

SECTION 3. CREATE

DETERMINE WHERE YOU WANT YOUR ORGANIZATION TO GO

Once you have identified where your organization is, it is time to focus on where you want it to go. Mapping a clear path for the future can be quite difficult, however—different stakeholders may have widely divergent ideas about where your organization can and should go. A strategic plan helps you build consensus around these difficult topics.

No problem can be solved from the same consciousness that created it. We must learn to see the world anew.

—Albert Einstein

When you create a strategic plan, you simply sketch what your organization is now and what it will be in the future. By developing guiding statements, you can create a shared idea of what your organization is, what it does, and why it does it. Those fundamental concepts form the basis of what your organization will become. With clear goals and objectives, you can create a roadmap of how to get there.

WHAT IS IN THIS SECTION?

This section discusses how to create a strategic plan for your organization by completing the following steps:

STEP 1. DEVELOPING GUIDING STATEMENTS

STEP 2. DEVELOPING STRATEGIC GOALS
AND OBJECTIVES

STEP 3. SETTING PRIORITIES

STEP 4. WRITING YOUR STRATEGIC PLAN

STEP 1. DEVELOPING GUIDING STATEMENTS

The main goal of a strategic plan is to help you get your organization to where you want it to be. Sometimes, however, exactly where your organization should be in the future can be unclear, or a matter of debate.

Guiding statements—vision, mission, and values—will help you create a conceptual frame for the actions your organization will take. Many people think of guiding statements as touchstones—you can come back to them again and again to see if your actions are congruent with the beliefs that you articulated. Though these statements are “big picture,” eventually they will be translated into more direct and specific actions as you implement your strategic plan.

1.1 DEVELOP A VALUES STATEMENT

Most organizations start developing their guiding statements hierarchically, drafting their vision first, then their mission, and finally their values. However, it can be useful to start with your core values instead. Often, articulating your organizational values can actually help you as you draft your vision and mission. Values simply answer the questions: What does my organization believe? What does my organization stand for? Values statements are helpful for putting into words the intangible nature of what your organization wants to represent.

Every organization values different attributes. Some values can be very intangible, like “Integrity.” Others might be more specific, like “Helping victims.” How broad or specific your values are matters less than simply understanding what they are and why you believe they are important. By generating a list of values for your organization, you can create a “code” that people within the organization can follow and that those outside of the organization can come to expect of your work.

Creating a set of values can help your organization make decisions and take actions that are in alignment with each other. Values can also help you as you create your strategic plan—as you map out new goals, you can come back to your organizational values for guidance on the best ways to achieve those goals. Values cannot tell you where to go, but they can tell you how to get there in a way that everyone philosophically agree on.



TOOLS FOR SECTION 3, STEP 1.1 provides comprehensive directions guiding you in how to create a values statement. Additionally, we include tools for you to assess the strength of your statement, and revise it as necessary.

1.2 DEVELOP A VISION STATEMENT

A vision is often described literally as a shared image of a successful future, a picture of the future that is desired by the organization and its stakeholders. It is often thought of as: How would the world be different if our organization successfully implemented its plan?

Some terms that are used to describe a vision statement are: inspiring, aspiring, and motivating. The image may be “fuzzy” at first but, through the strategic planning process, it is brought into a clear focus that is shared by all involved.

The National Endowment for the Arts describes the vision for an organization as “what keeps us moving forward, even against discouraging odds.” The prospect of keeping an organization and its members moving forward, even against all odds, should be attractive to victim service providers and program administrators, given the often difficult nature of their work. The NEA statement goes on to state that “vision is the most powerful motivator in any organization. If it is vivid and meaningful enough, people can do astounding things to bring it to realization.”¹

However, a vision statement is only a beginning. It does not identify specific approaches and strategies to bring the vision about. “A compelling vision can set the stage for change, but it does not tell people specifically what needs to change. It can mobilize people with many different backgrounds to work toward a shared future. Yet it does not tell people specifically what needs to be changed in the next few months to reach that vision.”²



TOOLS FOR SECTION 3, STEP 1.2 provides comprehensive directions guiding you in how to create a vision statement by using your values statement. Additionally, the Tools section guides you through assessing the strength of your statement and revising it as necessary.

