

# SECTION 4. IMPLEMENT

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## PUTTING THE PLAN INTO ACTION

Strategic Planning is a means to an end. That is why it is critical to quickly move from writing the plan to implementing it. A plan does no one any good if it simply sits on a shelf—it must become the basis for real actions. Only by putting the plan into action can you ensure that your organization actually meets its strategic goals and objectives and ultimately, its vision and mission.

*Action, to be effective, must be directed towards clearly conceived ends.*

—Jawaharlal Nehru

When you implement your strategic plan, you must take an organized approach. You are attempting to change an organization, and change is often met with opposition or concern. Even good change can be disconcerting. The process of managing change is critical to the successful pay-off of strategic planning efforts. By being organized and breaking the task down into actions with clear tasks and focused roles and responsibilities, you will increase your plan's odds of success.

## WHAT IS IN THIS SECTION?

This section outlines the steps you need to take to get your organization from *where it currently is*, to *where it wants to be*. We discuss:

STEP 1. DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

STEP 2. ADDRESSING THE RESOURCES YOU NEED TO SUPPORT ACTIONS

STEP 3. OBTAINING FUNDING FOR YOUR PLAN

## STEP 1. DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

It can be daunting to move from the big picture plan to the work that will make that plan a reality. An action plan is a way to take your goals and objectives and translate them into measurable actions. It is a detailed list of tasks and activities, milestones, and accountabilities. Your action plan helps you move strategic planning initiatives into the day-to-day realities of your organization.

### 1.1 UNDERSTAND THE STRUCTURE OF THE ACTION PLAN

Your action plan is really an extension of the goals and objectives that you created in **Section 3, Create**. Just as every goal has a set of objectives, every objective must have a set of actions to ensure that it is accomplished. When creating an action plan, you cannot be ambiguous about what you want to achieve. At the same time, you cannot have long lists of actions that may not be attainable.

The following chart shows how actions relate to the goals and objectives that you set. Such a chart can help you keep track of all of your goals, objectives, and actions and can create the structure for your action plan.

#### Action and Goal Relationship Chart

Goal 1 >	Objective 1 >	Action 1.1
		Action 1.2
		Action 1.3
	Objective 2 >	Action 2.1
		Action 2.2
		Action 2.3

As you develop actions, you should start by focusing on the priorities that you set as you wrote your goals and objectives. The goals and objectives that were given high priority are the ones that will immediately need a set of clear actions to be completed. Later, you can continue by creating actions for other lower-priority goals and objectives.

## 1.2 THINK ABOUT HOW ACTIONS WILL IMPACT THE OVERALL PLAN

It is easy to develop long wish lists of actions that *should* be done. But you also need to think about whether they *can* be done. Every action is a commitment of organizational time, energy, and resources. You need to make sure that you can follow through on the actions that your plan lays out.

Before a decision is made regarding an action, you should weigh it against certain organizational factors. The following questions can be used as a test of each suggested action:

1. If this action is completed, will that help us reach the objective?
2. What are the anticipated costs and benefits of this action?
3. Will this action have a positive or negative impact on any other objectives?
4. Is this action dependent on the successful implementation of any other action?
5. Is the organization organized to complete this action? If not, what must be changed to be able to complete it?
6. How long will the action take to complete?
7. Are there other constraints we can expect if we move forward with the action?
8. As we complete the action, will any procedural changes be required? If so, what impact will they have on the organization?
9. What are the steps needed to complete this action and how long will each step take?



TOOLS FOR SECTION 4, STEP 1.2 discusses how using the “Method of Rationales” can clarify the relationship between activities or actions and the results and outcomes of those actions. It also gives an example of how this method can be used as a checklist when working on an implementation plan.

## 1.3 DEVELOP YOUR ACTIONS

To develop actions, you must:

- Define clear and achievable actions that support objectives.
- Assign roles and responsibilities for actions.
- Set a clear timeline for actions.
- Conduct an action litmus test.
- Give people training to complete actions.
- Explore action plan resources.

### **Define clear and achievable actions that support objectives**

When you create an action, it must be one that your organization can achieve. To create clear and achievable actions you should create an action grid. The action grid allows you to:

1. Identify the action and map it to the appropriate objective.
2. Assign the action to an owner.
3. Create a realistic timeline for completing the action.
4. Set a deadline for completing the action.
5. Mark a set of milestones that will show progress on the action.

### **Assign roles and responsibilities for actions**

As you develop your action plan, you need to clarify the roles and responsibilities required to complete the actions. For an action to be completed someone needs to be identified as responsible and accountable for it; someone needs to “own” it. Without a clear set of roles and responsibilities, it is easy for actions to get lost in the shuffle or for actions to be initiated, but not completed.

