



How to Finalize Your Action Plans – Integrate and Reality Check

Ensure Your Action Plans Are Complete and Well Integrated

After all of the various action plans have been drafted, then planners should carefully examine them to ensure that they are complete for each goal or strategy and organized efficiently for the entire organization. At this point, action plans might exist for the entire organization or for programs (with or without the intention of “rolling up” the various programs plans into an overall Strategic Plan).

For Each Action Plan, One At a Time, Consider:

Are there any obvious objectives missing from the plan? Consider using a brainstorming technique to generate more ideas for objectives.

Next, For All of the Action Plans Together, Consider:

1. Is there any duplication of objectives across different action plans?
2. Can any of the objectives be combined for any one particular action plan?
3. Do any of the objectives conflict with each other, that is, would accomplishment of one objective would make it almost impossible to accomplish another objective on the overall list?
4. Should any of the objectives be divided into one or more other objectives?
5. Are some or all of the objectives interconnected somehow?
6. If one or more of the objectives is accomplished, might it contribute to achieving others objectives in one or more other action plans?
7. Might it be useful to combine any objectives that are in a similar category, for example, in central administration or a similar program?

Conduct a Reality Check of All of Your Action Plans

Once the action plans have been well integrated, then planners should carefully examine them to ensure that they are realistic. Consider the following for all of the action plans together:

1. **Are there enough people in the organization to attend to all of the objectives?**
For example, the action plans might specify that eight people are needed to work toward accomplishing objectives in March through June, but the nonprofit only has five people in the organization at that time.
2. **Is there enough money to support the budgets specified across all of the action plans?**
For example, if the action plans specify budgets that total \$25,000 in order to support activities to work the toward objectives from March through June, then can the nonprofit really provide that much money for that period?

3. **Are there enough materials, equipment and facilities to support the implementation?**
For example, across all of the action plans, if there needs to be two conference rooms available at the same time in March, then can the nonprofit provide those facilities then?
4. **Any other “red flags” become apparent now from review of all of the action plans?**
For example, are there any major upcoming events that might have been forgotten, but that would significantly impact the success of any of the action plans?

Adjust Your Action Plans as Needed

It is rare that a nonprofit has all of the resources available to implement the action plans as first developed. The first versions of action plans are usually modified later on somehow. Usually, the money needed to support the actions suggested in all of action plans is far more than the nonprofit can provide and/or needed much earlier than the nonprofit can provide it – even with rigorous fundraising. Usually the nonprofit has to arrange “fall back” or contingency plans that might include:

- Providing more resources
- Moving deadlines farther out
- Cutting back expectations and plans

It is much easier to adjust plans if the objectives have been specifically described, for example, it is easier to adjust (probably reduce) an objective of “Draft a fundraising plan to raise \$50,000 by March 1” than to adjust an objective of “Do a fundraising plan.”