1.3 DEVELOP A MISSION STATEMENT

A mission statement is the next level of refinement of the organization's guiding statements. It follows from the vision for the organization, but makes it more concrete and closer to implementation. One definition of the mission statement is:

"The mission statement of the agency clearly and succinctly identifies what the agency is and why it exists...A mission serves as a reminder to the public...and agency personnel of the unique purposes promoted and served by the agency."³

A mission statement is generally short, preferably no more than a paragraph. It describes the fundamental purpose of an agency, organization, or state. It does not describe strategies.⁴ In the context of victim services programs, it should:

- Explain why the organization exists—its basic purpose.
- Describe the services (and possibly the products) of the organization.
- Identify the clients or consumers the organization serves.
- Clarify roles and functions of the organization and its key components and personnel.

Not only does the mission statement create an important internal document, it also is extremely important for public relations purposes. It informs the world (clients and potential clients, funders and potential funders, other agencies and allied organizations, etc.) of the state's, organization's, or agency's reason for being, and what it *can* and *will* do to serve its clients. The mission statement can:

- Be educational and informative.
- Establish appropriate expectations, boundaries, and limitations.
- Clarify organizational purposes and assist in promoting cooperation.
- Foster creativity, innovation, and imagination.
- Contribute to the development of strategic components of the plan and its implementation.



TOOLS FOR SECTION 3, STEP 1.3 gives a very specific process to follow in order to write your mission statement, by working from your values and vision statements. Also in the Tools section is how to evaluate and revise your mission statement after it is written.

STEP 2. DEVELOPING STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Once you have developed guiding statements—values, vision, and mission—you can begin to develop your goals and objectives. Your goals and objectives are a bridge: they help you move from your guiding statements to the actions it will take to make these statements concrete. A solid set of goals and objectives is essential for effective strategic planning—without them, it is easy to get stuck in the big picture and not make the shift to the details that will ensure that the plan is accomplished.

Often, goals and objectives are used interchangeably, as if they are *the same*, but they are *not*.

The following chart illustrates some basic differences between goals and objectives.⁵

Goals	Objectives
■ Are broad.	■ Are narrow.
■ Are general intentions.	■ Are precise.
■ Are intangible.	■ Are tangible.
■ Are abstract.	■ Are concrete.
■ Are not tied to a timeframe.	■ Are always tied to a timeframe.

Goals and objectives are not the same, but they always come as a pair. The goal is the general expression of what you want to accomplish; the objectives are precise statements of how you will accomplish the goal.

For example:

The *goal* is to “improve victim restitution.”

The *objectives* are to:

- Develop an inter-agency policy that describes roles and responsibilities for restitution management from law enforcement, prosecution, courts, community corrections, and victim services.
- Develop a brochure for victims that explains their restitution rights and restitution procedures.

- Develop and implement a curriculum for offenders that teaches them budgeting, job interview skills, and why restitution is a factor in their accountability to victims, and conduct one class a week for 52 weeks.
- Increase restitution collection by 20 percent by (date).

2.1 DEVELOP CLEAR GOALS

Goals provide a framework for more detailed levels of planning.⁶ Goals are more specific than the mission statement, but remain general enough to stimulate creativity and innovation. They indicate the general changes that will take place in the organization as a result of the strategic planning process. Goals describe the desired end result.

For the purposes of statewide strategic planning for victim services, it is important to remember that goals will be set at the state, program, and sub-program levels. Statewide goals represent the strategic direction for the state as a whole and, therefore, will be broad. Collectively, statewide planning goals will clearly chart the direction of the state and provide a unifying theme for programs and activities at the local, as well as state, levels.

As you develop goals, you should ensure that they meet certain criteria and are strategic in their scope.