Roles are functions that are essential to the mission of the organization. Roles exist even if you have not identified the actual person who will assume the role. Roles:

- Require knowledge and experience.
- Allow problem-solving and decision-making.
- Include accountability.

Responsibilities are items for which someone is accountable within a role.

Responsibilities:

- Are not always clearly defined.
- Can overlap with other roles.
- May not have a single person who is accountable.

Roles are framed by the mission that you have established and by the goals and objectives that you have set. It is critical that you assign appropriate people to the roles necessary to complete your strategic plan. You should take time to work with your strategic planning group to identify who can best assume specific roles.

At the same time, you may need to communicate to your organization the new roles and responsibilities brought about by the strategic plan. Staff will need a great deal of additional information about how the agency expectations are changing with the new strategic plan. They need to know what roles they are being asked to play, what new expectations exist, and how they can get support for their work. Without clarification, staff will be confused as to how to prioritize their time, and what additional skills they need to acquire.

### **Set a clear timeline for actions**

Once you have identified the necessary actions and then found an owner for each action, you need to think about the timeline for achieving each action. You should communicate clearly with the action owner about the timeline *you* have in mind for the action. Since the action maps back to a time-bound objective, it is important to make sure that everyone is clear on when the action must be completed in order to fully support the objective. If this action is only one in a series needed to complete the objective, it is even more important that you take a broad view, assessing all of the actions together and establishing a realistic timeline for each of them.

Often there may be conflicts between different actions that need to be completed. You should work with your strategic planning group and with the action owners to reconcile these conflicts. The bottom line is this: you need to maintain an efficient timeline that allows your organization to achieve its objectives by the deadlines you have established in the Strategic Plan.

### **Set clear deadlines and milestones for actions**

One way to make sure that you have a clear timeline for achieving the action is by setting both a deadline for the action and a set of milestones that must be met to get to that deadline. When you establish only a deadline, it is easy for staff to work only to that date, instead of pacing the work out over time. By establishing milestones for the action, you can ensure that the action is getting completed efficiently over time. Milestones also allow you to check on the progress of the action. If milestones are being met, then you can predict that the action will be completed on time. If milestones are being missed, on the other hand, you can better identify and address problems that may be derailing the effort.



TOOLS FOR SECTION 4, STEP 1.3 provides a step-by-step process for developing clear actions. It also contains a sample action grid into which you can place your objective, action, owner, timeline, deadline, and milestones. This can give you a structured, visual reference for your action.

### **Conduct an action litmus test**

Sometimes your planning group will create a large number of actions. It is important to ensure that all the steps in your action plan are necessary and relevant to your overall strategic plan, and that they are well-defined enough to be completed. An action litmus test will help you do this.



TOOLS FOR SECTION 4, STEP 1.3 provides a Litmus Test checklist for you to determine whether all of your actions are necessary, relevant, and well-defined.

### **Give people training to complete actions<sup>1</sup>**

Changing action within an organization is not always easy. When you assign people to change action, you need to make sure that they have the tools and the training they need to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively. You should provide both introductory training and targeted training to help staff fulfill their parts of the strategic plan:

- **Introductory training.** Arrange for initial training for all staff members and management. Your introductory training should be focused on victim issues as well as on how to best achieve the established actions in

the strategic plan. It is important to ensure that everyone in your organization understands what the strategic plan is and how it will affect them. You want the training to frame the change in a positive manner so that you can get staff buy-in for the changes that are coming. Managers' perceptions, in particular, are crucial to whether or not others will be open-minded and whether the initiative will be supported operationally. Be careful who you select to do the training, and in its timing. Early, negative impressions can be difficult to overcome.

- **Targeted training.** Introductory planning/implementation training is rarely enough. As staff members begin working on changing actions, they may encounter roadblocks or gaps in their knowledge. You should be ready to offer additional training on a range of topics that will help staff better understand and fulfill their roles and responsibilities in the strategic planning process.

### **Explore action plan resources**

For a sample action plan on a specific project, the *Arizona 1998 Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement Handbook*<sup>2</sup> offers action plan steps, format and samples. An example of a victim services improvement action plan can be found at [www.ccv.s.state.vt.us/vs2000/vs2000.html](http://www.ccv.s.state.vt.us/vs2000/vs2000.html).

There are other useful references that can help you develop your action plan. One is *The Practical Planning Guide for Community Corrections Managers* (1991)<sup>3</sup> by the National Institute of Corrections, Washington D.C., which can be downloaded from: [www.nicic.org/pubs/1991/009018.pdf](http://www.nicic.org/pubs/1991/009018.pdf).

## STEP 2. DETERMINING THE RESOURCES YOU NEED TO SUPPORT ACTIONS

As you develop your action plan, you will start to better gauge what kind of resources you will need to implement the plan. Your action plan, if it is descriptive enough, should become the basis for developing requests for capital and operating budgets. This action plan should also support human and information resource management.

