timeframe allowed?
- ✓ Is achievement of the goal likely, given resources available for the program?

If the answer to any of these questions is “no” or “maybe,” planners should modify the lists of six-month and 12-month objectives until all the objectives can pass the checklist. Repeat the process for each of the goals identified during the previous planning step. This can be time-consuming, but it’s worth it because the result is a thoroughly considered, reasonable time-table of planned accomplishments. The effort exerted in the systematic process of developing objectives often reaps important benefits in terms of adequate resources, financing and community support for your program. It will also increase morale among team members who know they are approaching — or exceeding — the results targeted during planning.



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