Goals should meet certain criteria

The following criteria are helpful as you establish and evaluate goals. Goals:

- Will clarify the vision and mission.
- Will address priorities and the results of your organizational assessment.
- Will tend to remain essentially unchanged, unless there is a shift in the situation under which you created them or until the desired outcome has been achieved.
- Will normally encompass a relatively long period—at least three years or more—or have no stated time period.
- Will address the gaps between the *current* and the *desired* level of service.
- Will represent a desired program or sub-program result.
- Will chart a clear direction for the organization, but will *not* set specific milestones or strategies.

- Will be within legislative authority or will have, as an objective, legislation introduced to support them.
- Will be challenging, but realistic and achievable.

Goals should address strategic issues

Goals will also identify immediate or serious problems or high-priority issues that merit special attention. These critical or strategic issues, which are often uncovered during the organizational assessment, might be described as “make or break” kinds of issues. In the victim assistance discipline, these may include:

- Establishing victims’ rights laws or state-level constitutional amendments.
- Implementing victims’ rights laws or state-level constitutional amendments.
- Identifying unserved or underserved victim populations.
- Addressing funding issues (increases and decreases).
- Coordinating and collaborating to implement victims’ rights and provide quality, consistent victim services.
- Building capacity among community-based victim service providers and state or local coalitions.



TOOLS FOR SECTION 3, STEP 2.1 presents a checklist for establishing clear goals. This checklist incorporates the data gathered in **Steps 1 and 2**, in order for your organization to establish goals based upon your completed needs assessment.

2.2 DEVELOP OBJECTIVES

Objectives are specific and measurable targets for accomplishing goals.⁷ In contrast to goals, objectives are specific, quantifiable, and time-bound statements of tasks you want to accomplish or results you want to achieve. Objectives are intermediate accomplishments necessary to achieve goals.

Objectives should be SMART

As you develop objectives, you should ensure that they are SMART:

- **Specific.** Objectives should reflect specific accomplishments that your organization wants, but not the specific activities that will be required to complete them. Objectives should be detailed enough that others understand them and can create a plan for achieving them.
- **Measurable.** Objectives must be measurable so that you can determine when they have been accomplished.
- **Attainable.** If objectives are to be standards for achievement, they should be challenging, but should not demand the impossible. Objectives should also be consistent with available resources.
- **Results-oriented.** Objectives should specify a result; for example, "Respond to victim requests for an agency brochure within seven days, with an annual average response rate of five days or fewer."
- **Time-bound.** Specify a relatively short timeframe for meeting objectives, from a few weeks to *no more than a year*. Objectives are generally more manageable and better integrated with the budget process if they coincide with the fiscal year.

The following chart shows examples of “SMART” and “non-SMART” objectives:

SMART and Non-SMART Objectives	SMART Objective
Non-SMART Objective <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To end drunk driving deaths on the highway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To reduce drunk driving fatalities by 20 percent between January 2003 and January 2004.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To improve victim restitution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To increase restitution collection and dissemination to victims by 10 percent by (six months from now); and by 20 percent by (one year from now).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To sensitize judges to victims’ needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To conduct one “brown bag luncheon” on victim sensitivity training for judges each month for six months.



TOOLS FOR SECTION 3, STEP 2.2 presents a checklist for establishing clear objectives. This checklist takes the goals established in Step 2.1, and expands them to fit the SMART criteria. When this expansion is completed, you will have concrete objectives.

STEP 3. SETTING PRIORITIES

As you developed your goals and objectives, you should have focused both on the end results you want and on a set of specific targets for achieving those results. Once you have laid out these goals and objectives, it is critical that you set priorities for attaining them. Setting priorities is critical: your organization will likely have many goals, and the only way to ensure that it can achieve them all is to put them in a priority framework.

In addition to helping your group make choices about what needs to get accomplished, setting priorities will also help you ensure that you have not overcommitted your organization's resources. As you prioritize, you should try to think about what your organization can reasonably accomplish in a given timeframe. You may find that you need to shift some of the time frames for your objectives in order to ensure that you can accomplish them within a priority order.



TOOLS FOR SECTION 3, STEP 3 presents a prioritizing strategy in the form of a chart. In this strategy, you would assess all of your goals and objectives in terms of impact and urgency. By filling out the chart, you can discover which of your goals will provide the most impact and is the most urgent. It can help you set your priorities.

