Effective Program Planning: Using Data to Write Program Goals, Objectives and Outcomes

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Learning Objectives

• Define the difference between goals, objectives, and outcomes.
• Review sources of data to inform the goal writing and planning process.
• Practice writing program goals and objectives using program or case study data.
What are your Questions around Program Goals and Objectives?
Frequently Asked Questions

• What is the difference between goals & objectives?
• What is the expectation of programs to show progress?
• How should programs determine the number of goals to develop?
• How does family engagement relate to program goals?
• Do outcomes and impact mean the same thing?
Resources

- The Program Planning Cycle
- Resources and Guidance
- Foundations for Excellence
- Grant Application Instructions
- Terms and Definitions
Program Planning Cycle

- Conduct or update community assessment
- Every five years:
  Establish long-term goals and measurable objectives
  Annually: Review goals and objectives
- Create an action plan and budget that reflect goals
- Respond regularly with course corrections
- Implement an action plan
- Evaluate progress through the annual self-assessment
- Analyze progress and compliance through ongoing monitoring

As the program planning cycle shows, programs use the five-year planning process to develop, monitor, and evaluate progress toward strategic long-term goals.

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It Starts With the Community Assessment

Community assessments should:

• Support strategic planning.
• Be performed at least once over the five-year grant period.
• Describe community strengths, needs, and resources.
1) To design a program that meets community needs and builds on strengths and resources, a program must conduct a community assessment at least once over the five-year grant period. The community assessment must use data that describes community strengths, needs, and resources....
1. Make informed decisions about service area plans and delivery.

2. Understand the needs of families.

3. Recognize demographic changes and address newly identified needs.

4. Identify skills and competencies needed in workforce.

5. Advance cultural competence.

6. Mobilize community resources and partnerships.
Decision Areas Informed by Community Assessment Data

- Recruitment, Selection Criteria, and Enrollment Priorities
- Services and Coordinated Approaches
- Collaborative Partnerships
- Strategic Long-Term Goals and Measurable Objectives
- Program Option(s) and Calendar
- Service Area, Recruitment Areas, and Program Locations
What does goal setting look like in your program?

At your tables discuss your program goals and how your community assessment impacts your 5 year program goals and objectives.
Foundations for Excellence

Planning for a Successful Five Years


July 2018

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Using the Foundations for Excellence

Figure 1: Relationship between Goals, Objectives, Actions/Strategies, and Outcomes

Positive & Goal-Oriented Relationships
Equity, Inclusiveness, Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness

PROGRAM FOUNDATIONS
- Program Leadership
- Professional Development
- Continuous Learning and Quality Improvement

PROGRAM IMPACT AREAS
- Program Environment
- Family Partnerships
- Teaching and Learning
- Community Partnerships
- Access and Continuity

FAMILY OUTCOMES
- Family Well-being
- Positive Parent-Child Relationships
- Families as Lifelong Educators
- Families as Learners
- Family Engagement in Transitions
- Family Connections to Peers and Community
- Families as Advocates and Leaders

CHILD OUTCOMES
- Children are:
  - Safe
  - Healthy and well
  - Learning and developing
  - Engaged in positive relationships with family members, caregivers, and other children
  - Ready for school
  - Successful in school and life

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Program Goals: Terms and Definitions

Terms and Definitions

**Program Goals** — Broad statements that describe what a program intends to accomplish. Program goals should be strategic, long term, and responsive to the needs identified in the community assessment. They include:

- Goals for the provision of educational, health, nutritional, and family and community engagement program services to further promote the school readiness of enrolled children;
- School readiness goals; and
- Effective health and safety practices to ensure children are safe at all times (programs may wish to identify these as a stand-alone goal or as an objective related to another type of program goal, i.e. a health goal).

**School Readiness Goals** — The expectations of children’s status and progress across domains of language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches to learning, physical well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development that will improve their readiness for kindergarten (as defined in 45 CFR 1305.2).

**Measurable Objectives** — Support the attainment of goals that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely (SMART).

**Progress** — Forward movement toward the achievement of goals, objectives, and outcomes.

**Outcomes** — Something that happened as a result of an activity or process. The actual results achieved.

**Challenges** — Information describing obstacles to achieving program goals and objectives.

**Evidence** — Facts, information, documentation, or examples given to support an assertion.
Program Goals: Baseline Grant Application

1. What are your **Program Goals, Measurable Objectives, and Expected Outcomes** for the project period?
   a. List all **Program Goals**
   b. List all **Measurable Objectives** aligned to each program goal
   c. To demonstrate the agency’s approach to measuring progress and outcomes, select a few **Measurable Objectives** and describe the following:
      i. Activities or action steps to meet the objective
      ii. Data, Tools, or Methods for tracking **Progress**
      iii. **Expected Outcomes**
      iv. Expected Challenges
   d. **Only for grantees applying for a non-competitive new grant:** Describe how your actual **Outcomes** from the prior project period informed the above.
Program Goals and Objectives

Program goals are....

**BROAD Statements (Your Destination)**
- Bold. Beyond Current Expectations
- Responsive
- Organization-wide
- Aspirational
- Dynamic

Objectives are...

**SMART parts of Goals (Your Mile Markers)**
- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Realistic
- Timely

Carried out through an **Action Plan (Your Road Map)**

Recognized and Accepted as Important by All

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The Goal Setting Process

Measuring What Matters

• Let’s review an example.
• Read pages 6-7 of Measuring What Matters – Exercise 1.
• Identify the steps followed by the grantee towards the goal setting process.
What was the Process followed by the grantee?

- Review data
- Identify broad areas of need
- Determine priority areas to work on
- Frame broad goals
- Write specific objectives and actions
- Determine how to measure progress: Measures of Effort (SA, OGM) and Effect (progress)
Let’s try it out!

• Each group has data from a Community Assessment.
• Work together to identify big areas of need in the Community Assessment.
Let’s try it out!

Work together to prioritize the areas of need identified.
Let’s try it out!

- Using the MWM example, identify one priority area and write a program goal around it:
  - Strategic, Long Term and Responsive to needs identified in the CA
  - Broad
  - Aspirational
  - Dynamic
Objectives

• An objective describes a specific action or result to be achieved.

• One goal is likely to have several objectives.

• While the objective is a statement of what a program wants to achieve, it is not yet a statement of how the program will get there.
Objectives

Objectives are:

S- Specific
M- Measurable
A- Attainable
R- Realistic
T- Timely

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Continue reading our example (MWM – Exercise 1)
Let’s try it out!

- Work in groups to list objectives for your program goal
- Remember to keep them SMART!
The rest of the plan

• What actions will you take/services will you offer to make progress towards your goals?

• Identify your expected outcomes: What do you want to see happen as a result of your actions/services?

• How will you track progress? Measures of effort? Measures of effect?
Achieving Program Goals

1. Do you have goals and measurable objectives as required in the performance standards?

2. Do staff understand the goals and their role in carrying out the objectives and action steps?

3. Are you monitoring progress on your goals and communicating the progress?

4. What steps do you need to take to move forward on the accomplishment of your goals?
Reflect on Data Goal Setting and Goal Execution

• What’s working in your program?

• What do you need to strengthen?

• How will you strengthen goal setting and goal execution?
Final Questions

Any questions?

What were your “A-ha” moments?
Thank You!!

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