The individual or team responsible for completion of the action plan should determine the fiscal impact and identify the resources necessary to carry out the plan. The following questions can be used to determine the resources each action will require.

1. Do we have the resources required to implement the action? Resources include:
  - Personnel,
  - Training,
  - Facilities,
  - Hardware and software, and
  - Other equipment.
2. How will we get the resources we need? Can resources be reallocated within the organization? Do we need to get additional resources?
3. What will the overall fiscal impact of this action be?
4. Will additional funding be needed?



TOOLS FOR SECTION 4, STEP 2 includes a resource grid that can help give you a rough approximation of the resources that you will need to implement an action. The grid helps you determine what resources you need, how much that will cost, and if you will need additional funding to cover the cost. Resource types are listed above.

### STEP 3. OBTAINING FUNDING FOR YOUR PLAN

Once you have determined the resources you need, some organizations may need to get the funding to cover those resources. Government organizations may have the funding they need, but for other organizations that focus on providing victim services, finding sufficient resources is a persistent challenge. The experience of victim service programs in most jurisdictions is that no single funding source can meet the demands for the variety of services needed by crime victims. Therefore, most victim services use a range of public sector (community, state, and Federal governmental levels) and private sector (foundations, corporations, and in-kind contributions) support.

At the same time, obtaining funding can be tricky. You must always be aware of *all* legislative mandates that affect victim services funding, and you must also acknowledge the possibility of fluctuations in available Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding. In fact, among those states that have begun intensive strategic planning for victim services over the last few years, a mind set has developed that you must cover all bases and you must get funding to fully cover *all* strategic planning outcomes.

To obtain funding to support your action plan, you should:

- Anticipate and address challenges to your resource plan.
- Identify grant funding sources.
- Develop successful grant-seeking strategies.
- List funding prospects and pursue them.
- Write proposals that are persuasive and meet the requirements of the funding agency.

### 3.1 ANTICIPATE AND ADDRESS CHALLENGES TO YOUR RESOURCE PLAN

For victim services programs and initiatives, there are several challenges to fund-raising and resource development that require consideration from the strategic planning team:<sup>4</sup>

- **Lack of knowledge of potential funding sources.** While there are numerous government and public sector funding sources that support victim-related initiatives, they seldom provide funding without being asked, or without a designated solicitation process. Many organizations simply do not know all of the potential funding sources. You must be diligent in exploring all avenues and opportunities to get appropriate funding.
- **Fear of seeking financial support for victim assistance programs.** Asking for money is the most important, yet most difficult, aspect of fund-raising. Whether members of the planning team conduct face-to-face appeals for funding, write grants, or sponsor special events, it is often a challenge to request financial support. Yet, without a plan in place for the required resources at startup and into the future, the success of the initiative is in jeopardy.
- **Chasing after grant dollars.** Just because grant money is available does not necessarily mean that it is appropriate, or even can be used, for the planned initiative. Many victim assistance organizations make the common error of “chasing grant dollars” by changing or adding services to qualify for certain grants in an effort to maintain their very existence. This can lead to internal struggles while attempting to provide services or develop new initiatives for which an organization is ill-suited. Instead, victim service programs and strategic planning teams should attempt to match their capabilities and/or goals and objectives with grant requests for proposals (RFPs), and pass on RFPs that are not a good match.
- **Seeking project-specific grant funding without financial support to continue the project once funding ceases.** A long-range vision for your organization is critical to success. New initiatives that end abruptly when the funding runs out can be detrimental to an organization, and even harmful to victims who come to rely on the service for support. Many potential funding sources, both private and public, now require that the proposal reflect plans for continued financial support once the project funding ceases.