STEP 4. WRITING YOUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Once you have articulated the vision and mission, agreed upon the goals and objectives, and established some priorities, the next step involves putting all of these pieces together into one coherent document. Usually one member of the planning group, or even a planning consultant, will draft a final strategic plan document and then submit it for review by all key decision makers and stakeholders.

The writers of the plan can use a writing process to better create a well-written, comprehensive plan that gets buy-in from your stakeholders. Steps writers can take include:

- Assigning lead recorder(s) and writer(s) early in the process.
- Organizing the data collected so as to provide useful information.
- Reviewing samples of similar strategic plans to provide content and formatting ideas.
- Distributing draft plans widely for input and feedback from various contributors.
- Building consensus on how the plan will be disseminated.

The reviewers of the plan should focus on making sure that the plan answers key questions about priorities and directions in enough detail to serve as a guide for the organization's members. Revisions should not be dragged out for months, but action should be taken to answer any important questions raised at this juncture. The end result will be a concise description of where the organization is going, how it should get there, and why it needs to go that way.⁷

Review sample strategic plans

You can also review other strategic plans to get ready to write your own. There are many different formats and a wide variety in what constitutes a final strategic plan document. Five sample strategic plans or reports that include the core components of a strategic plan include the following:

- South Carolina State Office of Victim Services, “Bridging the Gap in Victim Services” 2001-2002 Accountability Report.
www.govoepp.state.sc.us/sova/sovarpt.pdf
- Grand Rapids (Michigan) Police Department Strategic Plan.
www.policing.com/grstratweb/
- Virginia Department of Corrections Strategic Plan (which includes a victim-related plan)
<http://vadoc.state.va.us/about/administration/strategicplan.htm>
- Arizona Governor’s Office for Children, Youth and Families, Division for Children Three Year Program Plan.
<http://governor.state.az.us/cyf/children/AJJCprograms/>
- Illinois Violence Prevention Authority.
http://ivpa.org/state_plan.html

SECTION 3 ENDNOTES

- 1 Don Adams, "The Pillars of Planning: Mission, Values, Vision," Lessons Learned: Essays, <http://arts.endow.gov/pub/Lessons/ADAMS.HTML>.
- 2 M. Bechtell, 2002, "Making Your Vision Materialize," *Security Management*, 46, (August): 30.
- 3 State of Delaware Office of the Budget "Office of the Budget Strategic Planning Guidelines Manual," Strategic Planning and Performance Measures, www.state.de.us/budget/Strategic%20Planning/planning.htm.
- 4 G. Saloner, A. Shepard, and J. Podolny, 2001, *Strategic Management*, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 24.
- 5 D. Lewis, 1996, *The Difference Between Goals and Objectives*, San Diego: San Diego State University, Educational Technology.
- 6 Adapted from Arizona Governor's Office, 1998, *Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement Handbook*, Phoenix, AZ: Office of the Governor, Strategic Planning and Budgeting.
- 7 CompasPoint Nonprofit Services, "Strategic Planning FAQs," http://search.genie.org/genie/ans_result.lasso?cat=Strategic+Planning.



TOOLS FOR SECTION 3: CREATE

WHAT IS IN THIS SECTION?

This section contains tools you could use when you are creating your strategic plan. These tools apply to:

STEP 1. DEVELOPING GUIDING STATEMENTS

- Developing a Values Statement
- Developing a Vision Statement
- Developing a Mission Statement
- Client Analysis Checklist

STEP 2. DEVELOPING STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Developing Clear Goals Checklist
- Developing Clear Objectives Checklist

STEP 3. SETTING PRIORITIES

- Priority Table

STEP 1. DEVELOPING GUIDING STATEMENTS¹

1.1 DEVELOP A VALUES STATEMENT

Writing a Values Statement

Develop your values statement before you begin work on your vision or mission statement.

Steps for creating a values statement

Step 1: Gather opinions from your strategic planning team.

