Writing Goals and Objectives

**Problem:** Groups report difficulty writing concise goals and objectives. Without them, groups may have difficulty having a clear understanding of what they plan to do and how they plan to get there. Poorly defined goals and objectives will lead to a group’s ineffectiveness and lack of cohesive direction.

**Possible Solutions:**

1. **Develop well-defined goals and objectives**

   **Goals** provide a roadmap or plan for where a group wants to go. Goals can be long term (over several years) or short term (over several months). Goals should be based on needs of the community and evidence-based data.

   Goals should be:
   - Believable - situations or conditions that the group believes can be achieved
   - Attainable - possible within a designated time
   - Tangible - capable of being understood or realized
   - On a Timetable - with a completion date
   - Win-Win - beneficial to individual members and the coalition

   **Objectives** are measurable steps toward achieving the goal. They are clear statements of specific activities required to achieve the goal. The best objectives have several characteristics in common - S.M.A.R.T. + C.:

   - **Specific** - they tell how much (number or percent), who (participants), what (action or activity) and by when (date)
   - **Measurable** - specific measures that can be collected, detected, or obtained to determine successful attainment of the objective
   - **Achievable** - not only are the objectives themselves possible, it is likely that your organization will be able to pull them off
   - **Relevant to the mission** - your organization has a clear understanding of how these objectives fit in with the overall vision and mission of the group
   - **Timed** - developing a timeline is important for when your task will be achieved
   - **Challenging** - objectives should stretch the group to aim on significant improvements that are important to members of the community
2. Evaluate and refine your objectives
   Review your developed objectives and determine the type and level of each using
   the following information:

There are two types of objectives
- **Outcome** objectives – measure the “what” of a program
- **Process** objectives – measure the “how” of a program

There are three levels of objectives:
- **Community-level** - objectives measure the planned community change
- **Program impact** - objectives measure the impact the program will have on a
  specific group of people
- **Individual** - objectives measures participant changes resulting from a specific
  program, using these factors:
  - **Knowledge** - understanding (know screening guidelines; recall the number
    to call for screening)
  - **Attitudes** - feeling about something (will consider secondhand smoke
    dangerous; believe eating 5 or more fruits and vegetable is important)
  - **Skills** - the ability to do something (demonstrate breast self exam on a
    breast model; complete fecal occult blood test)
  - **Intentions** - regarding plan for future behavior - (will agree to talk to the
    doctor, will plan to schedule a Pap Test)
  - **Behaviors** (past or current) - to act in a particular way (will exercise 30+
    minutes a day, will have a mammogram)

Well-defined goals and objectives can be used to track, measure and report
progress toward achievement.
## Summary Table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community-level</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHAT will change in a community</td>
<td><strong>Example:</strong> As a result of state funding, FIT (fecal immunochemical tests) will be available to all uninsured men and women age 50 and over through participating local clinics and doctors.</td>
<td>HOW the community change will come about</td>
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<td><strong>Example:</strong> Contracts will be signed with participating local providers to enable uninsured men and women over age 50 have access to free colorectal cancer screening in their communities.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>WHAT will change in the target group as a result of a particular program</td>
<td><strong>Example:</strong> As a result of increased funding, uninsured women between 40 and 49 will receive free breast and cervical cancer screening.</td>
<td>HOW the program will be implemented to affect change in a group/population</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Example:</strong> All female clients, between 40 and 49, will receive a letter inviting them to participate in breast and cervical cancer screening.</td>
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<td>WHAT an individual will learn as a result of a particular program, or WHAT change an individual will make as a result of a particular program</td>
<td><strong>Example:</strong> As a result of one to one education, at least 20% of participants will participate in a smoking cessation program to quit smoking.</td>
<td>HOW the program will be implemented to affect change in an individual's knowledge or actions</td>
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<td><strong>Example:</strong> As a result of one-to-one counseling, all participants will identify at least one smoking cessation service and one smoking cessation aid.</td>
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