- **Lack of clarity in funding initiatives and goals.** Strategic planning teams should have a very clear vision of what their fund-raising initiatives hope to achieve. Annual budgets, for example, can include priorities for programs and services based upon available funding, with an understanding that without financial support, certain activities cannot and will not occur. Fund-raising goals can be established that include a baseline (the minimum amount of money that needs to be raised for basic subsistence) and graduated goals that match priority needs to the amount of money that can be raised to meet them.
- **Lack of proposal writing skills.** Proposal writing is becoming more precise, particularly with funding sources' strict expectations and basic formulas that contribute to continued success. Victim service organizations can maintain databases with basic information, such as annual budget, organizational capabilities, and staffing, that can be easily inserted into proposals. However, good writing skills and a strong presentation style are crucial to grant writing success.
- **Lack of diversity among proposed project staff and volunteers.** Your organization must mirror the population it serves. Project staff and volunteers should be diverse by gender, culture, and geography. Similarly, project proposals should incorporate the needs of traditionally underserved victim populations and reflect how these needs will be addressed by the project.
- **Failure to meet the requirements of existing programs that are funded by grantors.** A strong track record in successful and timely completion of *all* goals for projects that receive outside funding is one of the greatest assets of a victim service organization's development program. Project deliverables that are late, sloppy, or incomplete can result in a damaged reputation, particularly if an organization receives a significant portion of funding from one source.
- **Lack of follow-up to ensure that a program or project is indeed successful.** One of the most consistent gaps in victim-related development initiatives is program evaluation (discussed further in **Section 6, Track**). As more states move toward performance-based evaluation measures, and as the Federal government seeks program evaluation as a core component of most of its RFPs, victim service programs and strategic planning teams must learn how to measure success, and be capable of doing so in a consistent fashion. Many agencies and victim initiatives are beginning to team with academia and graduate students to develop evaluation measures and processes that meet program evaluation requirements.

## 3.2 IDENTIFY GRANT FUNDING SOURCES

As you work to obtain funding for your strategic plan, you will most likely seek grant money. Grants are an essential way to support your organization. Many grants exist to help victim service organizations get started and stay in operation. To learn about grant funding sources you need to:

- Recognize the types of grants that exist.
- Recognize the common sources of grants.
- Search for grants.

### **Recognize the types of grants that exist**

The following list shows the common types of grants that victim service organizations can apply for.

- **Capital.** These grants fund land acquisition, building construction, and large equipment purchases.
- **Challenge or matching.** These grants award funds only if the program raises a matching amount.
- **Emergency.** These grants assist programs experiencing unexpected or temporary financial problems.
- **Endowment.** These grants use investment funds that provide regular income to the recipient program.
- **General support or unrestricted.** These grants provide funds that may be used for a broad range of program needs, including general operations.
- **Research.** These grants provide funds for medical, educational, and other types of research activities.
- **Seed.** These grants provide startup funding for a new program or organization.
- **Technical assistance.** These grants are awarded for technical training of staff, such as computer operations.

### Recognize the common sources of grants

Grants are made by numerous entities, both private and public. The following table shows different sources of grants, how they work, and how to get more information about them.

What is the source of grants?	How does it work?	How can you get more information?
Foundations	Foundations are non-profit organizations created for the purpose of establishing or maintaining charitable, educational, religious, and social activities for the common good. These non-profits include independent or family foundations, company foundations, community foundations, and operating foundations.	The Foundation Center 79 Fifth Avenue New York, NY 10106 212-620-4230 <a href="http://www.fdncenter.org">www.fdncenter.org</a>
Corporations	Not all corporations have company foundations to channel their charitable giving. Even those with foundations often reserve part of their gift dollars for direct giving. Although the grant-making process differs from company to company, usually a company will have a contributions committee composed of the chief executive officer and other senior management. Some corporations give preference to charities in which their employees are actively involved or to the communities where they have a presence.	Contact local, state, regional, or national companies directly, and ask for annual reports, application criteria, funding guidelines, and deadlines.

What is the source of grants?	How does it work?	How can you get more information?
Government Agencies	Many Federal, state, and local government agencies have grant programs.	<p>Contact Federal, state, or local government agencies directly by telephone or via the Internet to request an application.</p> <p>Request to be put on all relevant mailing lists—the U.S. Department of Justice, state level public funding sources, and private foundations and charitable trusts—in order to receive RFPs at the time they are released.</p>
Community organizations	Civic, service, and religious organizations are good prospects for small grants for ongoing programs or special projects related to victim assistance.	Contact the local president or other leader, or channel requests through state or national officials.

## Search for grants

### *Internet*

The Internet can be a valuable tool for a strategic planning team to learn about available grant opportunities. The following table shows a list of websites that offer useful information when searching for grants.

What is the site?	How do you get to it?
Internet Resources for Non-profits	<a href="http://www.ucp.utica.org/uwlinks/directory.html">www.ucp.utica.org/uwlinks/directory.html</a>
The Foundation Center	<a href="http://www.fdncenter.org">www.fdncenter.org</a>
University development and grants offices	University websites
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA)	<a href="http://www.cfda.gov">www.cfda.gov</a>
Grants.gov, a clearinghouse for Federal grants	<a href="http://www.grants.gov">www.grants.gov</a>
Federal Register	<a href="http://www.access.gpo.gov">www.access.gpo.gov</a>

### *Libraries*

Many local libraries house reference materials for fund-raising or identifying funding sources that may be helpful. Some useful print materials include:

- Chronicle of Philanthropy.
- Foundation & Corporate Funding Advantage.
- Public Assistance Funding Report.
- The Foundation Index Bimonthly.
- The Federal Register.