Use one or more of the following suggestions:

- Have a board or staff retreat to brainstorm about their vision for the organization.
- Develop, distribute, and analyze a questionnaire or survey for stakeholders.
- Set aside time at a staff meeting for discussing the vision.
- Establish a Planning Committee that comprises members of the board charged with visioning.
- Seek participation and input from allied professionals who serve culturally diverse populations.

Step 2: Clarify your organization's values.

Answer the following questions:

- What does your organization believe?
- What does your organization stand for?
- What drives your organization?
- What are your organization's governing ideas?
- Are your governing ideas in line with your priorities? (For example, if never stretching the truth to clients is a priority, your value may be honesty or integrity.)

Step 3: Write a values statement for your organization.

- Using the answers to the questions in **Step 2**, create a general statement expressing what your organization values. Express this in one sentence.

Step 4: Evaluate your values statement.

Answer the following questions to help you evaluate the strength of your values statement.

Does your values statement:

- Set high standards for excellence?
- Reflect high ideals?
- Inspire commitment?
- Integrate the unique qualities of the organization?

Is your values statement:

- Based on a sound philosophy?
- Pro-active and positive?
- Communicated clearly?

Step 5: Revise your values statement.

- Share your values statement.
- Gather input from relevant groups and through all media.
- Review their input to look for similarities and differences in perceptions of the agency's values.
- Assign a small but representative group to review input and revise the values statement.
- Share the revised values statement with those who contributed to the process to be further discussed and refined.

1.2 DEVELOP A VISION STATEMENT

Writing a Vision Statement

Develop your vision statement after your values statement, but before you begin work on your mission statement.

Steps for creating a vision statement

Step 1: Review your values statement with your planning group.

Step 2: Expand your values statement to create a vision statement.

Answer the following questions:

- How do you want your community to be different?
- What role do you want your organization to play in your community?
- What will success look like?²
- How would the world look if your state, organization, or agency successfully fulfilled its purpose?

Step 3: Write a vision statement for your organization.

- Using your answers to the above questions, create a statement about the vision you have of your organization's future. Express this in one sentence.

Step 4: Evaluate your vision statement.

Answer the following questions to help you evaluate the strength of your vision statement.

Does your vision statement:

- Describe a mental image of a possible and desirable future state of your organization?
- Answer the question, "Where are we going?"
- Define a long-range view of the organization's direction (with at least a five-year time frame)?
- Describe what the organization will be like, how it will act, and how the public will perceive it in the future?

- Describe how the vision fits with its changing environment—including:
 - Ensuring that the vision does not violate the proper customs and positive culture of the organization?
 - Providing detail and perspective?
 - Anticipating the possible responses of all stakeholders to the direction you have taken?
- Integrate the unique competencies of the organization?

Is your vision statement:

- Based on a sound philosophy?
- Pro-active and positive?
- Communicated clearly?

Step 5: Revise your vision statement.

- Share your vision statement.
- Gather input from relevant groups and through all media.
- Review their input to look for similarities and differences in perceptions and hopes for the agency's vision.
- Assign a small but representative group to review input and revise the vision statement.
- Share the revised vision statement with those who contributed to the process to be further discussed and refined.

1.3 DEVELOP A MISSION STATEMENT

You need to complete your values and vision statements before beginning work on your mission statement.

Writing a Mission Statement

A mission statement is a written declaration of what your organization is, and what it is about. What would you like your organization's story to be about? To what do you want to devote your organization's time and talents? A mission statement can be an organizational standard.

Understanding that there are unpredictable circumstances that affect progress, a mission statement can be a road map of how you will attempt to achieve your purpose.

Individuals working in victim services are likely to be comfortable with developing a mission statement. Often, professionals in the field have worked systematically toward academic degrees, professional achievement, and other goals by first setting a personal mission in place, whether formally or informally.

This familiarity with personal mission statements should help strategic planning members to transfer their knowledge into working on the development of organizational-level statements.³

Steps for creating a mission statement

Step 1: Review your vision statement with your planning group.

Step 2: Expand your vision to create your organization's mission statement.

Think about your organization's purpose and vision, and address the following questions:⁴

- If your organization were to do one thing that would have the most positive impact, what would that thing be?
- What are all the things you would like to have in your organization? (For example, victims advocate, special seminars)
- What are all the things you would like your organization to do? (For example, expand to include more employees, offer a specific service).
- What kind of organization do you want to be? (For example, compassionate, responsible)
- What have been some of your greatest moments of happiness and fulfillment in your organization?

- What activities do you enjoy the most and find most fulfilling in your organization?
- What strengths or capacities does your organization have now, or want to have?
- How can your organization best contribute to the world?

Step 3: Create your mission statement.

- Using the answers to the questions above, create a statement about the kind difference you want your organization to make, including details.
- Express this in several paragraphs.

Step 4: Evaluate your mission statement.

Answer the following questions to help you evaluate the strength of your vision statement.

Does your mission statement:

- State central purpose of the organization?
- Answer the question, “Why do we exist?”
- Provide each member of the department and community with a core statement against which to measure the agency’s responses to present and evolving problems?
- Incorporate these three perspectives:
 - **Past:** the history, traditions, and experiences of the state, organization, or community?
 - **Present:** the interest, skills, areas of commitment, capabilities and culture of the state, organization, or community?
 - **Future:** the vision, long-term goals, direction of focus, and needs of the state, organization, or community?

Step 5: Revise your mission statement.

- Share your mission statement.
- Gather input from relevant groups and through all media.
- Review their input to look for similarities and differences in perceptions and hopes for the agency’s mission.
- Assign a small but representative group to review input and revise the mission statement.
- Share the revised mission statement with those who contributed to the process to be further discussed and refined.

STEP 2. DEVELOPING STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 DEVELOP CLEAR GOALS

By following certain key steps in developing your goals, you can ensure that they are clear and achievable. You will need the data you collected in **Sections 1 and 2** to complete this checklist. Keep in mind that goals are general, broad, “big picture” statements that may seem vague and abstract. You will establish concrete, specific objectives to achieve your goals in **Step 2.2**.

Developing Clear Goals Checklist⁵

Step 1: Establish the process for achieving goals.

- Identify participants (stressing inclusivity).
- Define your terminology in measures that are easily understandable and culturally competent.
- Establish time frames for all activities.
- Clarify expectations with opportunities for feedback from participating agencies and individuals.

Step 2: Review internal and external assessment data.

- Distribute background information for participants to review to set the stage for formulating goals.
- Consider all the information from the internal/external assessment (SWOT and stakeholder analyses, etc.).
- Incorporate and address all identified strategic issues.
- Analyze your clients’ and stakeholders’ needs, as established in **Section 1**.
- Analyze strengths and weaknesses as established in **Section 2** to identify further areas for improvement as well as gaps in service provision.

Step 3: Develop an initial list of issues to address in your goals.

Write down answers to the following questions:

- If the state continues in the same direction, how will identified issues or problems be addressed?
- How will identified strengths *continue* to be strengths?
- If the state continues in the same direction, how will needs of external and internal clients be met?
- How will services to clients improve?
- How do current programs and/or activities need to change?
- What gaps exist in service to victims?

Developing Clear Goals Checklist continued

- What should be added, eliminated, and/or expanded?
- How much expansion is needed, wanted, or can be handled?
- How will expansion in one area affect programs and services in other areas?
- What lines of communication, coordination, and cooperation should be developed among programs and jurisdictions?

Step 4: Draft your goals.

- Establish which of the above issues in your organization you would like to change or improve.
- Organize answers into a list showing priorities, from highest to lowest.
- Combine answers which follow a common theme under broader headings.
- Create definitive statements (goals) from these broad headings which capture what you want your organization to achieve in the strategic planning process.
- Ensure that your goals reflect where you want your organization to be in the future.

Step 5: Review and revise your goals.

- Review goals you have developed and reword, as appropriate.
- Add language to the goal statement to clarify "who will benefit" if it is not obvious who the intended beneficiaries of goals are.
- Determine if the goals are feasible. Consider the factors or conditions that will facilitate or hinder goal achievement. Revise goal statements as necessary.
- Reach consensus among strategic planning participants about the goal statements and commit to completing your goals.