### *Professional organizations*

Some professional organizations provide their members with information on funding opportunities. The National Society of Fundraising Executives, with chapters located nationwide, offers its members the use of its fund raising resource center monthly and quarterly publications (1-800-866-FUND).

### *Office for Justice Programs (OJP), U.S. Department of Justice*

OJP publishes information about its appropriations relevant to public safety, criminal and juvenile justice, crime prevention, and victim assistance. For more information:

- *OJP Fiscal Year At A Glance* is available through the Department of Justice Response Center (1-800-421-6770).
- Funding Opportunities are listed on OJP's web site at [www.ojp.usdoj.gov](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov).

***Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), U.S. Department of Justice***

OVC publishes two resources with valuable information about Victim Assistance funding:

- OVC National Directory of Victim Assistance Funding Opportunities.
- Sub-grantees' Training Guide.

To order these publications, contact:

National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS)

P.O. Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849-6000

Telephone: 1-800-851-3420 or 301-519-5500

On line orders: [www.ncjrs.org](http://www.ncjrs.org) or [puborder@ncjrs.org](mailto:puborder@ncjrs.org).



SECTION 4, TOOLS FOR STEP 3.2 includes a list of 20 Federal sources of grant funding. For the types of funding available, how to access that funding, and how to contact the Federal agencies, see Appendix B.

### 3.3 DEVELOP SUCCESSFUL GRANT SEEKING STRATEGIES

You should maximize your funding opportunities by cultivating successful grant-seeking strategies. The following list includes some of the most important grant seeking strategies.

1. **Any solicitation for financial support should be viewed as a *partnership*.** Funding sources should not be viewed as simply a financial resource, but rather as a partner in a process that builds upon positive programs for the future. By positioning a proposal as a partnership, victim service programs can improve their success rate in soliciting funds.
2. **Funding sources are more likely to support programs and services with which they are familiar.** Victim assistance programs with a reputation for performing valuable services that are highly visible in a community increase their likelihood of receiving financial support within that jurisdiction. The visibility of an organization is one of its best assets. The linkages between fund-raising, public relations, and community outreach are critical to success.
3. **Equally important is an organization's ability to clearly articulate its mission, vision, goals, and programs.** If victim assistance organizations are able to articulate their strengths, they are more likely to receive financial support.
4. **Constant evaluation of fund-raising activities is critical to success.** A program's past fund-raising experience is an important foundation to help plan for the future. Each fund-raising initiative must be examined as to what contributed to its success or failure. Feedback from funding sources that either supported or declined to support funding requests can help determine strengths and gaps in fund-raising initiatives.<sup>5</sup> Many private funding sources request references from entities that have funded prior projects or initiatives sponsored by a victim service program or organization. Agencies that build upon their fund-raising successes are more likely to continue such successes in the future.<sup>6</sup>

### 3.4 LIST FUNDING PROSPECTS AND PURSUE THEM

You should take a structured approach to contacting grant prospects. By being organized and prioritizing the grants you want to pursue, you will avoid expending too many resources at one time. The following is a step-by-step approach that you can use to pursue grants.

1. **Research grants and prioritize them.** As you search for grants, keep track of those that are relevant to your organization. Be sure to prioritize them so that you know which you need to respond to first.
2. **Keep track of grant prospects you want to pursue.** As you look for funding sources, you should be sure to know the various time lines for grant applications and funding cycles. Often, early involvement in the funding agency's goal-setting process can insure that funding is available in the future.
3. **Conduct an informal inquiry of top prospects.** Once you have a priority list, you can contact top prospects by letter or phone to briefly describe your organization's initiative and need. At this point, you should offer to send a formal funding proposal.
4. **Create a formal funding proposal (discussed in more detail below).** You should send formal proposals only to funding agencies who express an interest in the project. Your proposal should be well-written and should show a clear link between your organization and the funding priorities of the sponsoring agency. Your formal proposal should:
  - Be realistic about the amount of funding required.
  - Show evidence of successful previous grants administration.
  - Report any outstanding funding agency grant proposals.
  - Try not to exceed available funds.
5. **Schedule a preliminary meeting.** You should try to get a chance to sit face-to-face with the funding agency to discuss the proposed initiative. You can use your proposal as the basis for an in-person presentation.