2.2 DEVELOP CLEAR OBJECTIVES

Developing Clear Objectives Checklist

Step 1: Review your goals.

- Ensure that you have established clear goals for your organization.
- Ensure that all members of the planning group understand and agree to the intent of the goal(s).
- Review performance measures and targets already set for goals.
- Identify additional performance measures, if needed.

Step 2: Decide what "S"pecific accomplishments you want to achieve.

- Assess your general goal statements by deciding and writing down what *specifically* you want accomplished.
- Break each goal into several *specific* targets.
- Make each target specific enough so that a plan can be built around it.
- Ensure that the target does not contain activities to achieve results.

Step 3: Determine how to "M"easure your objectives.

- Build into objectives how progress will be measured.
- Determine a percent increase for performance, if applicable.
- Establish a number increase or decrease to measure, if applicable.
- Add in specific levels of achievement or solutions if they are already mandated by external forces, such as federal or state laws, agencies policies, etc.

Step 4: Establish whether your objectives are "A"ttainable.

- Decide what specific, manageable parts of your objectives you should achieve.
- Establish what variables or factors may influence the result.
- Based on your current human, technological, and financial resources, decide how much you can accomplish within the planning period.
- Determine if the objectives are feasible. Consider the factors or conditions that will facilitate or hinder goal achievement.

Step 5: Make sure that all your objectives are “R”esults-driven

- Consider the different results, clients or services implied within a goal.
- Include in your objective what you want to happen as a result of your goal.

Step 6: Set a “T”imeframe for achieving results.

- Determine if there are any already mandated timeframes or deadlines by Federal or state statutes, court orders, consent decrees, or agency policies.
- Decide on a reasonable period of time for achieving the results you want.
- Determine how critical immediate action is.
- Establish what the opportunities are to act *now*, versus *later*.
- Consider what the consequences are of action *now*, versus *later*.

Step 7: Review and revise your objectives.

- Make sure that all of your goals have corresponding objectives.
- Review objectives developed and reword, as appropriate.
- Add language to the goal statement to clarify “who will benefit” if it is not obvious who the intended beneficiaries of objectives are.
- Determine whether the proposed objectives are consistent with executive and legislative branches’ policies, values and priorities, and revise if necessary.
- Establish whether the proposed objectives are consistent with the priorities of the strategic planning leadership, and revise if necessary.
- Reach consensus among strategic planning participants about the objective statements and commit to completing your objectives.

STEP 3. SETTING PRIORITIES

Priority Table

One way to help you prioritize is to look at all of your objectives in terms of both impact and urgency.

	Impact	Urgency
High		
Medium		
Low		

When you look at your goals and objectives in terms of impact and urgency, you will find yourself prioritizing on two benchmarks. Both are equally important—if you only focus on one of the two, you will find your planning process is not balanced. For example, if you only address those issues that have high urgency, then you might find that your organization is constantly “putting out fires.” At the same time, if you only address those issues of high impact, then your organization may not look responsive to pressing needs. It is important to strike a balance between the two.

As you use a prioritizing strategy of assessing impact and urgency, your planning group will likely find itself talking about and making choices about what is most important for your organization to achieve. Your group may even find that some goals are simply not as important as others. This conversation is useful in helping you further reach consensus about the direction that your organization is taking.

SECTION 3
TOOLS
ENDNOTES

- 1 Community Policing Consortium, "Strategic Planning for Community Policing: An Annotated Outline," Resource Toolbox, Training Curriculum, www.communitypolicing.org/outline.htm.
- 2 Alliance for Nonprofit Management, "Frequently Asked Questions," The Alliance Raising the Bar on Quality, www.allianceonline.org/faqs/.
- 3 Stephen R. Covey, 2000, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, Salt Lake City, UT: Franklin Covey.
- 4 Community Policing Consortium, 1998, Strategic Planning: Special Edition Resource Package - A Look at Strategic Planning, Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice.
- 5 Portions adapted (with permission) from Arizona Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting, 1998, *1998 Strategic Planning and Performance Handbook*, Arizona Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting, www.state.az.us/ospb/handbook.htm.