### 3.5 WRITE PROPOSALS THAT ARE PERSUASIVE AND MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FUNDING AGENCY

In order to write effective proposals, you need to develop some material that can be used repeatedly in the different proposals that you submit. Some of these materials include:

- **Mission statement.** By going through the strategic planning process, you should have developed a clear and focused mission statement that you can include in proposals.
- **Organizational capabilities.** You should clearly outline your organization's strengths as an overview to your proposal. This overview should address how long the agency has been in existence, its core programs and services, staffing (including use of volunteers), past successful fund-raising endeavors and community support, and the organizational structure (flow chart of staffing and services).
- **Program descriptions.** Whether your programs are relevant to a specific fund-raising initiative or not, you should provide an overall view of your organization and the scope of its services. A proposed initiative should link to an existing program in order to show a foundation of ongoing programmatic support.
- **Data on victim services.** The data that you have about your organization's services will help frame a program as a vital resource for victims in need of support and assistance. Data you can present in a proposal includes the number, types, and personal demographics of the victims your organization has served and types of services you have provided.
- **Relationships with other agencies.** By showing the relationships that you have with other groups, you establish your organization as a team player with an impressive network of allied professionals. You can also present a proposed initiative as a collaborative project. Other groups you can discuss include criminal and juvenile justice agencies, community based programs and services, funding sources, civic organizations, interfaith communities, public policy agencies, and elected officials.
- **Program evaluation data.** Though this type of data is often the most neglected component of proposals, it is actually one of the most important to funding agencies. Funding sources are eager for evidence that a program is effective and that it accomplishes what it says it can or will do. Evaluative data you can present include: numbers of clientele served; results of victim satisfaction surveys; findings from focus group research about an organization's programs and services; and summaries of servic-

es provided that directly link to the enforcement of core victims' rights such as notification, protection, and participation in the justice process.

- **Testimony from satisfied clients.** You should try to show funding sources "the human side" of victim services. While a description of crisis intervention services is adequate, a real-life testimonial brings that information to life. For example, a testimonial from a domestic violence victim whose life was dramatically altered in positive ways through victim assistance interventions shows funding agencies that the services you provide are not optional, they are essential.

As you prepare proposals, you should try to avoid common errors and pitfalls, including:

1. Failure to understand and demonstrate an understanding of the problem (why is the application for funding being submitted).
2. Failure to include all of the required information.
3. Failure to tailor the proposal to the RFP.
4. Failure to take evaluation criteria and allocated points into consideration.
5. Failure to submit on the required date.
6. Costs/budget is unreasonable.
7. Costs/budget does not provide details or breakdown information for line items.
8. Proposal does not explain how or by whom the project will be managed.
9. Proposal does not contain relevant information about the requesting agency, its capabilities, and/or management and staff.
10. Proposal does not demonstrate that the requesting agency has the experience or capability to carry out the project.



TOOLS FOR SECTION 4, STEP 3.5 provides a checklist you can use after you finish writing your proposal. This checklist helps you ensure your proposal includes all of the necessary information.

## SECTION 4 ENDNOTES

- 1 National Institute of Justice, 1998, "Change Action: A 12-Step Approach," Restorative Justice Online Notebook, [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/rest-just/ch6\\_toc.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/rest-just/ch6_toc.htm).
- 2 Arizona State Budget and Strategic Planning Advisory Committee, 1998, *Managing for Results - Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement Handbook*, Phoenix, AZ: Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting, [www.state.az.us/ospb/handbook.htm](http://www.state.az.us/ospb/handbook.htm).
- 3 National Institute of Corrections, 1991, *The Practical Planning Guide for Community Corrections Managers*, Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, available at [www.nicic.org/pubs/1991/009018.pdf](http://www.nicic.org/pubs/1991/009018.pdf).
- 4 Anne Seymour, Jane Sigmon, and Eric Smith, 2000, "Special Topics: Funding for Victim Services," *National Victim Assistance Academy Text*, ed. Anne Seymour, et al., Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime and Victims' Assistance Legal organization, 7-9.
- 5 Ibid, 7.
- 6 Harry A. Rosso and Associates, 1991, *Achieving Excellence in Fund Raising*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 319.





## TOOLS FOR SECTION 4: IMPLEMENT

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### WHAT IS IN THIS SECTION?

This section contains tools you could use when you are developing a plan for implementing your strategic plan. These tools apply to:

#### STEP 1. DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

- Project Logic or the “Method of Rationales”
- Action Plan Development Action Grid
- Action Plan Litmus Test

#### STEP 2. DETERMINING THE RESOURCES YOU NEED TO SUPPORT ACTIONS

- Resource Action Grid

#### STEP 3. OBTAINING FUNDING FOR YOUR PLAN

- Federal Grant Funding Sources
- Checklist for Proposal Writing

## STEP 1. DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

### 1.2 THINK ABOUT HOW ACTIONS WILL IMPACT THE OVERALL PLAN

#### **Project Logic or the “Method of Rationales”**

One useful approach to clearly show the relationship between your activities and desired outcomes is to use “project logic,” also known as the “method of rationales” (MOR).<sup>1</sup> The Method of Rationales (MOR) is a way to clarify what a project intends to do and how it will be measured. It can be useful during the implementation phase as well as the tracking phase discussed in Section 6. Ideally you would build your project logic during the implementation phase and then use it to guide evaluation during the tracking phase.

Note: The term “project” used here refers to the plan that you develop to implement your strategic plan.

#### **What are the four categories of a project?**

Every project has four categories. These categories may be stated or unstated:

1. **Resources** (or “inputs” the “nouns” of the project such as people and equipment) that are required to undertake the effort.
2. **Activities** that reflect the regular work of the project (the “verbs” of the project, such as referring clients and counseling).
3. **Results** (also called “outputs”) are the direct measurable results of the activities, within the scope of the project, such as “15 victims received restitution.”
4. **Outcomes** the end goals of the project, which are usually broader and more global than the “results;” for example, “victim satisfaction is enhanced.”

Listing the inputs, activities, results and outcomes can help your strategic planning process in several ways. It can help you:

- Identify critical information for your plan in advance,
- Clarify the relationship among project components,
- Solidify expectations of all involved, and
- Identify shortfalls or opportunities in achieving the desired ends.

### **How are the four categories of a project related?**

The way that the different elements of your project are related is not always obvious. For example, your objectives may not always be clear at first, or, if clear, may not be consistent among stakeholders interested in the success of the project. However, the relationship is always there, even if it is not clear at first.

The input, activities, results and outcomes of a project have a relationship to each other as shown below:

Inputs → Activities → Results → Outcomes

### **Steps for setting up a MOR for your project**

1. **List your inputs.** List the resources in the “inputs” column. Resources that will have any effect on the project should be listed, whether or not they are funded by grant monies.
2. **List your activities.** List the duties, tasks and other actions in the “activities” column.
3. **List your results.** List the expected effects of the activities in the “results” column.
4. **List your outcomes.** List the anticipated downstream end goals in the “outcomes” column.
5. **Rank your inputs, activities, results, and outcomes.** With your stakeholders, determine which activities, results, or outcomes are the most important.
6. **Link related inputs, activities, results, and outcomes.** Link the inputs, activities, results and outcomes of your key project goals.
7. **Select indicators for each key item.**
8. **Find data sources.** Determine the source of data and who will be responsible for gathering the data.

## Practical Application of Project Logic<sup>2</sup>

### **Reviewing the Program Logic Model and Intended Outcome Indicators<sup>3</sup> (Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Planning)**

Does your logic model:

- Include all activities and outcomes that are important?
- Make the appropriate connections between inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes?

Are the outcomes identified as important to measure:

- Relevant to the program's purpose?
- Outcomes for which the program should be held accountable?

Are they important to achieve if the program is to fulfill its purpose?

Do they represent meaningful benefits or changes for participants?

Is it reasonable to believe the program can influence them in a non-trivial way?

Are the outcomes:

- Clear in defining the intended scope of the program's influence?
- Useful to program managers in efforts to identify both points of success and problems the program can correct?
- Likely to be effective in communicating the program benefits to various clients?

## 1.3 DEVELOP YOUR ACTIONS

### Using an action grid to develop your action plan

Follow the steps below to form your action plan using an action grid.

**Step 1. Find your priority goals and objectives.**

**Step 2. For each objective, list out the actions that need to be completed to ensure that it is accomplished.**

**Step 3. For each action, complete the action grid below.**

#### Action Plan Development Action Grid

<b>Objective</b>		You should make sure that you map an <b>objective</b> that you identified in <b>Section 3, Create</b> .
<b>Action</b>		The <b>action</b> is a task that will help you achieve the objective. Some objectives will have more than one action.
<b>Owner</b>		The <b>owner</b> of the action is the person who is accountable for ensuring that the action is completed.
<b>Timeline</b>		The <b>timeline</b> shows the general timeframe in which the action needs to be addressed.
<b>Deadline</b>		The <b>deadline</b> is the final date by which the action needs to be completed.
<b>Milestones</b>		<b>Milestones</b> represent points along the way that will show that the action is making appropriate progress.

**Step 4. Organize all of the goals, objectives, and actions using a numbering system.**

A typical method for organizing an action plan is to devise a numbering system. For example:

- Goals could be numbered: 1, 2, 3, etc.
- Objectives could be numbered to correspond to each goal: “1.1” or “1-1” would represent the first objective under the first goal.
- Finally, action steps could be numbered to identify which goal and objective they are under: “1.1.2” or “1-1-2” would be the second step required under the first objective, first goal.
- The numbering system does not necessarily have to represent the importance of the goal or objective, unless the agency has decided to prioritize elements of the plan.
- Since much of the information included in the action plan will also be used for the tracking and monitoring document (**Section 6, Track**), agencies may want to design one format to accomplish both purposes.

**Step 5. For each objective, list out the actions that need to be completed to ensure that it is accomplished.**

**Step 6. Compile your organized goals, objectives, and actions into a report or binder.**

This is your action plan.

### Conducting the action litmus test<sup>4</sup>

Answer the following questions about each one of the actions in your action plan. If the answer is yes, then your actions are necessary and relevant to your action plan. If the answer is no to any question, however, you need to return to that particular action and revise it so that it does meet the necessary qualifications to become both necessary and relevant to your action plan.

#### Action Plan Litmus Test

Action:	Yes/No
Does the action contain a time frame for completion?	
Is the action broken down into important steps, i.e. have operations, procedures, and processes been included?	
Has responsibility for successful completion of the action been assigned?	
Will additional resources be needed to accomplish the action plan?	
Have arrangements been made for any additional resources needed?	
Will the action help to achieve the objective?	
Does the action relate to the goal?	

**STEP 2. DETERMINING THE RESOURCES YOU NEED TO SUPPORT ACTIONS**

**How can you determine what resources you will need?**

Before you can find the resources you need, you must assess *what* resources you will need. The following resource grid can help give you a rough approximation of the resources that you will need to implement an action.

**Resource Action Grid**

Action:	What do we need?	How much will this cost?	Do we need additional funding to cover it?
<input type="checkbox"/> Personnel			
<input type="checkbox"/> Training			
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities			
<input type="checkbox"/> Hardware			
<input type="checkbox"/> Software			
<input type="checkbox"/> Equipment			



## STEP 3. OBTAINING FUNDING FOR YOUR PLAN

### 3.2 IDENTIFYING GRANT FUNDING SOURCES

There are over twenty sources for Federal grant funding related to victim assistance, criminal and juvenile justice, and public safety. Each of these Federal sources is highlighted in Appendix B, with detailed information about the types of funding available, how to access information about grant funding, and contact information for the specific agencies.

#### **Federal Grant Funding Sources**

- Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)
- STOP Violence Against Women Act Program (VAWA)
- Children’s Justice and Assistance Act Program
- Family Violence Prevention and Services Program
- The Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant Program
- Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs (BJA)
- Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Formula Grant Program (administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance)
- Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)
- National Institute of Corrections (NIC)
- Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Program
- National Institute of Justice (NIJ)
- Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency and Prevention (OJJDP)
- Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants Program (JAIBG)
- Office of Justice Programs Anti-terrorism Funding Sources
- Office for State and Local Domestic Preparedness Support
- Office for Domestic Preparedness
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)
- National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce

### 3.5 WRITING PROPOSALS THAT ARE PERSUASIVE AND MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FUNDING AGENCY

Using a checklist after you have written your proposal will help you ensure that you include all the necessary material.

#### **Checklist for Proposal Writing**

To help write a successful proposal, ask yourself the following questions.

Have you:

- Read the solicitation carefully?
- Followed the instructions, including:
  - The recommended format, such as the organization of the application package?
  - The narrative content and length?
  - The required paper size, font, spacing, etc.?
  - Completing all the forms?
  - Filling in all blanks?
  - Obtaining all official signatures?
- Developed a program narrative that:
  - Defines the problem?
  - Specifies proposed actions?
  - States how actions will solve the problem?
  - Describes evaluation criteria?
  - Includes source information for factual citations?
- Used clear English, in particular:
  - Avoiding acronyms, unless defined?
  - Avoiding technical jargon?
- Developed a budget that contains the costs of the proposal, not of the organization? Are your costs:
  - Reasonable?
  - Necessary?
  - Allowable?
  - Accurately calculated?

SECTION 4  
TOOLS  
ENDNOTES

- 1 Adapted from Arizona State Budget and Strategic Planning Advisory Committee, 1998, *Managing for Results- Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement Handbook*, Phoenix, AZ: Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting. The Handbook is intended to serve as a reference document to aid Arizona's state agencies to apply the concepts of strategic planning and can be found at: [www.state.az.us/ospb/os\\_planning.cfm](http://www.state.az.us/ospb/os_planning.cfm).
- 2 Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Planning with Performance Vistas, Inc., 2001, *Managing for Results Guidebook: A Logical Approach for Program Design, Outcome Measurement and Process Evaluation*, Nashville, TN: Office of Criminal Justice Programs.
- 3 The Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Planning (OCJP) has created "core client outcome indicators with required measures" for eight different types of community- and system-based victim service programs. These can be accessed at the OCJP website: [www.state.tn.us/finance/rds/victimshomepage.htm](http://www.state.tn.us/finance/rds/victimshomepage.htm).
- 4 Arizona State Budget and Strategic Planning Advisory Committee, 1998, *Managing for Results- Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement Handbook*, Phoenix, AZ: Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting.