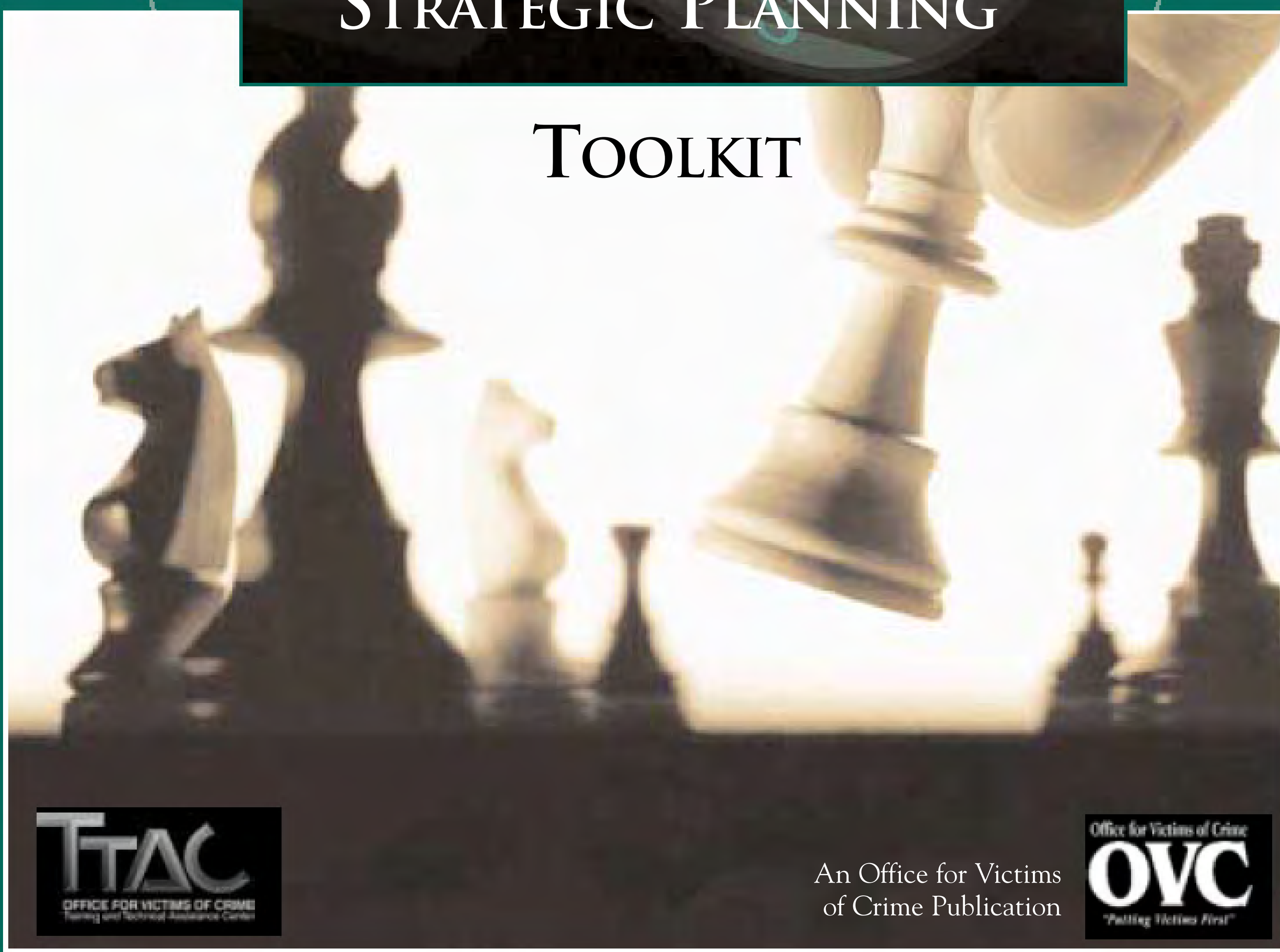
Strategic Planning

Toolkit



An Office for Victims of Crime Publication

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

What is strategic planning?

A strategic plan is simply a tool to help your organization plan for the future. Because it is strategic in scope, it helps you identify where your organization is now and envision where you want it to be in the future. Because it is a plan, it helps you take systematic actions to bridge the "here-and-now" and your vision of the future. Along the way, it allows your organization to identify its strengths and weaknesses, to articulate a shared vision, to establish goals, and to prepare plans to achieve those goals in an effective and efficient manner.[2]

Strategic planning is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on the future.[1]

So, why should your organization develop a strategic plan? Ultimately, because strategic planning will help you serve victims better. Strategic planning can strengthen your organization now, secure your organization's future, and improve its performance throughout.[3] It is a win-win situation—for your organization and for the people you serve.

Why should you create a strategic plan?

Organizations that have created strategic plans have seen many benefits result—both in their ultimate plan and the process that they took to create it. Some of the benefits to strategic planning[4] are:

- **It allows you to plan for change in increasingly complex environments.** Perhaps the one constant in the public and private sectors today is the idea of change. Increasing demands for services, shrinking resources, and greater expectations for services all combine to form a dynamic environment. Strategic planning is proactive; organizations are encouraged to seek and manage change instead of simply reacting to it.
- **It is an essential managerial tool.** Organizations are being asked to achieve and improve outcomes each year. In many cases, getting appropriate funding relies on improved out-

comes. In other words, every organization must now focus on making their operations as efficient and effective as possible. Strategic planning enables organizations to develop a system to institute continuous improvement at *all* levels.

- **It identifies organizational capabilities.** When people think of strategic planning, they tend to think of a solely future-oriented activity. However, strategic planning also helps you focus on the here and now. As you create your plan, you will spend time assessing where your organization is right now. You will gain insight into how your organization actually works, how others perceive it, and what its true strengths and weaknesses are.

- **It focuses your organization on the future.** Strategic planning can also help your organization determine the best direction for its future. It involves a disciplined effort to help shape and guide what your organization becomes, what it does, and why it does it. Strategic planning requires you to gather broad-scale information, explore alternatives, and address the future implications of present decisions.[5]

- **It promotes communication.** Strategic planning brings together many people with a common goal: to plan for an organization's future. It requires difficult discussions as different people will have different visions for the future. Strategic planning facilitates better communication and participation, accommodates divergent interests and values, and fosters orderly decision making.

- **It is adaptable.** Although strategic planning takes a long-range approach, it also uses methods to determine progress and assess the validity of the plan—keeping the planning flexible. A plan can be updated and adjusted to respond to changing circumstances and take advantage of emerging opportunities. It sets targets for performance, incorporates ways to check progress, helps establish priorities, and provides guidance for ongoing operational and capital plans and budgets.

- **It is essential for client support.** Strategic planning determines the things that an organization can do to address client expectations. Service organizations all across the country have come to recognize that they have both clients and stakeholders that they are accountable to. The strategic planning process allows you to better identify your clients and stakeholders and assess their needs and expectations.

- **It is essential for funding support.** Many funding sources *require* or *strongly encourage* strategic planning in order to justify their continued support through grants, contracts and other awards. This applies to both private-sector and government funding sources. Some private foundations and public funding sources either request or even require strategic plans as part of their grant applications.

- **It is necessary: If you fail to plan, you plan to fail.** State and local victim service organizations face increasing challenges: they must constantly manage complex and changing programs, work on limited resources, and serve increasing numbers of clients with multiple needs. In an environment like this, planning is a necessity.

What is an overview of the strategic planning process?

Strategic planning requires concentrated effort from a variety of contributors over a period of time. The best way to understand the strategic process is to use a model. The following model shows the steps that your organization will go through as it develops a strategic plan:

Prepare → **Assess** → **Create** → **Implement** → **Communicate** → **Evaluate**

Prepare
In this step, you form a planning group and find out how ready your organization is for strategic planning.

Assess
In this step, you assess where your organization is right now—its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats

Create
In this step, you create a strategic plan that includes a vision, mission, goals, and objectives.

Implement
In this step, you create an action plan that will allow you to make your plan a reality.

Communicate
In this step, you tell others—including staff, clients, community partners, and funding sources—about your plan

Evaluate
In this step, you evaluate the short-term and long-term effectiveness of the plan.

Who should use this Toolkit?

This Strategic Planning Toolkit can benefit any victim services organization—at the state or local level—that wants to assess where it wants to go in the future. When we refer to "your organization" throughout the document, that term could mean a government organization or a private one. It could also mean a group of organizations who are planning a joint direction together.

Beginning any new program or instituting change is always a stressful enterprise. Instead of simply jumping in blindly, it is much more prudent to adopt a structure, and a plan. When an organization decides to begin any new program, or even just alter an existing one, a strategic plan can help you ensure that your process is successful.

Strategic planning provides a strict structure designed to walk any organization through the process of researching, designing, implementing, and evaluating a strategic plan. Creating a strategic plan may not *guarantee* success in your new venture, but it greatly enhances your chances of succeeding.

HOW SHOULD YOU USE THIS TOOLKIT?

This Strategic Planning Toolkit is intended to function as a guide for you to use throughout the strategic planning process. The Toolkit offers guidelines you can follow and tools and resources for you to draw on at every step.

The Toolkit is organized to help you both *learn* about the planning process and *use* the process. It is broken into six sections that correspond to the six steps in strategic planning. Each section includes a written description of that part of the process and a separate set of tools and resources. All sections are designed to give you a focused way to start strategic planning in your organization.

The Toolkit contains:

- **Section 1. Prepare:** Getting your organization ready for strategic planning.
- **Section 2. Assess:** Determining where your organization is now.
- **Section 3. Create:** Determining where you want your organization to go.
- **Section 4. Implement:** Putting your plan into action.
- **Section 5. Communicate:** Marketing your Strategic Plan.
- **Section 6. Track:** Determining how well your plan is working.
- **Appendix A:** Suggested reading list on strategic planning.
- **Appendix B:** Suggested Federal grant funding resources.
- **Appendix C:** Five state strategic planning initiatives—Highlights of the strategic planning process.

Additionally, each section is accompanied by a Tools section which includes practical, hands-on activities for you to use in your strategic planning process. There are worksheets, checklists, tables, and sample documents for you to use or alter to suit your strategic planning needs.

How do you navigate through this Toolkit?

You will be able to navigate through the six sections of the Toolkit by simply looking at the numbers provided. Each section is broken up into a series of steps, such as Step 1, and Step 2, and again into sub-steps, like 1.1, 1.2.

Each of the six sections in the Toolkit has a tools portion that follows the basic text. The tools portion is organized according the same steps included in the main section. Not every step in a section has a corresponding tool and some steps have more than one tool. For example, in the tools portion of **Section 1, Assess**, there are two tools for Step 1. Developing a strategic planning group. One is a Stakeholders Analysis Checklist and the other is a Client Analysis Checklist.

Introduction Endnotes

1. Internet Nonprofit Center, 2003, "What is Strategic Planning?" The Nonprofit FAQ, www.nonprofits.org/npofaq/03/22/html. See also J.M. Bryson, 1995, *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations: A Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organizational Achievement, Revised edition*, New York: Jossey-Bass.
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SECTION 1. PREPARE

GETTING YOUR ORGANIZATION READY FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

A strategic plan can move your organization in a different direction; the results can be dynamic and positive. Still, the planning process should not be taken lightly, because change is inherently difficult. Before you start, you should prepare for what is ahead by taking a critical look at your organization and asking: Is my organization ready to embark on the strategic planning process?

What is the point in running when you're not on the right road?

—German Proverb

Every organization is fundamentally different; each will be at a different level of readiness for a strategic plan, and each will have different needs that should be addressed in the strategic planning process. When you prepare for your strategic plan, you attempt to understand how such a plan can work in your organization. By identifying key players and setting the stage for the planning process, you can obtain buy-in and build consensus about your strategic plan. The short-term preparation work that you do will pay off for your plan in the long run, increasing its ultimate chance for success.

WHAT IS IN THIS SECTION?

This section outlines the steps you need to take when you prepare for your strategic planning process. We discuss:

STEP 1. DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC PLANNING GROUP

STEP 2. FINDING OUT IF YOUR ORGANIZATION IS READY FOR A STRATEGIC PLAN

STEP 3. ESTABLISHING COMMON GROUND FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

STEP 1. DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC PLANNING GROUP

The first step in preparing for your strategic plan is to put together a planning group. Your planning group can be formal or informal. Sometimes a strategic planning group is a formal team chartered to create the plan together. Other times, there is a core team of decision-makers and a loose affiliation with other players who contribute feedback throughout the process. The bottom line is to think critically about who can and should contribute to your strategic plan, and to get them involved early in the process.

You may not immediately know who to include in your planning group. A comprehensive strategic planning process requires significant input from both clients and stakeholders. Clients and stakeholders can contribute a great deal to your planning process — as contributors, advisors, reviewers, subject-matter experts, or even as financial backers.

Your clients and stakeholders are the people or groups who use your organization's services or are affected by your organization's actions. Identifying both your clients and your stakeholders will help you assess the current environment of your organization by giving you an understanding of who will be affected by your plan or want to contribute input.

A client is anyone whose best interests are served by your organization, or who receives or uses your organization's resources or services. Organizations may have many different clients. You can have internal clients (such as units or employees in your organization) and external clients (such as crime victims, allied service providers, or community members).

A stakeholder is any person or group with a vested interest in your organization; or who can expect a certain level of performance or compliance from your organization. Organizations may have many different stakeholders. Stakeholders may not necessarily use the resources or receive the services of a program; they may be advocates of the program or other community members who are affected by the program.

As you develop your planning group, you will want to think about including people both internal and external to your organization. Your strategic planning group should be representative of key organization decision-makers, but it should also rely on significant contributions from your stakeholders (including community members or other partner groups) and even your clients. You should ensure that your planning process allows you to get feedback from a representative cross-section of people who are invested in your organization.

You might worry that bringing together the opinions and thoughts of so many different people will make the planning process more difficult. Though it may be harder to achieve consensus among a wide range of people with different insights and interests, having such a range of input will greatly benefit your plan. When people contribute valuable insights and data to the strategic planning process, they are often more receptive to the final plan. They will be naturally interested and encouraged to see the outcomes of their contributions.

Tools for Section 1, Step 1 includes more detail regarding the client and stakeholder identification process. This section has two checklists — a Stakeholder Analysis Checklist and a Client Analysis Checklist. These checklists help you identify your stakeholders and clients, and give guidance on how to elicit and incorporate feedback from them.

STEP 2: FINDING OUT IF YOUR ORGANIZATION IS READY FOR A STRATEGIC PLAN

Once you have a planning group in place, you will be ready to determine your organization's *readiness to plan*. How well you analyze the conditions under which strategic planning will take place can mean the difference between your plan succeeding or failing. Assessing *readiness* can help identify issues that may impede the process, opportunities for strengthening it, and potential allies or supporters who will help move the planning process forward.

To find out if your organization is ready for strategic planning you should:

- Conduct a systematic assessment of your organization's readiness to plan.
- Anticipate and prepare for the challenges of strategic planning.

2.1 CONDUCT A SYSTEMATIC ASSESSMENT OF YOUR ORGANIZATION'S READINESS TO PLAN

How do you determine if an organization is *ready to plan?* Like most ventures, strategic planning processes require a certain degree of readiness in order to succeed. States, organizations, and individuals must be prepared to make sure that the planning process will provide the maximum benefit. It is important to recognize that conditions only need to be conducive—not perfect—for planning to be successful. Planning takes time, coordination, expertise, objectivity and preparation. By making sure that your organization is ready to invest these resources in the process, you will better ensure your plan's success. Additionally, if you find out that your organization is not ready to plan, your group can stop and try to fix the situation before proceeding with the strategic planning process.

Therefore, it is important to frankly and honestly gauge your organization's readiness to pursue a strategic planning process. There is no standard procedure or protocol for conducting a preliminary readiness assessment. There are, however, some publications and authors that provide guidance about how to determine an organization's *readiness to plan*.

Tools for Section 1, Step 2.1 includes a Pre-Planning Readiness Checklist. This short checklist gives you "big picture" concepts to think about as you decide whether to start the strategic planning process.

2.2 ANTICIPATE AND PREPARE FOR CHALLENGES TO STRATEGIC PLANNING

The very process of strategic planning can be challenging and time-consuming. Often, the potential challenges to strategic planning are viewed as excuses to simply not plan. However, many of these challenges to strategic planning are quite common. By understanding these challenges in advance, you can be ready to address them effectively so that your strategic plan stays on track.

Challenges and solutions in strategic planning

The following ten challenges to strategic planning are based upon the experiences of states and jurisdictions that have successfully implemented strategic planning for victim services.

Challenge	Why does it happen?	How can you solve it?
Challenge 1. Misunderstanding: "All we have to do is just write down the things that we want to do over the next couple of years. Why do we actually need a strategic plan?"	Sometimes VOCA administrators, agency directors, and board members do not have a clear understanding of what strategic planning means. They are not informed or convinced about the *purpose and benefits* of developing such a plan. To many, the term "strategic planning" itself can be intimidating. They do not know how to begin the process so they stay away from it.	**Solution:** First, thinking patterns must be changed. Participants must learn—and "buy in" to—the value of planning. Done correctly, it looks not only at where they want the states, local jurisdictions, or organizations to go, but will examine where they are and even where they have come from. Strategic planning is the "road map with a commonly agreed upon destination" to help create a set of goals based upon a sound mission and shared values.
Challenge 2. Training: "I don't need anyone to show me how to write down goals and objectives. I've done this stuff for years."	Many victim assistance organizations are grassroots programs with leaders who may have a passion for what they are doing, but have little or no formal training in how to accomplish it. The concept of "planning" is difficult to comprehend when there appears to be limited time and resources for providing direct victim services. Without training and technical assistance or a basic understanding of strategic planning, many potential participants will not be interested in joining a process that should be inclusive.	**Solution:** The Strategic Planning Toolkit has been designed in a manner to facilitate both training and technical assistance about the strategic planning process. States, local jurisdictions and organizations can utilize its many components—as well as technical assistance available from OVC's Training and Technical Assistance Center's (TTAC's) strategic planning consultants—to guide strategic planning initiatives or to receive training about strategic planning processes.

Challenge	Why does it happen?	How can you solve it?
Challenge 3. Commitment: "I think strategic planning is fine, as long as someone else has the time and resources to do it."	Strategic planning requires time as well as human and financial resources. Many VOCA administrators and agency directors feel that they do not have the time to invest in this significant effort while completing their day-to-day requirements for basic program management and victim assistance.	**Solution:** In order to be most effective, the planning process has to be viewed holistically, with each participant identifying some value or positive outcome resulting from his or her participation. The final plan should yield useful results not only for the strategic planning sponsors, but for all states, organizations, and individuals who contribute to its success. Ideally, the planning process will be integrated into the organization's operations on an ongoing basis. It's helpful to find a person or a team of persons—the *change agent(s)*—who will drive the overall project. These are people who are well respected and committed to seeing this project to its conclusion. They have the enthusiasm to motivate participants and are committed to being inclusive.
Challenge 4. Funding Resources: "We simply don't have it in the budget. We have to raise money for services and nothing else! We have to watch the bottom line!"	The strategic planning process can be costly in terms of time and human resources. Project sponsors must develop a budget and a time-task-cost plan that clearly delineates both costs and funding priorities when there are limited dollars available.	**Solution:** Yes, planning can be costly, but not as costly as time wasted on unfocused activities that do not advance the mission of the organization. Further, lack of resources should never be an excuse not to plan, given the situation. The *Determining resources* portion of **Section 4: Implement**, of this Toolkit contains valuable information about resources for supporting a strategic planning initiative. Many funding sources see the value of strategic planning and are encouraging (and even *requiring*) agencies to undertake the process. In addition, local resources such as universities and United Way programs can support strategic planning initiatives. Sometimes, professors are willing to use this initiative as a class project or a graduate level individual activity.

Challenge	Why does it happen?	How can you solve it?
Challenge 5. Buy-In: "I'm not sure we need to do this, but if others feel so strongly about it, go ahead."	It is imperative that the leadership of an organization agrees to undergo this process. Mere verbal assent is not enough. "Buy-in" involves everyone's time, talents and resources.	**Solution:** Potential participants need to see how beneficial the strategic planning process and potential outcomes are. One way to overcome this type of thinking is to ascertain what the needs are of those who are slow to come aboard, and use these needs as a "jump start." However, it is important to draw parallels that demonstrate how their needs or concerns impact other segments of the system. The idea here is to avoid any undermining, while building a stronger working team.
Challenge 6. Lone Ranger Approach: "It's her duty as director to come up with the plan. We'll review it and decide if it is the way that we want to go. We can help if she needs anything."	Strategic planning is frequently assigned to the Executive Director to carry out. However, good planning involves the collaborative commitment and participation of everyone.[1]	**Solution:** If everyone participates, then individuals are less likely to attribute the blame to others for problems with the plan. In addition, working as a group can help increase objectivity and focus the plan, which otherwise might get bogged down in personalities and politics.
Challenge 7. Denial: "I'm OK, you're OK." "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!"	Good planning means looking at oneself and the agency critically. Planners have to sit and listen to the truth, no matter how painful, and accept it as beneficial to "the big picture."	**Solution:** The goal of a good strategic plan is to remedy some of the problems the agency or jurisdiction is facing in developing and/or implementing its mission, vision, goals, and objectives. It is not designed to "sugar coat" the truth. Sometimes it is good to take a hard look at what has been and is currently being done. If it is right, the plan will confirm it.

Challenge	Why does it happen?	How can you solve it?
Challenge 8. Time: "I've checked my calendar and I am available on my lunch hour on Thursday and for two hours on Friday afternoon. If the rest of the board will make a similar commitment, we can knock this thing out quickly!"	Strategic planning is seen as a long and complicated process. There is immense pressure to maintain services and generate funds. Many VOCA administrators, agency directors, and their board members feel they simply *cannot* take on anything else.	**Solution:** You cannot develop a strategic plan overnight. A well-managed organization builds strategic planning into its normal operations in an ongoing manner. Strategic planning and implementation requires a lot of time and energy. Although the demand for planning can appear overwhelming in light of the day-to-day operations of programs whose staff are needed for the planning process, states, organizations, and individuals must be made aware that the benefits can outweigh the time challenge.
Challenge 9. Getting Pertinent Players to the Table: "I realize victim services is important, but I don't think the Chief will let me give any more time." "I have a heavy trial calendar and I can't devote any more time to this." "Unfortunately, running a major corporation keeps me really busy. Maybe my secretary can sit in on some of the meetings."	It can be challenging, at best, to get all of the stakeholders to the table to map out a blueprint for the state's, organization's, or jurisdiction's programmatic direction. People who serve on nonprofit boards are often very busy and over-committed, and VOCA administrators and allied professionals are under their own occupational time and resource constraints. The "traditional players" in victim services do not always reflect the cultural, gender, and geographic diversity that is required for success.	**Solution:** A "time-task-responsibility plan" can help determine whose input is needed at what point in the strategic planning process (a sample is included in **Section 2, Assess, Tools**). While core strategic planning team members should clearly understand what is required of them in terms of time, the multitude of people who will contribute to the planning process should be asked to get involved with clear expectations, as well as time commitments, provided. Ongoing efforts should be made to ensure that cultural competence is achieved in terms of planning team leadership and participation throughout the planning process.

Challenge	Why does it happen?	How can you solve it?
Challenge 10. Finding the Right Consultant: "No one out there understands what we're going through."	Admittedly, it can be difficult to locate consultants who have some knowledge about the victim service field, but they are out there. Many consultants have experience in strategic plan development and implementation, as well as other skills, and can offer "process expertise" to complement the victim assistance expertise among strategic planning team members.	**Solution:** You can use consultants who have a good working knowledge of the field of victim assistance. Since a number of states have developed strategic plans for victim assistance, solid references for consultants to guide the process are readily available. In addition, technical assistance for strategic planning is available for VOCA administrators and grantees from the OVC Training and Technical Assistance Center (866-OVC-TTAC).

STEP 3. ESTABLISHING COMMON GROUND FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING[2]

Finding common ground for your strategic planning process is critical to the ultimate success of your plan. Your planning group and your organization need to start from a common frame of reference. By making sure that everyone is on the same page, you can better create a strategic plan that meets everyone's expectations. At the same time, you can ensure that your planning process has a set of common ground rules so that people interact respectfully and productively.

Whether you are engaging in a state-wide strategic planning process or a local level process, a wide range of stakeholders will be involved. Each participant comes with his or her personal and organizational history, perspectives, experiences, successes, and visions. "Turf" issues are often cited as a major hurdle in working cooperatively: programs and/or administrators often seem reluctant to share information, resources, or ideas. Establishing the "common ground" shared by participants leads to group appreciation of the strengths brought by each member, a valuing of their potential contributions, and an understanding of the needs and wishes of all involved: an important first step to countering "turf-ism."

There are planning practice techniques designed to help groups of diverse organizations or departments come together to form cooperative, effective, and dynamic entities. From these entities—that must be founded on common ground—you can enhance the "bottom line" of your plan—be it profits or services. The practices and techniques may have different design formats, but they share key commonalities that have proved very effective.

Whether working with a small internal group or one that is very large, complex and diverse, there are key principles that can help you create the final, cooperative environment needed for action. You may choose to engage a trained facilitator to lead a process designed specifically for this purpose or you may develop your own methods. Either way, the key principles below offer significant insights into promoting an environment for cooperation and change.

Two important ways to help develop common ground are to:

- Establish a foundation of trust and cooperation in your planning group, and,
- Ensure that there is cultural competence in your planning group.

3.1 ESTABLISH A FOUNDATION OF TRUST AND COOPERATION AMONG YOUR PLANNING GROUP

For your plan to be a success, you must have an effective team. But creating an effective team is about more than inviting the right people. It is also about creating a productive and positive atmosphere where change can happen.[3]

- **Establish a "strengths-based" approach.** In any process, you will find elements that are working. Identify those elements and capitalize on them. When we think of Strategic Planning, we often tend to focus on the weaknesses: "needs," "gaps," "deficiencies," "frustrations," "breaks in services," "funding declines," etc. What we sometimes fail to consider are the past and present practices that are working, supporting, and enhancing services for victims. As you work in your planning group, focus on how you can expand on what is working. Additionally, find avenues for each participant or organization to enhance their contributions to the process.
- **Develop relationships: the key to change.** You should recognize and value what each participant and organization brings to the table. Ask questions to get people talking about what they believe is important in the planning process. Set up activities that require inter-agency work. And above all, remember that developing relationships among key stakeholders is critical to the success of your ultimate plan.
- **Promote mutual sharing and learning among stakeholders.** Everyone at the table has something to offer. The more diverse the group, the richer the opportunities to learn from each other.
- **Appreciate and apply lessons from past successes.** Keep track of changes, developments, and new practices, both positive and negative. Your planning group should take what is working, improve it, and apply it to new endeavors. Planning groups that create a historical timeline that represents a shared history develop an understanding of each other. They also tend to respect and value each other when they see what they have accomplished together through often difficult circumstances.
- **Develop a shared vision for the future.** Determine the ideal scenario and then work together to identify ways to get there. Have participants think about 5 to 10 years in the future. What would be the ideal situation, and, most importantly, how would they get there? You can use fun strategies including skits, songs, developing book titles and chapter headings that describe the process, and having "60-minutes-type" interviews.

- **Gather together a diverse group where each person makes valuable contributions: participatory change models.** Diversity includes not only gender and ethnicity, but also job responsibilities, personal styles, and wide-ranging stakeholder groups. One model for large group strategic planning states that if you don't have some people at the table who make you uncomfortable, you probably haven't included all the stakeholders who should be there. Inclusion in the process leads to "buy-in" and action.
- **Avoid a problem-solving process.** Even though "needs" are identified, strategic planning should involve looking for creative strategies to try, not re-hashing the reasons for failure in the past. Focusing on problems gives the process a negativity that can pervade and undermine the work.
- **Recognize that language is important.** Use positive, upbeat language. Instead of saying "It won't work," say "Let's try." "Challenges" feel like they are more easily overcome than "barriers." It sounds simple, but negative language can be intentionally (although maybe subconsciously) used to sabotage some actions. Unintentionally using negative language can support an environment counterproductive to change.

3.2 ENSURE THAT THERE IS CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN YOUR STRATEGIC PLANNING

When you work on your strategic plan, you need to focus on inclusivity—or *recognizing* and *valuing* the diversity, backgrounds, experiences, and assets of crime victims and those who serve them. Inclusion is integral to and necessary for the success of strategic planning.[4]

The National Institute of Justice, Pickett Institute defines cultural competence as "a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, beliefs, and policies that come together in a system, agency, organization, or individual that enables it to work effectively in cross-cultural situations." To better understand where you are in the process of becoming more culturally competent, it is useful to think of the possible ways you can respond to cultural differences from an organizational standpoint.

The Pickett Institute identifies six points along a developmental continuum and the characteristics that might be exhibited at each position. Each stage progressively builds on the former one and requires the participating organization to assess the biases, prejudices, and assumptions it makes about people who are different. A more personal examination requires individuals to look at how they can provide support and direction and help improve the way their organization deals with employees and volunteers. The points on the continuum also help participating organizations develop and implement policies, procedures, systems and practices to break the barriers that hinder cross-cultural understanding and communication.[5]

1. **Cultural Destructiveness.** Organizations representing the first developmental stage adopt attitudes, policies, and practices that are destructive to cultures and, consequently, to the individuals in the culture.
2. **Cultural Incapacity.** While the system or organization in developmental level two does not intentionally seek to be culturally destructive, it lacks the capacity to help minority clients or communities. Some examples would be maintaining discriminatory hiring practices, sending subtle messages to people of minority status that they are not valued or welcome, and espousing lower expectations of minority clients.
3. **Cultural Blindness.** At the midpoint of the continuum, the system and its agencies in developmental level three provide services with the expressed philosophy of being unbiased, and feel that color or culture makes no difference. They believe that helping approaches traditionally used by the dominant culture are universally applicable. Such services ignore cultural strengths, encourage assimilation, and blame victims for their problems.
4. **Cultural Pre-competence.** The pre-competent organization at developmental level four realizes its weakness in serving certain cultural groups and attempts to improve some aspects of their services to a specific population. The danger at this stage is that an organization may take on a false sense of accomplishment by feeling that by fulfilling one major goal, it has met its obligation to a particular cultural group. Another danger is tokenism. Hiring minority staff does not ensure that services will be more accessible, staff will be more sensitive, and the needs of the targeted cultural groups have been fully met.
5. **Cultural Competence.** Culturally competent organizations reflecting developmental level five are characterized by acceptance and respect for difference. They continue self-assessment regarding different cultures, pay careful attention to the dynamics of difference, continuously expand cultural knowledge and resources, and adapt service models to meet the changing needs of various cultural groups. They also hire unbiased employees and volunteers, and seek advice from and the involvement of various cultural groups to improve services.

6. **Cultural Proficiency.** The developmental level six organization holds culture in high esteem. It supports and/or conducts research and develops new approaches to serving different cultural groups, supports or publishes the results of demonstration projects, and hires staff members who are specialists in culturally competent practice.

Organizations that have successfully developed and implemented strategic plans emphasize the importance of ensuring cultural competence in the client/stakeholder identification process. Ensuring cultural competence requires that, as part of the process, the organization seeks and incorporates input and opinions from individuals and groups that are diverse by culture and ethnicity (and also by gender, geography, disability, and life experiences). Strategic planning efforts should always try to reflect the clients ultimately served, as well those who are underserved and unserved (often due to cultural marginalization). This may mean understanding and including groups of people more representative of all clients and stakeholders.

TOOLS FOR SECTION 1, STEP 3.2, "What principles can you use to ensure cultural competence?" discusses cultural competence in more detail. It includes a definition of cultural competence in terms of selecting clients and stakeholders. It also includes principles to follow to ensure cultural competence.

3.3 APPLY CULTURAL COMPETENCE TO STRATEGIC PLANNING

In order to develop a planning process and a strategic plan that are culturally competent, strategic planning team members must consider how cultural competence affects the representation in your organization, the assistance your organization provides, and organization members' own feelings.

Cultural competence and how it affects the representation in your organization

The level of cultural competence you achieve can affect:

- How well diverse cultures and a wide range of points of view are represented in strategic planning initiatives (i.e. on planning teams, advisory boards, research, data collection and outreach efforts, and through public education initiatives, etc.)
- How programs are planned, implemented, and developed with respect to cultural diversity.
- Research about the impact of victimization, particularly any differences

in how victims of various cultures are affected by crime, trauma, and their treatment by justice processes and personnel and victim service providers.

- How you develop staff performance measures and program evaluation criteria.
- The need for participants in the strategic planning process to feel validated, safe, and respected, regardless of their culture, ethnicity, gender, geography, or disability.
- How you plan to address the rights and needs of victims who have physical or mental disabilities, and how you would plan to include representatives in planning efforts who can address important participation and outreach issues (i.e., compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, interpreters for the deaf, outreach resources in Braille, etc.).

Cultural competence and how it affects the assistance your organization provides

The level of cultural competence you achieve can affect:

- How crime victims of diverse cultures are viewed and treated by the justice system and allied professional agencies and organizations.
- How crime victims perceive their treatment, by collecting relevant data throughout the planning process to document their treatment and perceptions.
- Outreach and dissemination efforts that engage and involve representatives from culturally diverse communities as paid staff, partners, volunteers, liaisons, and other important linkages to crime victims and allied professionals.
- How criminal and juvenile justice, victim service providers, and allied professionals are trained to identify and address the needs and concerns of diverse cultures.
- The need for language interpreters to facilitate strategic planning processes, as well as basic implementation of victims' rights throughout the justice system, provision of system- and community-based victim services, and victim and community outreach.
- The need to provide victim information and outreach resources in the languages of the various cultures in your community (in print, audio, video and Web-based formats).
- How you ultimately develop a strategic plan that must incorporate and address the needs of all victims of crime and those who serve them.[6]

Cultural competence and how it affects organization members' feelings

The level of cultural competence you achieve can affect:

- Strategic planning team members' or program members' own feelings, perspectives, and possible biases that relate to strategic planning, collaboration, and the overall provision of victim services.
- How you combat tokenism. Your focus on culturally diverse representation in strategic planning initiatives should be driven by a desire for the best possible plan and outcomes, not a need to achieve "bonus points" for diversity. If you do not recognize and respect the contributions of diverse populations, they will not have the positive impact that you need for real success.

Endnotes

1. Common Ground, N.C. Center for Nonprofits, May-June 1999, *Board Development: the New Work of Nonprofit Boards*, N.C. Center for Nonprofits.
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3. Two useful references on establishing a foundation of trust and cooperation are:
   - Marvin R. Weisbord, *Discovering Common Ground: How Future Search Conferences Bring People Together to Achieve Breakthrough Innovation, Empowerment, Shared Vision and Collaborative Action*, San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers. Available at: www.futuresearch.net
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4. Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center, 2003, *Strategic Planning Training-of-Planners Conference*, Baltimore, MD: Office for Victims of Crime, Training and Technical Assistance Center.
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TOOLS FOR SECTION 1: PREPARE

WHAT IS IN THIS SECTION?

This section contains tools you could use when you prepare your organization for strategic planning. These tools apply to:

STEP 1. DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC PLANNING GROUP

- Stakeholders Analysis Checklist
- Client Analysis Checklist

STEP 2. FINDING OUT IF YOUR ORGANIZATION IS READY FOR A STRATEGIC PLAN

- Preplanning Readiness Checklist

STEP 3. ESTABLISHING COMMON GROUND FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

- Head Start's Eight Multicultural Principles Checklist

STEP 1: DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC PLANNING GROUP

1.1 CLIENT/STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION AND INCORPORATION PROCESS

We have included two checklists to help you fully identify your clients and stakeholders so that you can incorporate their views into your strategic plan.

Stakeholders[1] Analysis Checklist

Step 1: Identify who your stakeholders are

- ☐ List all the primary stakeholders.
- ☐ List all the secondary stakeholders.
- ☐ List all the external stakeholders.
- ☐ Identify all potential supporters and opponents of your project.
- ☐ Identify your key stakeholders.
- ☐ Identify the interests of vulnerable groups (*e.g.* the poor).
- ☐ Rank all your stakeholders in importance to your project.
- ☐ Note any new primary or secondary stakeholders that are likely to emerge as a result of the project.

Step 2. Identify stakeholder interests

- ☐ List the individual interests of each stakeholder. (Try to be objective and look for covert interests as well as obvious ones.)
- ☐ Record the stakeholders' expectations of the project.
- ☐ Catalog likely benefits for the stakeholder.
- ☐ Determine resources the stakeholder will wish to commit (or avoid committing) to the project.
- ☐ Discover other interests the stakeholder has which may conflict with the project.
- ☐ Identify how the stakeholder regards others on the list.

Step 3. Assess the impact of your project on each stakeholder

- ☐ Assess the impact of your project on each stakeholder – is it positive, negative, neutral or unknown?
- ☐ List which stakeholder interests converge most closely with project objectives.

Step 4. Assess the influence of each stakeholder on your strategic plan

- ☐ Identify clearly who can influence your project.
- ☐ Know where command and control rests in relation to budget; in relation to clinical matters.
- ☐ Identify leaders/champions.
- ☐ Record who controls strategic resources. Will they commit these to your project?
- ☐ Catalog who has specialist knowledge crucial to your project. Will they support you?
- ☐ Determine who occupies a strong negotiating position in relation to other stakeholders.

Step 5. Assess the level of stakeholder participation your plan will have

- ☐ Decide which stakeholders you must involve as partners.
- ☐ Evaluate which stakeholders need to be consulted with but who may not wish to be active in the program.
- ☐ Establish which stakeholders you need to keep informed only.

Step 6. Find out what your stakeholders think and want

Use the following tools (described in detail in **Section 2, Assess, Tools**) to collect this information:

- ☐ Written or telephone surveys.
- ☐ Focus groups.
- ☐ User groups.
- ☐ One-on-one interviews.
- ☐ Client assessment surveys.
- ☐ Client advisory committees or working groups.
- ☐ Public hearings and meetings.
- ☐ The Affinity Diagram process.

Step 7. Incorporate stakeholder feedback.

Use stakeholder feedback to:

- ☐ Further build your strategic planning group.
- ☐ Address problems that you identify in the strategic plan.
- ☐ Communicate more effectively with them about the strategic planning process. (Please see **Section 5, Communicate**, for more details.)

Clients Analysis Checklist

Step 1. Identify who your clients are

- ☐ List all groups of people who receive or use the resources and services produced by your organization.
- ☐ Record any new primary or secondary clients likely to emerge as a result of the project.
- ☐ Rank all your stakeholders in importance to your project.

Step 2. Identify client Interests

- ☐ Decide what clients need from your programs.
- ☐ Record what they want and expect.
- ☐ Determine what other options clients have when obtaining similar resources or services.
- ☐ Identify the interests of vulnerable groups (e.g. the poor).
- ☐ Establish who should receive or use such resources and services, but are not adequately represented.
- ☐ List the clients' expectations of the project.
- ☐ Identify likely benefits for the clients.

Step 3. Assess the impact of your project on each client group

- ☐ Assess the impact of your project on each client group — is it positive, negative, neutral or unknown?
- ☐ Decide which client group interests converge most closely with project objectives.

Step 4. Assess the level of client participation your plan will have

- ☐ Determine which clients you must involve as partners.
- ☐ Establish which clients need to be consulted with but who may not wish to be active in the program.

Step 5. Find out what your clients think and want

Use the following tools (described in detail in **Section 2, Assess, Tools**) to collect this information:

- ☐ Written or telephone surveys.
- ☐ Focus groups.
- ☐ User groups.

- ☐ One-on-one interviews.
- ☐ Client assessment surveys.
- ☐ Client advisory committees or working groups.
- ☐ Public hearings and meetings.
- ☐ The Affinity Diagram process.

Step 6. Incorporate client feedback.

Use client feedback to:

- ☐ Further build your strategic planning group.
- ☐ Address problems that you identify in the strategic plan.
- ☐ Communicate more effectively with them about the strategic planning process. (Please see **Section 5, Communicate**, for more details.)

STEP 2. FINDING OUT IF YOUR ORGANIZATION IS READY FOR A STRATEGIC PLAN

2.1 CONDUCT A SYSTEMATIC ASSESSMENT OF YOUR ORGANIZATION'S READINESS TO PLAN

Pre-Planning Readiness Checklist

The Alliance on Nonprofit Management (ANA) has developed a short checklist to help you assess your organization's readiness to plan. You can review and address the following elements or conditions before you commit to strategic planning.[2]

ANA Pre-Planning Readiness Checklist

- ❑ A commitment of active and involved leadership, with continuous leadership engaged throughout the planning process.
- ❑ A resolution of major crises that may interfere with long-range thinking during the process, commitment to the plan, and participation in the planning process (e.g., insufficient funds for next payroll, etc).
- ❑ Board and staff that are not embroiled in extreme, destructive conflict.
- ❑ Board and staff who understand the purpose of planning and what it can or cannot accomplish, as well as consensus about expectations.
- ❑ Commitment of resources to adequately assess current programs and the ability to meet current and future client needs.
- ❑ Willingness to question the status quo and to look at new approaches to perform and evaluate the business of the organization.

STEP 3: ESTABLISHING COMMON GROUND FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

3.2 ENSURE THAT THERE IS CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN YOUR STRATEGIC PLANNING

What principles can you use to ensure cultural competence?

The Head Start Program is federally mandated to be culturally relevant and multiculturally sensitive. Head Start has developed eight “multicultural principles” that must be reflected in its programming and are equally relevant for organizations engaged in strategic planning. The principles are paraphrased below.

Head Start’s Eight Multicultural Principles Checklist[3]

Check off each principle as it is discussed in your strategic planning process:

- ❑ Every individual is rooted in culture.
- ❑ The cultural groups represented in the communities and families are the primary source for culturally relevant programming.
- ❑ Culturally relevant and diverse services require learning accurate information about the culture of different groups and discarding stereotypes.
- ❑ Addressing cultural relevance is necessary in all activities.
- ❑ Every individual has the right to maintain his or her own identity while acquiring skills to function in our diverse society.
- ❑ Culturally competent programs reflect the community.
- ❑ Culturally relevant and diverse programming examines and challenges institutional and personal biases.
- ❑ Cultural recognition and competence are incorporated in all services.

Endnotes

1. BC Heart Health, "a01-stakeholder_analysis.pdf,"www.heart-health.org/resources/hhs/toolkit/PDF/worksheets.
2. Alliance for Nonprofit Management, "Frequently Asked Questions," The Alliance Raising the Bar on Quality, www.allianceonline.org/faqs/.
3. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1992, *Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs*, Washington, DC: Administration for Children and Families, Head Start Bureau. www.bmcc.org/Headstart/Cultural/index.htm.

SECTION 2. ASSESS

Determine where your organization is now

Most organizations get excited about the strategic planning process and want to jump right in and create the plan. However, you must provide the proper foundation for the strategic plan before you get started. The bottom line is that you need to know where your organization is *right now* before you can decide where it should be going.

Wherever you go, there you are.

—Buckaroo Banzai

By taking a critical look at your organization first, you can better understand what your strategic plan can feasibly address. By getting a handle on your current purpose, processes, and capabilities, you can create a dynamic strategic plan that builds on your strengths and improves on your weaknesses.

What is in this section?

This section outlines the steps you need to take when you assess your organization. We discuss:

STEP 1. USING STRUCTURED METHODS TO ASSESS YOUR ORGANIZATION

STEP 2. COLLECTING AND CONSOLIDATING DATA ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION

STEP 1. USING STRUCTURED METHODS TO ASSESS YOUR ORGANIZATION

Everyone feels that they "know" their organization, but often what we know is clouded by our own thoughts and feelings. Additionally, the information we have about our organization is often anecdotal or based on hunches and assumptions. In short, we may know less about our organization than we think we do.

To truly understand where you are right now, you need to take a structured approach to gathering information. Using established models, you can investigate your organization almost as an outsider looking in. By stepping back and assessing your organization in a structured way, you may learn more than you thought possible about the work your organization does, how it does this work, and what its true strengths and weaknesses are.

You can use many assessment models. Most models are structured so that you start by focusing on a set of key questions about your organization. After identifying the key questions, you can then use data collection methods to get research-based answers to those questions.

This section introduces two different assessment models:

- Using a model to assess your organization (A framework adapted from McCaskey[1] for analyzing organizations).
- Conducting a situation analysis to assess your organization.

Both models can be extremely useful as you assess your organization. The first is focused more on taking a research-based approach—relying on structured data collection methods to get answers. The second model is more of an internal, team-based approach—relying on your planning group to work together to brainstorm answers to key questions about your organization. Both are valid models that your planning group can investigate.

1.1 USE A MODEL TO ASSESS YOUR ORGANIZATION

One way to assess your organization is to collect information about critical aspects that could affect its functioning. Academic literature is full of such models. We have chosen one that is relatively simple and has been used successfully by organizational analysts over a period of years.[2] To use this model you collect information about the different aspects of your organization by answering questions.

The model has seven parts:

1. **Organizational Context**
2. **Outputs**
3. **Culture**
4. **Tasks**
5. **Formal Organization**
6. **People**
7. **Physical Setting and Technology**

Each part has several questions that your planning group can begin answering.

Tools for Section 2, Step 1.1 provides a detailed checklist of questions in order to successfully use this model to assess your organization. To use this model, your planning group would discuss each question and collect additional information as needed to answer the questions.

1.2 CONDUCT A SITUATION ANALYSIS TO ASSESS YOUR ORGANIZATION

Another way to assess your organization is to have your planning group conduct a situation analysis, also known as a SWOT analysis.[3] In this group-based approach, you work together to identify **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats in your organization. A SWOT analysis provides a framework for identifying critical issues that will impact your strategic plan.

Conducting a SWOT analysis requires participants to be honest in their assessment. This is not the time to "soft shoe" the truth. Sometimes it will be difficult to hear and even say, but if it is one's earnest desire to move the agency to a better place, then truth is essential. It is an effective way of gaining insight into your organization's assets and liabilities. It can also help identify areas for your organization to develop, to improve, or to terminate.

- **Strengths** are positive aspects internal to the organization
  Example: We have a very hard working staff.
- **Weaknesses** are negative aspects internal to the organization.
  Example: The Board procrastinates in making critical decisions.
- **Opportunities** are positive and external to the organization.
  Example: Organizations that meet their stated goals and objectives are eligible for discretionary funds.
- **Threats** are negative aspects external to the organization.
  Example: A major funding source has changed its priorities.

As these short descriptions demonstrate, a SWOT analysis depends on a thorough assessment of issues internal and external to the organization.

- **Internal Assessment.** With an internal assessment, you analyze your organization's position, performance, problems and potential.
- **External Assessment.** With an external assessment, you analyze the elements or forces that affect the environment in which your organization functions.

As you implement your strategic plan, you will find that your SWOT analysis will form the basis for later actions that you take. For example, your goals and objectives often come from the strengths you want to build on, the weaknesses you want to strengthen, the opportunities you want to take, and the threats you need to address.

At the same time, you will need to periodically revisit your SWOT throughout the planning process—it is a "situation" analysis, and situations often change. You may find that how you categorized issues in the past changes as time goes by. What may have initially been viewed as an opportunity may not actually be so when weighed against resources and other factors in the future. Additionally, future situations may demonstrate that what once was threat has become an opportunity.

TOOLS FOR SECTION 2, STEP 1.2 provides a detailed checklist of questions in order to successfully complete a SWOT analysis. This checklist includes questions both for internal and external assessment, as well as worksheets to help you determine your strengths and weaknesses, and opportunities and threats. Additionally, this Tools section suggests what to do with the results of a SWOT analysis.

STEP 2. COLLECTING AND CONSOLIDATING DATA ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION

Whether you use the model, or the SWOT analysis, you will most likely find that you need to collect data to help you draw the right conclusions about your organization. Different data collection methods can help you answer key questions in an unbiased way. Because strategic planning must take into account your clients, stakeholders, current and future environment, history, and sometimes other factors, it is important to gather data from as wide a variety of sources as possible.

To do this, you will need to:

- Collect archival data.
- Collect new data.
- Consolidate your data.

2.1 COLLECT ARCHIVAL DATA

Before you gather new data, which is a very technical and time-consuming endeavor, you should look to archival data sources (e.g., official records, previously published research, etc.) to see what information might already be available to you about your organization and the services it offers.

You can use four basic sources to get key archival data that focuses on general victims' issues and on specific program information:

1. **Federal Crime Victim Data Sources**. Although strategic planning efforts should rely primarily on the most localized level of data (e.g., program, municipal, county, or state), or specific types of data (e.g., type of victimization), it is often helpful to access national-scope sites. You should consider sites maintained by the federal government helpful because they:
   - Provide a national picture for comparison to local statistics.
   - Often provide data that are synthesized to the local levels.
   - Link the user to other, more specific criminal victimization data sets.

Tools for Section 2, Step 2.1, "Federal crime victim data sources" lists major national data sources that can be used by strategic planners in victim services.

2. **State and Local Data Sources.** State and local level data may be available from any number of government sources, and are often available on agency websites.

TOOLS FOR SECTION 2, STEP 2.1, "State and local data sources" provides specific data source examples, with contact information for state-level criminal justice and non-criminal justice statistical Web sites, and ways to contact other state agencies.

3. **Private Sources** (e.g., Educational Institutions and National Nonprofit Organizations). A number of national nonprofit, educational, and other sources of relevant victim data that may be accessed include major, Federally funded information sources such as the National Criminal Justice Reference Service, or specialized organizations, such as the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Additional sources might include colleges and universities (and even individual faculty members), national victim service organizations and law enforcement-related organizations. A comprehensive list of national victim assistance organizations with web links is available at the Office for Victims of Crime web site: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/help/natorg.htm.

TOOLS FOR SECTION 2, STEP 2.1, "Private data sources" provides other specific private source data gathering resource examples, with websites listed.

4. **Program-specific Data** (e.g., Needs Assessment, Program Monitoring, and Evaluation). The importance of collecting local, program-specific data cannot be stressed enough. Your organization may have already conducted needs assessments or may have completed formal evaluations of its services. Look at the information that your organization has already collected and use it to find out more about what your organization does well and where it may need improvement.

Tools for Section 2, Step 2.1, "Program-specific data" gives information regarding where more Needs Assessment, Program Monitoring, and Evaluation details can be found.

2.2 COLLECT NEW DATA

Collecting current data is also very important in accurately assessing where your organization is. Your planning group can use many tools to investigate the questions that you identified in **Step 1**. When collecting data, it is most important to think about why you are collecting the data. You should only collect data to investigate specific, pre-defined questions. You should always have a clear reason why you are collecting the data. It is a waste of valuable resources to simply collect data with no clear purpose in mind.

Some data collection techniques you can use to better understand your organization include:

1. **Client/stakeholder identification process.** As described in **Section 1**, you want to identify who your organization's key clients and stakeholders are. These people have a clear interest in your organization and should be involved in the strategic planning process.
2. **Needs assessments.** Your needs assessment helps you identify the critical needs and concerns of existing clients. It can also help you identify potential clients that are unserved or underserved.
3. **Surveys.** Surveys are extremely useful and efficient instruments for gathering data, particularly with larger groups of individuals who are not amenable to interviews or focus grouping due to their size and/or their being geographically dispersed. More specifically, you can use client assessment surveys to find out how satisfied individuals are with the services they received from your organization. You can conduct client assessments through a structured written instrument or an oral interview. Survey fields can include *all* clients, or clients *randomly selected* to complete the survey.
4. **Focus groups.** You can use focus groups to get information from key groups of people that your organization interacts

with, including victim groups or other stakeholders. Focus groups involve a highly structured, facilitated discussion of a group of individuals that usually have some common interest or characteristics, in order to gain information about a specific issue or issues. A focus group is a qualitative research process designed to elicit opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions from individuals to gain insights and information about a specific topic.

5. **User groups.** User groups are similar to focus groups, but the actual group consists of *specific clients* of services offered by the group's sponsor, i.e., people who *currently use* its services or resources, or *potential clients* (such as victims who have been identified as "underserved" by the user group's sponsor). In addition, user groups can involve the gatekeepers of the resources needed to advance victim services.

6. **One-on-one interviews.** Another way to get information about how well your organization does its work is by conducing one-on-one interviews. In these interviews, you can uncover individuals' personal experiences and perceptions (such as a crime victim's perception of his or her treatment by the criminal justice system, as well as his or her actual experience with the system). One-on-one interviews result in a one-way flow of information, can vary in length, can be confidential based upon the subject's preference, and can obtain excellent personal insights that can "humanize" crime victims' experiences.

7. **Client advisory councils.** You can use advisory councils to provide ongoing information and input, as well as feedback (when requested) to an agency or strategic planning project. "Clients" can include crime victims, victim service providers, justice professionals who interact with the sponsoring agency, or others whose ongoing input and feedback are needed and valued.

8. **Public hearings and meetings.** You can use public hearings and meetings to both present and solicit information. The key advantage to public meetings and hearings is that they allow you to communicate with a large group of people simultaneously. In strategic planning processes, you can use public hearings and meetings early in the process to obtain input from key stakeholders; or after the process is complete, to present the plan and solicit feedback about its components.

9. **Affinity diagrams.** You can use an affinity diagram to identify, gather, and organize ideas and opinions. Affinity diagramming takes the results of a group's "brainstorming," and groups the initial processes into categories or chunks. It is an excellent tool to refine general processes into more specific, useful, and organized data.

Regardless of which tool you use, you should always try to ensure that your data collection reflects the diversity of your clientele in terms of experience, gender, age, culture, geography, and disability.

Tools for Section 2, Step 2.2 "Key Strategic Planning and Data Collection Tools," includes a helpful chart to help you decide which data collection technique to choose. The chart compares and contrasts the characteristics, optimum numbers, benefits, and drawbacks of many different types of data collection techniques. Techniques compared are: archival data, surveys (including Client Assessment Surveys), focus groups, one-on-one interviews, affinity diagrams, and strategic planning conferences. General information regarding archival data appeared earlier in this section. **Section 1** discussed client/stakeholder identification process.

Tools for Section 2, Step 2.2, provides detailed information on the following data collection techniques:

- Conducting needs assessments,
- Conducting surveys,
- Conducting focus groups, and
- Creating an affinity diagram.

These tools tell you why these techniques are important, when to use them, and how to conduct them properly.

2.3 CONSOLIDATE YOUR DATA

Once you have collected all of your archival and new data, you will want to analyze what you have. A crosswalk is a way to organize the different types of information being collected across several different data sources or instruments (e.g., provider interviews, victim surveys, focus groups, etc.). The crosswalk illustrates that different data sources have similar information and which specific questions within each data source or instrument provide this information. It is a matrix of data elements.

A crosswalk serves as a valuable tool to guide analysis and reporting. It is particularly useful in projects that are coordinating multiple data sources or sets. A crosswalk *does not* present any of the findings or results, just the various types of information that have been gathered from the different data sources. Although crosswalks are idiosyncratic to research projects, they can be used anywhere there are multiple sources of information.[4]

You can create a crosswalk to consolidate and manage all of the information you collect prior to starting your strategic plan.

TOOLS FOR SECTION 2, 2.3 gives specific information about what goes into a crosswalk, how to construct one, and an example of a draft crosswalk.

SECTION 2 ENDNOTES

1 Michael B. McCaskey, 1996, "Case 9-480-009," In *Framework for Analyzing Work Groups*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Course Services.

2 See N.M. Tichy, 1983, *Managing Strategic Change: Technical, Political, and Cultural Dynamics*, New York: Wiley, or see Gordon L. Lippitt, Petter Lagseth, and Jack Mossop, 1985, *Implementing Organizational Change*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

3 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, http://www.state.az.us/ospb/handbook.htm.

4 Debra Elliott, Ph.D, 2003, Portland State University Regional Research Institute, Portland, OR, Telephone interview of September 17, 2002.

TOOLS FOR SECTION 2: ASSESS

This section provides tools and resources you can use to accurately assess where your organization is right now. These tools apply to:

STEP 1. USING STRUCTURED METHODS TO ASSESS YOUR ORGANIZATION

- Organizational Assessment Checklist
- Conducting a SWOT Analysis

STEP 2. COLLECTING AND CONSOLIDATING DATA ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION

- Collecting archival data
    - Federal Crime Victim Data Sources
    - State and Local Data Sources
    - Private Data Sources
    - Program Specific Data
- Collecting new data
    - Conducting Needs Assessment
    - Conducting Surveys
    - Conducting Focus Groups
    - Creating an Affinity Diagram
- Consolidating your data
    - Using a Crosswalk

STEP 1. USING STRUCTURED METHODS TO ASSESS YOUR ORGANIZATION

1.1 USING A MODEL TO ASSESS YOUR ORGANIZATION

Organizational Assessment Checklist

Answer each question with your planning group and collect additional information as needed to assess your organization's readiness.

1. Organizational Context

- ☐ What is the purpose of the organization?
- ☐ What other organizations does it work with frequently?
- ☐ What governmental organizations regulate its activities?
- ☐ Who are the principal stakeholders in the organization?
- ☐ What is the financial condition of the organization?
- ☐ What environment is the organization facing? Have there been recent changes?

2. Outputs

- ☐ What are the organization's key products and services?
- ☐ How satisfied are customers with these products and services?

3. Culture

- ☐ What are the formal and informal rules within the organization?
- ☐ How are problems solved in the organization?
- ☐ How much feedback is tolerated from employees?
- ☐ How are decisions made?

4. Tasks

- ☐ What are the overall goals of the organization?
- ☐ What tasks must be completed for the organization to reach its goals?
- ☐ What procedures are used to complete the tasks?
- ☐ Who works on which tasks?

5. Formal Organization

- ☐ How is the work organized, both vertically and horizontally?
- ☐ What is the organizational structure?
- ☐ How is work coordinated and organized?
- ☐ How is new staff recruited?
- ☐ What is the reward system?

6. People

- ☐ How satisfied are employees with the organization? What is the turnover rate?
- ☐ Do staff members have the skills they need?
- ☐ Do staff members receive training as needed?

7. Physical Setting and Technology

- ☐ What is the physical condition of the offices occupied by the organization?
- ☐ Does the physical setting have any impact?
- ☐ What is the technological level achieved by the organization? Is it on the cutting edge or a bit behind?

1.2 CONDUCTING A SITUATION OR ANALYSIS TO ASSESS YOUR ORGANIZATION[1]

Conducting a SWOT Analysis

Stage 1: Conduct an internal assessment.

a. Identify your data sources (details located in Step 2.2)

Find out about your organization by looking at data that you have already collected. Useful data sources for your internal assessment might be:

- Quality assessment surveys.
- Annual reports.
- Employee surveys.
- Annual progress review meetings.
- Client surveys.
- Program evaluations.
- Policy development files.
- Organization audit recommendations.
- Internal data bases.
- Performance measurements.
- Budget requests.
- Internal plans.

b. Consider organizational issues

- **Review your organization's scope and functions, including:**
    - Enabling State and Federal statues and the dates they were created.
    - Historical perspective and significant events in the organization's history.
    - Client and stakeholder expectations.
    - Your public image.
    - The structure of programs and subprograms.
    - Your organizational accomplishments.
    - Existing performance measures and how well they gauge success.

- **Review organizational aspects, including:**
  - The size and composition of your work force (including the number of employees, minority composition, professional, technical, clerical, exempt, classified positions, etc.).
  - Organizational structure and processes (including divisions/departments, quality and management style, key management policies/operating characteristics).
  - The location of the organization's main office, field offices and any travel requirements, etc.; the location of service or regulated populations.
  - Human resources (including training, experience, compensation/benefits, turnover rates, morale).
  - Capital assets and capital improvement needs.
  - Information technology (IT); the degree of automation in your organization; the quality of telecommunications, organization IT plans, data collection, and tracking and monitoring systems.
  - Key organizational events and areas of change, their potential impact, and your organization's responsiveness to change.

- **Review fiscal aspects, including:**
  - The size of your budget (trends in appropriations and expenditures, significant events, etc.).
  - Incoming funds: Federal, non-appropriated, fees, etc.
  - A comparison of your operating costs with other jurisdictions'.
  - The relationship of your budget to your program/subprogram structure.
  - The degree to which your budget meets current and expected needs.
  - Internal accounting procedures.

c. Determine your strengths and weaknesses

Finally, to determine your strengths and weaknesses, answer these three key questions:

- **Where has the organization been?**
  - Have the needs of internal and external clients been met in the past?
  - Have the resources and services been of the highest quality?
  - What has changed internally? Has the organization been reorganized? Have improvements been made or has the organization been stagnant or in decline? Why?

- **Where is the organization now?**

The next step is to find out the current status of the organization's performance.

- Identify current programs or activities. Does the existing structure of programs and subprograms make sense? What are the statutory mandates for those programs or activities?
- Do existing programs or activities support one another in the organization, or in allied agencies? Are any in conflict? Are all programs and activities needed?
- What are the accomplishments of current programs or activities? What is being done well? Poorly?
- Do you have current (baseline) performance measures? If so, are you meeting your expected levels of performance? Why or why not? If you do not have baselines established, do you have a plan in place to do so? What is the plan?
- What do the public, clients, and stakeholders think of current programs? How successfully are clients' needs being met?
- Are there any identifiable populations that are currently unserved or underserved?
- What benchmarking information can be utilized to compare the quality and cost of the organization's services with those of other public or private organizations in your state?
- How does your organization compare to recognized standards?
- Are planning, budgeting, quality, and other management efforts integrated?

- **What are the strengths and weaknesses?**

Finally, use the information that you have collected and analyzed to identify your organization's strengths and weakness. This includes strengths and weaknesses in resources, processes, service delivery, etc.

- What is your organization's capacity to act?
- What advantages or strengths exist? How can strengths be built on?
- What disadvantages or weaknesses exist? How can weaknesses be overcome?
- What are the constraints in meeting the clients' needs and expectations?
- How are the needs and expectations of clients changing? What opportunities for positive change exist? Does the plan accommodate that change?

SWOT Strengths and Weaknesses Identification Worksheet
Use this worksheet to list your organization's strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths and Weaknesses	
List Strengths and Assets We Can Build Upon	**List Our Weaknesses and Liabilities**

Stage 2: Conduct an external assessment

The external assessment, or environmental scan, identifies the opportunities and threats present in the current environment, and anticipate changes in the future environment. This portion of the SWOT provides an essential backdrop for strategic planning and policy development.

a. Identify your data sources (examples listed in Step 2.1)

Find out about your external issues that affect your organization by reviewing data. Useful data sources for your external assessment are:

- Federal and state government statistical reports and databases.
- Federal, state, and local government legislation, regulations and executive orders or actions.
- Federal, state, and local government budgets and policy statements.
- Federal, state, and local government special studies.
- Court decisions and actions.
- National and regional professional organizations or associations.
- Interest or advocacy groups.
- Underserved or unserved clients.
- Media (both broadcast and print).
- University and college resource centers.
- Organization advisory and governing boards.

b. Identify organization aspects to consider

- **Review your organization's demographics, including:**
  - Characteristics of your client demographic (age, education, geographic, special needs, impact on state's economic, political, cultural climate, etc.).
  - Trends and their impact (including population shifts, emerging demographic characteristics, etc.).

- **Review economic variables, including:**
  - Unemployment rates, interest rates, etc.
  - The extent to which clients and stakeholders are affected by economic conditions.
  - Expected future economic conditions and their impact on your organization and your clients and stakeholders.

- Your state's fiscal forecast and revenue estimates.
- Your organization's response to changing economic conditions.

■ **Review the impact of "other" government statutes and regulations, including:**

- Key legislation or key events, etc.
- Current government activities (including identifying relevant government entities, relationship to state entities, impact on operations, etc.).
- The anticipated impact of future government actions on your organization and its clients (including organization-specific Federal mandates; court cases, Federal budget, general mandates; i.e., Americans With Disabilities Act, etc.).

■ **Review other legal issues, including the:**

- Impact of anticipated state statutory changes.
- Impact of current and outstanding court cases.
- Impact of local government requirements.

■ **Review technological developments, including the:**

- Impact of technology on current organization operations (products/services in the marketplace, telecommunications, etc.).
- Impact of anticipated technological advances.

■ **Review public policy issues, including:**

- Current events.
- Juvenile crime, children and family issues.

c. Identify your opportunities and threats
Now that you have completed a thorough inventory of the strengths and weaknesses, follow a similar process to determine the threats and opportunities facing your organization. Assessing opportunities and threats means you need to answer two key questions.

1. What is the current external environment?

■ What is your organization's current fiscal status?

■ What elements of the current external environment are relevant to your organization? How?

- What elements are most critical? Which are likely to facilitate or impede the organization?
- What are the major current issues or problems? Are these local, statewide, regional, national or global in scope? Why are these issues or problems of such importance?
- What current events or policy issues have captured the attention of the public? How do they affect the organization?

2. How may the environment differ in the future?

- What are your organization's revenue and expenditure estimates for next year, the next five years?
- What forces are at work that might affect or alter key elements of the environment?
- Are trends likely to continue? Are changes forecast?
- What major issues or problems are anticipated? What effects could they have on the organization?
- What implications do these future forces and environmental changes (trends and issues) hold for the organization? Which is most critical?
- What are the most likely scenarios for the future?

SWOT Opportunities and Threats Identification Worksheet

Use this worksheet to identify your opportunities and threats.

Opportunities and Threats		
People Who Use Our Services (Our Stakeholders)	**Competitors and Allies**	**External Forces That Impact What We Do**

Stage 3: Examine results of the SWOT Analysis

When preparing a SWOT analysis, consider that the strategic plan will be a public document available for outside review. Although it is important to be factual in listing a organization's weaknesses, you should be careful about the way you word statements so that this information will not be misinterpreted. For instance, a statement summarizing problems or weaknesses can be written to stress opportunities for improvement.

You should use the results of the internal and external analyses and client identification to formulate the mission, vision, values, goals, and objectives. These will be developed in **Section 3, Create**, of the Strategic Planning process, deciding where you want your organization to go.

STEP 2. COLLECTING AND CONSOLIDATING DATA ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION

2.1 COLLECTING ARCHIVAL DATA

This section describes how your strategic planning work group can locate and use existing crime and victimization data to inform your planning process.

Federal Crime Victim Data Sources

National and Federal data sources can be referenced as benchmarks for local analyses or used to provide guidance about how you might want to conduct local data collection and analysis.

The major national and Federal databases that are available to strategic planners in victim services include the following:

The Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics

The Sourcebook compiles data from more than 100 sources in over 600 tables about all aspects of the U.S. criminal justice system. The Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 2000, the 28th edition, is available from the Bureau of Justice Statistics Clearinghouse.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)

The U.S. Department of Justice's BJS website, www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs, contains a wealth of crime and victimization data. These data are available in many forms, including:

- Crime and victim statistics.
- Victim characteristics.
- BJS publications.
- A compendium of federal justice statistics.
- Key crime statistics at a glance.
- Crime and justice data on-line.
- Spread sheets for data analysis.
- Sexual assault reports to law enforcement.
- Urban, suburban, and rural victimization.
- Victimization and race.
- Sex offenders and victims.

Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI)
The FBI website, www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm, provides access to Uniform Crime Report Statistics data, which are also available from BJS. The Uniform Crime Reports are the longest running, continuous, national source of crime statistics in the nation. These data are considered very reliable for what they represent, which is crimes reported to the police.

Initially conceived as a resource allocation tool, the Uniform Crime Reports can have significant implications for victim service strategic planners, including data available at the state and local level. However, they have significant limitations—in particular, there is no accounting of crimes *not* reported to the police. Although they do not report to the police, these victims may still access a number of victim assistance services from VOCA grantees and others. This phenomenon will be discussed further below in the "State and Local Data Sources" section where the issues of *local crime victimization surveys* are addressed.

Office on Violence Against Women (OVAW)
The OVAW provides a variety of statistics regarding violence against women on its website, www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawo. The OVAW will provide print materials upon request.

Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)
BJA's website, www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA, provides information related to a wide variety of law enforcement topics. These topics assist your planning process by giving statistics relevant to victim services.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
OJJDP's website, www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org, provides statistics related to the juvenile population—both offenders and victims—and also those who offend against juveniles. This information may be important if you are incorporating child victim services or assistance for victims of juvenile offenders into your plan.

The White House Social Statistics Briefing Room
The Social Statistics Briefing Room at the White House website, www.whitehouse.gov/fsbr/ssbr.html, provides access to information that may be useful to strategic planners, as well as links to many other agencies.

FedStats
Fedstats, www.fedstats.gov, provides access to Federal data provided through approximately 70 Federal agencies.

The Census Bureau
Census information, at www.census.gov, is often essential to support population-based estimates of current and future service needs. It can also provide more basic population descriptions for funding sources or for programmatic purposes.

State and Local Data Sources

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is providing software and assistance to states and localities which would like to develop their own Crime Victimization Surveys.

If you can develop your Crime Victimization Survey initiative before or during their strategic planning process, or perhaps even as a goal of strategic planning, it will help you understand your state's actual rates of criminal victimization. Clearly, reported crime data misses a great deal of crime that goes unreported. This was the rationale for the development of the National Crime Victimization Survey and should be considered at the state level. The BJS website notes:
"BJS (www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs) and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) developed a software program for localities to conduct their own telephone surveys of residents to collect data on crime victimization, attitudes toward policing, and other community-related issues. This survey can produce information similar to that published in Criminal Victimization and Perceptions of Community Safety in 12 Cities, 1998. Interested states may want to review a sample of a state victimization survey from the State of Iowa, which can be viewed at
http://csbs.uni.edu/dept/csbr/data/crime_vic.html."

There are also many non-criminal justice agencies that may have data sets containing information that would be useful to strategic planners in victim services. These include departments of:

- Children, Youth, and Family Services.
- Child Protection.
- Elderly Services.
- Social and Human Services.
- Mental Health.
- Addiction/Substance Abuse Services.
- Persons with Disabilities.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to list all contact information for these sources, as it is different in each state. Local phone books or internet search engines are useful places to find contact information.

State crime victim data sources

- State-level Victimization Survey Kit: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cvs.htm. (A sample of a state victimization survey from Iowa can be viewed at: http://csbsnt.csbs.uni.edu/dept/csbr/data/crime_vic.html).
- California: http://caag.state.ca.us/cjsc/datatabs.htm.
- Connecticut: www.state.ct.us/dps/Crimes_Analysis_Unit.htm.
- Florida: www.fdle.state.fl.us/Crime_Statistics/.
- Georgia: www.ganet.org/gbi/disclucr.html.
- Idaho: www.isp.state.id.us/citizen/crime_stats.html.
- Illinois: www.jrsa.org/jaibg/state_data2/illinois01/.
- Iowa: www.state.ia.us/government/dhr/cjjp/JDW.html.
- Massachusetts: www.state.ma.us/msp/cru/SPRESRCH.HTM.
- Michigan: www.michigan.gov/msp/0,1607,7-123-1645_3501_4621---,00.html.
- Minnesota: www.mnplan.state.mn.us/cj/.
- Montana: http://bccdoj.doj.state.mt.us/sac/ or www.jrsa.org/jaibg/state_data2/montana01/.
- Nebraska: www.nol.org/home/crimecom/PDF%20Files/01PRELIM.pdf, and www.state.ne.us/home/crimecom/Functions.htm.
- New York: http://criminaljustice.state.ny.us/crimnet/ojsa/areastat/areast.htm.
- North Carolina: http://sbi2.jus.state.nc.us/crp/public/Default.htm.
- Oregon: www.ocjc.state.or.us/SAC.htm.
- Texas: www.tdcj.state.tx.us/red/red-home.htm.
- Virginia: www.vsp.state.va.us/crimestatistics.htm and http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/crime/.
- West Virginia: www.wvstatepolice.com/ucr/ucr.htm.
- Additional State-level Crime Statistics: www.ncpc.org/50stats.htm.

If your state is not listed, contact your local police, and ask if there are any compiled statistics that you could use for your research.

Private Data Sources

National victim assistance organizations
A comprehensive list of national victim assistance organizations with web links is available at the Office for Victims of Crime website: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/help/natorg.htm.

- American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law: www.abanet.org/child/.
- American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children: www.apsac.org/.
- Anti-Defamation League: www.adl.org/hate-patrol/main.html.
- Center for Criminology and Criminal Justice Research, University of Texas at Austin (Site sponsored by the American Statistical Association and the USDOJ/BJS): www.la.utexas.edu/research/crime_criminaljustice_research/.
- Child Abuse Prevention Association: www.capa.org.
- Child Abuse Prevention Network: http://child.cornell.edu.
- Childhelp USA: www.childhelpusa.org.
- Child Quest International: www.childquest.org/.
- Child Welfare League of America: www.cwla.org.
- Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS): www.nationalcops.org.
- Cornell University's Child Abuse Data Archives: www.ndacan.cornell.edu/.
- The Disaster Center's Crime Statistics Data Bases: www.disastercenter.com/crime/.
- Family Violence Prevention Fund: www.fvpf.org.
- Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community: www.dvinstitute.org.
- Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA): www.jrsa.org/U.
- JRSA's State Statistical Analysis information: www.jrsainfo.org/sac/.
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving: www.madd.org.
- National Center for Missing & Exploited Children: www.missingkids.org.
- National Center for Victims of Crime: www.ncvc.org.
- National Center on Elder Abuse: www.elderabusecenter.org/.

- National Children's Alliance: www.nncac.org.
- National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information: www.calib.com/nccanch.
- National Coalition Against Domestic Violence: www.ncadv.org.
- National Coalition of Homicide Survivors: www.mivictims.org.
- National Commission Against Drunk Driving: www.ncadd.com.
- National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics: www.search.org/.
- National Conference of State Legislatures Criminal Justice Links: www.ncsl.org/programs/cj/websites.htm.
- National Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Association: www.nationalcasa.org/.
- National Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center: www.musc.edu/cvc/.
- National Criminal Justice Reference Service, NCJRS:
  - http://virlib.ncjrs.org/stat.asp?category=53&subcategory=210 and
  - http://virlib.ncjrs.org/Statistics.asp.
  - Crime victim information can be accessed at http://virlib.ncjrs.org/VictimsOfCrime.asp, which provides general victim information, while other areas on this site will provide very specific information, e.g., information on hate crimes can be found at www.ncjrs.org/hate_crimes/hate_crimes.html.
- National Fraud Information Center: www.fraud.org.
- National Insurance Crime Bureau: www.nicb.org.
- National Organization for Victim Assistance: www.try-nova.org.
- National Sexual Violence Research Center, www.nsvrc.org.
- National Victim Assistance Academy, OVC-Site or www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/assist/vaa.htm.
- National Victims Constitutional Amendment Network   www.nvcan.org.
- National Violence Against Women Prevention Research Center www.violenceagainstwomen.org.
- Neighbors Who Care: www.neighborswhocare.org.
- Northeastern State University: http://arapaho.nsuok.edu/~dreveskr/CJRR.html-ssi.

- Parents of Murdered Children (POMC): www.pomc.com.
- Safe Campuses Now: www.uga.edu/~safe-campus/.
- Security on Campus: www.campussafety.org/.
- University of Maryland's CESAR Site: www.cesar.umd.edu/cesar/bytopic/cj.asp.
- University of Michigan Statistical Data:
  - www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stsoc.html#crime.
  - www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stats.html.
  - www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD/home.html.
  - www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD/ucr.html.
  - www.icpsr.umich.edu/cgi/subject.prl?path=NACJD&format=tb&query=X.
- Victims' Assistance Legal Organization: www.valor-national.org.

Program Specific Data

There are two primary sources of program-specific data that can complement the information available from the larger data sets discussed above. These are:

- Needs assessments; and,
- Program monitoring and evaluation.

Needs assessments are discussed in this section under **"Collecting new data."** Monitoring and evaluation are discussed in **Section 6, Track**, as they also relate to important post-strategic plan implementation and follow-up issues.

2.2 COLLECTING NEW DATA

Collecting new, current data is also very important in accurately assessing where your program is. The chart below compares and contrasts many of the key data collection and analysis tools listed in **Section 2, Assess**. Additionally, the chart includes archival data and Strategic Planning Conference, i.e., Future Search or Appreciative Inquiry methods.

The client/stakeholder identification process was discussed in **Section 1, Prepare**. Needs assessment information is provided below the following chart.

Key Strategic Planning and Data Collection Tools

Tool	Characteristics	Optimum Numbers	Benefits	Drawbacks
Archival data	■ Federal Sources ■ State Sources ■ Private Sources ■ Program-specific data	■ Limitless	■ Quantifiable ■ Easily viewed in charts	■ Collecting so much that it becomes unmanageable
Surveys	■ Data from a large number of people ■ Written or oral ■ Random selection or all possible respondents ■ Satisfaction level for services (Client Assessment)	■ Any group size	■ Confidentiality ■ Attempt to reach large number of people ■ Written or oral ■ Cost effective	■ Relatively small number of returns ■ Literacy levels of respondents need to be considered
Focus Groups	■ Highly structured ■ Facilitated discussions ■ Group has some common interest or characteristic	■ No larger than 20	■ Structured dialogue gives consistency across all groups ■ Questions designed to elicit specific information	■ Time intensive ■ Logistics and preparation for assuring success ■ Skilled facilitator needed

Key Strategic Planning and Data Collection Tools

Tool	Characteristics	Optimum Numbers	Benefits	Drawbacks
One-on-one interviews	■ Can enlist subjective information on a personal basis	■ Time will limit the number interviewed	■ Oral history and stories present powerful information	■ Time intensive ■ Can be emotional ■ Needs a relatively large number in order to have an accurate representation
Affinity Diagram	■ A group method for organizing and prioritizing data	■ Groups up to 12 people	■ Synthesizes large numbers of ideas into a smaller number of broader categories ■ Can also then set priorities for the broad groupings - e.g., through voting	■ The leader must allow all participants to lead as well
Strategic Planning Conference, i.e., Future Search or Appreciative Inquiry methods	■ Interactive, cross-functional, cross-organization, large group vision and planning process	■ Any size group from 10 to 1000 or more	■ Inclusive, cross-component representation ■ Active ■ Strengths-base approach ■ Energizing ■ Visionary - new programs to be considered or strategies for change	■ Trained facilitator advised ■ Logistics and planning required

Conducting Needs Assessments

Comprehensive needs assessments can help you justify new programs, changes in current program priorities, or other needed adjustments. By openly engaging in the needs assessment process, an organization may determine that it would be more efficient or cost-effective to focus its efforts on certain areas to the exclusion of others if alternative services are already available.

What questions do needs assessments answer?

Needs assessments seek to address and answer questions like:

- Who are the individuals we seek to serve?
- What are the needs of the victims we serve that are currently being met? What needs are currently unmet?
- What resources are, and are not, available to meet these needs?
- Are there specific victim populations who are currently underserved or unserved?
- What are the capacities and shortcomings of the organization in meeting these needs?
- What are the resources needed to address any shortcomings?

By investigating these issues, the strategic planning team can assess and prioritize the needs of its clients, and the organization's ability to meet those needs.

What types of needs assessments are there?

Needs assessments can be conducted on several levels or aimed at different targets. Three important types are:

- Community needs assessments.
- Organization needs assessments.
- Program-specific needs assessments.

Conducting community needs assessments

Assessing and, perhaps more importantly, understanding community needs is essential, especially in the early stages of planning. Understanding the needs of the community you serve will help you design the most effective planning process.

The following tools can be used to gather information for a community needs assessment:

Community Needs Assessment Tools

- Surveys of crime victims (See www.state.tn.us/finance/rds/victimshome-page.htm)
- Surveys of victim service providers, criminal and juvenile justice officials, and allied professionals
- Mail surveys and questionnaires (e.g., see Dillman's seminal work in this area)[2]
- Telephone surveys
- Exit interviews
- Follow-up surveys
- Executive interviews
- Focus groups (see "Focus Groups" on page T2-30 of the Toolkit)

Community needs assessments can involve a considerable level of effort and investment. Your organization may be able to use existing needs assessment tools or data, or get involved in a broader effort while maintaining a crime victims' focus.

To see an example of the needs assessment process and results, The Office for Victims of Crime offers a special OVC Bulletin, entitled Denver Victim Services 2000 Needs Assessment,[3] which can be accessed online at the following website:
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/publications/bulletins/dv_10_2000_1/welcome.html.

Conducting organization needs assessments

Assessing an organization's needs can involve an in-depth self-examination or an evaluation by an objective third party.

There are a variety of tools and resources available to the state and/or non-profit organization interested in examining its strengths and weaknesses.

Organization Needs Assessment Tools and Resources

- **The National Endowment for the Arts offers a free, seven-page (online) "Organizational Self-Assessment Checklist."**[4] It contains over 160 questions that will help audit an organization's purpose, programs, governance, staff, marketing, public and community relations, fund-raising, financial management, facilities, planning, communications and decision-making, and external environment (available at http://arts.endow.gov/pub/Lessons/Lessons/WARSHAWSKI.HTML).
- **The Management Assistance Program offers "Conducting a Complete Fitness Test of Your Nonprofit Organization."**[5] This seven-page Fitness Test includes over 135 questions covering legal, board governance, human resources, planning, financial management, and fund-raising. The Complete Fitness Test of Your Nonprofit Organization is available at www.managementhelp.org/np_progs/fit_mod/fitness.htm.
- **The McKinsey "Capacity Assessment Grid" is a free, online resource available to nonprofit organizations.**[6] This 40-page, self- administered needs assessment tool helps nonprofits look at their aspirations, strategies, organizational skills, human resources, systems and infrastructure, organizational structure, and organizational culture. It can be accessed online at the following website: www.venturephilanthropypartners.org/usr_doc/6_rpt.pdf.

Conducting victim services program-related needs assessments

Victims service program-related needs assessments should focus on 10 key principles.[7] In 1997, the Association of State Correctional Administrators (ASCA), with support from the Promising Practices and Strategies project, identified ten core elements that should form the foundation of a corrections-based victim services program.

These elements can be applied to other programs as well. The ASCA Victims Committee recommended the following ten core elements for victim services within correctional settings:

ASCA Ten Core Elements Checklist

Sample Needs Assessment Form Used with State Agencies Based Upon the *Ten Core Elements of Corrections-Based Victim Services Programming*				
10 Core Elements of Corrections-Based Victim Services Programming	**Do We Now Meet Standard?**	**Do We Want to Meet?**	**Action Required to Meet Test**	**Comments**
Incorporate victims' rights and needs into agency mission statement and develop VS mission and vision statements.				
Designate full-time staff person for VS and designate reps at institutions and offices.				
Provide core services to victims that include notification, protection, input, restitution, information, and referral.				
Create victim advisory council to guide program.				
Establish written policies and procedures for victim rights and services.				
Develop public information/outreach plan.				
Develop and use training curriculum for orientation and continuing education.				
Develop policies and protocols for victimized staff.				
Implement the victim impact classes and panels per California Youth Authority (CYA) curricula.				
Designate agency representative to be liaison with VS community.				

Adapted by William McCoy, The McCoy Company (Columbus, Ohio), Fall 2002

Conducting Surveys

One of the most effective ways to improve the delivery of victim services and the implementation of victims' rights is to conduct direct surveys of clients served by an organization.

What purposes do surveys serve?

The purpose of a survey is for the clients to tell an organization:

- Their perceptions of how they were treated by organization staff.
- Whether or not they received the services they expected or were offered.
- Whether or not their statutory or constitutional rights as victims were enforced. (Keep in mind that victims often don't know their rights, so the survey question would need to list or explain them).
- Recommendations for improving the implementation of victims' rights, or delivery of victim services.
- Open-ended comments that offer further insights into the client's feelings about the organization and its programs.

Client surveys can be general in nature, or tailored to specific victim populations or victim assistance programs and services. Surveys can be conducted of *all* clients (resources permitting), or a randomly-selected survey field that is representative of the overall clientele.

How can you create a survey?

There are eight key steps in creating a survey:

- **Step 1: Identify the inquiry.** Review the information you want to gather in terms of its contribution to strategic planning. Review your basic research questions to make sure they elicit the right information.
- **Step 2: Develop the sample.** Determine what group(s) of individuals you want for your sample. *This is critical to the integrity of your survey.* Samples may be either some form of random sample (e.g., of the entire population of a state or jurisdiction, or of a large group of victims and survivors), or more deliberate (e.g., choosing to survey all victims and survivors who have received certain services, or all advocates and service providers in certain programs). Be sure you identify a culturally inclusive sample.

- **Step 3: Develop the survey instrument.** Construct the survey instrument carefully—you want to make sure it measures the right variables. Surveys can measure:
  - Values and beliefs,
  - Attitudes,
  - Experiences,
  - Behaviors,
  - Characteristics, and,
  - Other factors of interest.
- **Step 4: Choose your question structure.** There are different ways to structure the questions on a survey (for example, questions can be open-ended, closed-ended, and mixed). There are also different ways you can present alternative responding choices for participants. It is important to choose the correct format for what is being assessed.
- **Step 5: Write your questions clearly.** When designing questions, watch for common problems with wording, such as:
  - Inappropriate vocabulary
    Do not use terms that will be unfamiliar to your audience. For example, if you are conducting a survey of victims, you might not want to refer to cases that are "nolle prossed."
  - Vagueness
    For example, "What goals do you have for the future?" is probably too general a question. A better question could be, "What are three goals that you would like your office to reach in the next two years?"
  - Bias
    You should ask questions in a manner that can potentially elicit a wide range of responses. If you ask someone, "How do you feel that the police have been unfair in the handling of your case?" you are biasing the respondent in terms of listing negative responses. An unbiased question would be, "How do you feel that the police have handled your case?"
  - Double-barreled questions
    Only ask one question at a time. "How often do you construct your budget and for what time periods?" may yield responses that are confusing.

- Double negatives
  Do not ask questions that have two negatives in them, such as, "Do you disagree with the decision of the prosecutor in your county to not allow victims under the age of six to testify?"
- Exclusivity
  When you give the respondent a choice of responses where you want them to select only one, you must be sure that the responses are mutually exclusive. For example, if you ask respondents where their office is located and the possible responses are "within the city," "near to the police station," and "in a high-rise office building" these answers would not meet the exclusivity criteria.
- Assumptions about the respondent's knowledge
  For example, your respondents may not be familiar with the strategic planning process. Make sure you ask questions that do not include steps you have already started that they would not understand.
- Inaccuracy
  Make sure several people in your organization read over all of your questions to be sure they do not contain errors.
- Appropriateness and referent problems
  Make sure that the respondents have the background that will allow them to answer the questions you are asking.

Be sure to review your questions to address any of these problems.

- **Step 6: Pilot test or otherwise review your survey.** It is very important to pilot test your survey. At the very least, find someone outside the process to review your survey. This will help you identify potential problems and correct them before the entire sample is surveyed.
- **Step 7: Survey carefully.** Surveys are usually conducted by mail (e.g., the use of survey instruments or questionnaires). Surveys can also be conducted by telephone, but these can be very time consuming and require a well trained telephone calling staff. In either event, you must strictly adhere to recognized survey methodologies, including sample selection, in order to ensure that your data are reliable and valid.

One of the most critical aspects of having a successful survey is to making sure that the response rate is high enough that you can feel confident that those who responded are similar to those who did not. Some of the keys to having a good response rate are:

- Make sure the instructions of how and when to complete the survey are clear.
- Include a motivating cover letter from a person that will encourage the target audience to respond.
- Include a return envelope with postage so that the respondent can easily mail it back.
- Follow-up the survey with a postcard, telephone call, or both to remind respondents to return it.
- Include an incentive for participation if you can.

■ **Step 8: Analyze and present your data.** Record and review your data, taking care to interpret results recognizing the limitations of mail surveys. Present your data summaries appropriately (for example, by using descriptive statistics or charts) for review by others involved in the strategic planning process and/or outside, independent reviewers.

Where can you learn more about surveys?
There are many good survey research texts. Among the most respected is:

■ Dillman's (1978) Mail and Telephone Surveys: The Total Design.[8]

■ A more recent guide is Nardi's (2003) Doing Survey Research: A Guide to Quantitative Methods.[9]

You can also look at some examples of surveys to get more ideas. The Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs has developed eight client surveys for victims of different types of programs. These sample surveys can be easily adapted to any jurisdiction, organization, and provide an excellent "baseline" for client survey development. The eight surveys can be accessed at: www.state.tn.us/finance/rds/victimshomepage.htm.

Conducting Focus Groups

A focus group can be defined as a group of interacting individuals having some common interest or characteristics, brought together by a moderator, who uses the group and its interactions as a way to gain information about a specific or focused issue.[10]

Unlike the one-way flow of information in a one-on-one interview, focus groups generate data through the "give and take" of group discussion. Listening as people share and compare their different points of view provides a wealth of information—not just about *what they think*, but why *they think the way they do*.[11]

What purposes do focus groups serve?

In strategic planning, focus groups serve a variety of purposes, which are to:

- **Identify crime victims' most salient needs and concerns.**
  While victims' issues vary considerably, focus groups can elicit input from similar types of victims (for example, victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, etc.), a range of victims, and/or community- and system-based service providers, justice professionals, and allied professionals about the major needs of victims.

- **Seek input from a variety of stakeholders about victims' rights and services.**
  The "range" of stakeholders includes virtually *anyone* who is concerned about personal and community safety, and justice policy and practices, and should reflect the diversity of clients and communities served.

- **Identify strengths and gaps in public policy, victim assistance programming, victim services, and collaborative efforts that seek to benefit victims.**
  A good focus group discussion guide will provoke input and insights into how victims are best *identified* and *served* through policy, programs and practices.

- **Provide a foundation for *quantitative research*, such as the development of victim-related surveys or needs assessment processes.**
  The design of focus groups can lead to findings that help create quantitative research instruments and processes.

- **Contribute to the development of a strategic plan that identifies strengths and gaps in victims' rights and services and either fills or builds upon them.**

What are key focus group characteristics?

Certain key characteristics will affect the information you get from your focus group.

- **Group size.** The research on focus groups generally recommends six to twelve participants as optimum for impact. Some statewide strategic planning initiatives for victim services have conducted focus groups with up to 20 participants; however, the larger the size of the group, the more difficult the group interactions are to manage.

- **Length of group discussion.** Most focus groups encompass 90 minutes to three hours of discussion. If focus groups are longer, it is necessary to build in breaks to allow participants time to refresh.

- **Group participants.** In traditional focus groups, participants are randomly chosen in a manner that seeks homogeneity among participants, in order to elicit opinions from a "like" representative group (for example, *all community-based victim service providers*). Depending upon the focus group goals, sponsors may wish to:

  - Seek complete homogeneity in participants.
  - Seek variety in participants based upon how their backgrounds, insights, perspectives and diversity by culture, gender and geography will contribute to goals and outcomes.
  - Conduct simultaneous focus groups where two different groups of participants (with each group's participants alike, but different from the other group, i.e., a group of crime victims and a group of judges) respond to the same discussion guide questions, then are brought together to share responses and provide further opportunities for a combined group discussion.

How can you create a focus group?

Planning for a focus group involves completing eight key planning steps:

1. **Establish focus group goals.** The focus group process must include the development of clear and measurable goals. While these are useful tools for focus group sponsors, they are also essential for participants to understand why they are being asked to participate in a focus group session.

2. **Select a focus group facilitator.** The focus group facilitator is critical to the success of the entire process. He or she must function as a neutral leader who can also serve as a "referee," if needed, during the group process. The focus group facilitator should possess the following qualities:

- **Independence:** Able to separate him/herself from the topics at hand, maintain complete objectivity, and have no hidden agendas that will affect the outcomes.
- **Strong communication skills:** Clear, concise, honest, trustworthy, and able to relate to a variety of opinions without showing preferences.
- **Strong group dynamics skills:** Able to engage in intense group discussions and encourage all members to participate, while maintaining a flow that keeps with the stated agenda.
- **Cultural competence:** Skilled and comfortable facilitating individuals who represent diverse cultures (as well as gender, geography and disability).
- **Flexibility:** Willing to freely follow group discussion and permit relevant diversions, if needed, to accommodate participants' input and ideas.
- **Perception:** Able to read between the lines of participants' comments, and offer probes to elicit further discussions.
- **Patience:** Capable of letting individuals complete their verbalizations without rushing them, and allowing time for reflection between questions.
- **Respect:** Respectful of the diversity of participants, as well as the diversity of their opinions and input.

3. **Knowledge of issues:** While the facilitator need not be an expert in victim issues, s/he should be familiar with the dynamics of the field and of victimization in general (including victim trauma); and familiar with the goals of the overall strategic planning project.
4. **Develop the focus group agenda.** A typical agenda will include the following:
    - Introduction of focus group sponsors and facilitator(s).
    - Introduction of participants.
    - Overview of strategic planning project and focus group goals (with software presentation, tear sheets, and/or individual handouts), and allowing participants to contribute to these goals.
    - Overview of group processes (including discussion guide, any individual work sheets, etc.).
    - Group establishment of ground rules.
    - Questions and answers.

5. **Develop the focus group discussion guide and related resources.** The focus group discussion guide is highly dependent upon overall strategic planning goals, as well as the goals of the focus group (see "Establish Focus Group Goals" above). To the degree possible, any data that have been received relevant to the overall strategic planning goals should be incorporated in the development of the discussion guide.
6. **Select focus group participants.** The goals and purpose of the focus group will determine whom to invite. Possible examples are listed below.
7. **Invite focus group participants.** The way you invite participants will depend on how you want to select participants. You may want to hand out flyers inviting random individuals in certain areas to participate. You may want to mail invitations with RSVP phone numbers, or call participants to arrange their participation.
8. **Arrange for your focus group logistics.** In order to prepare for your focus groups, you must:
    - Determine the location for your focus group.
    - Arrange for any audio/visual equipment you might need.
    - Arrange for the specific needs of your participants.
    - Arrange for participant resources.
    - Invite and confirm focus group participants.
    - Conduct a "Pilot Test" of the focus group.

Potential Participants for Statewide Strategic Planning Focus Groups

Academicians	Law enforcement
Appellate level representatives	Medical professionals
Civic leaders	Mental health professionals
Community-based victim service providers	Neighborhood associations and groups
Crime victims	Parole professionals
Criminal and juvenile justice professionals	Probation professionals
Corrections professionals	Prosecutors
Court administrators	Public policy makers (local and state)
Defense attorneys	Representatives of organizations that meet the needs of culturally diverse populations
Employment services	School representatives
Executive branch representatives (state)	Social services
Funding sources (public and private)	System-based victim service providers
Housing services	Transportation services
Inter-faith community representatives	Others
Judges	

Where can you learn more about focus groups?

To find information on analyzing data and writing a report, look at these resources:

M. Marczak and M. Sewell, "Using Focus Groups for Evaluation." *Cybernet Evaluation*, Tuscon, AZ: The University of Arizona.[12]

R.A. Krueger, 1988, *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.[13]

Creating an Affinity Diagram

Affinity diagrams result from a facilitated process that can help your planning group come to consensus. They are an effective method to identify, gather, and organize ideas and opinions.

Affinity diagramming is best used in a relatively small group (no more than 12 people). It starts out with the identification of a broad issue or problem and then, through group processing, identifies more specific areas and proposed solutions.

In strategic planning, the affinity diagram can be used in virtually any group format (such as the planning leadership group, user groups, roundtables of planning participants, etc.). It validates individual perceptions and input while, at the same time, offers a forum for clarifying initial information and adding new concepts that are generated through the process.

How can you create an affinity diagram?

There are six key steps to developing an affinity diagram:

1. **State the problem or issue to be explored.** (It helps to use presentation software or other visual depictions that publicly display the problem or issue for all participants to view, and to provide an opportunity for clarification, if needed). A time limit should be established for this initial session (depending on the problem or issue, usually no more than 60 minutes).

2. **Brainstorm ideas to address the problem or issue (with clear guidelines that "no idea is a bad idea").** The goal is to obtain *as much input and insight as possible* from this initial stage. Each participant should have a specified number of small adhesive notes or index cards (three to five are usually adequate) to write down his or her ideas (to encourage and document individual participation *prior* to group interactions).

3. **Have the facilitator collect adhesive notes or index cards and spread them out on a flat surface or secure them to a wall.**

4. **Arrange the adhesive notes or index cards into similar or related groups.** The facilitator's challenge is to achieve consensus among participants about groupings, with "majority votes" utilized in cases where there may be disagreements. If additional insights result from the group's discussion, they should be added on a small adhesive note or index card to the appropriate category.

5. **Create a title or heading for each grouping that summarizes the categories.**
6. **Summarize the final groupings or categories, along with the related subjects under each, on tear sheets or, preferably, in a report back to all participants.**

How can you refine the affinity diagram?
If you seek to establish priorities through the affinity process, one additional step can be taken to achieve consensus on key findings:

1. Once the complete diagram is visually posted, the facilitator states that each grouping should have "X" number of priorities.
2. Provide each participant with a specified number of sticky dots (usually two or three) for each category (these can be color coded to reflect the number of categories).
3. Allow 10-15 minutes for each participant to place his or her sticky dots under the item(s) that reflect *their highest priority* in each category.
4. Move the notes or cards with the largest number of dots to the *top* of each grouping. Identify them in any summary report as the "priorities of the group."

2.3 CONSOLIDATING YOUR DATA

Consolidating your data is the final, and crucial, step in data collection. Without effectively consolidating your data, you will not be able to compare the different data you have found to see any contradictions or identify good and bad options for your organization. A crosswalk is a good way to consolidate your data.

Using a Crosswalk

How do you use a crosswalk?
When a strategic plan has several data sources, as is the case with a statewide needs assessment, a crosswalk helps to organize all of the information from all of the data sources about a certain topic. The crosswalk helps place all like information into one chart, so that it is easily compiled and compared. For example, if there is an interest in information about barriers to service delivery, the strategic planning team can look at that section of the crosswalk and know which data sources have barrier information, and which questions in the data collection instruments relate to barriers.

The crosswalk not only helps to ensure that all of the relevant information about a certain topic is being captured, but also shows what topics will have information from all sources or a combination of sources. This is helpful when the strategic planning team is interested in looking at differences or similarities across respondent groups.

How is a crosswalk constructed?

A crosswalk is separated into dimensions, or categories, of collected data. Each dimension contains all the types of data collected on that topic or kind of information from each of the assessment sources. Therefore, by looking at each dimension, the project team can immediately see what type of information has been collected on that topic and from where it was collected.

Most crosswalks are developed in table formats. Each dimension is reflected in a separate table of the crosswalk. Every data source is assigned a column in each of the tables. Each data source is represented in each dimension, so it is immediately evident if there is relevant information regarding a certain topic. The data source columns are consistent throughout the dimensions of the entire crosswalk to ensure easy access and avoid confusion of data sources.

What does a sample crosswalk look like?

The Oregon Department of Justice, Crime Victims' Assistance Section conducted a comprehensive needs assessment of the current state of victim services and victims' needs in the state. The project implemented a crosswalk of the survey/interview items, which organized the information across different survey fields.

The Oregon Victims of Crime Needs Assessment Crosswalk was separated into eight dimensions, or categories:[15]

1. Support and Services.
2. Organization Referral Sources.
3. Descriptive Information about Victims of Crime.
4. The Crimes and the Impact on Victims.
5. Service Needs, Gaps, and Barriers.
6. Crime Victims Rights and Compensation.
7. Service System: Recommendations for Improvement.
8. Descriptive Information about the Organization.

There were six data sources for the Oregon needs assessment:[16]

1. Service Provider Interviews.
2. Referral Source Surveys.
3. Victim Surveys.
4. Key Informant Interviews.
5. Focus Group Questions.
6. Public Meeting Questions.

When using the crosswalk, you can see which questions or topics were used by each data source. For example, if you were evaluating the support and services dimension of your research, and wanted to know which data sources discussed Victim Notification of Offender/Case Information, you could move down to the row which addresses this topic in the first table, and see that Service Provider Interviews, Referral Source Interviews, Victim Surveys, and Focus Group Questions did. Information gathered by each of these data sources can then be compiled, and results formed.

The blank spaces in the crosswalk indicate that the particular question being cataloged was not asked of that particular data collection group. For example, question 26i and 12i (the first on the crosswalk) were asked during service provider interviews, and referral source surveys, but not asked during victim surveys, key informant interviews, focus groups, or public meetings.

Sample Crosswalk

Oregon Victims of Crime Needs Assessment
CROSSWALK OF INTERVIEW/SURVEY ITEMS (Draft 6/03/02)

Service Provider Interview (P)	Referral Source Survey (R)	Victim Survey (V)	Key Informant Interview (K)	Focus Group Questions (F)	Public Meeting Questions (M)
DIMENSION: Support and Services					
26i. Please tell me whether or not your agency offered [each service] to victims of crime directly during the last fiscal year.	12i. Please tell me whether or not your agency offered [each service] to victims of crime directly during the last fiscal year.				
26ii. Total number of victims served last fiscal year.		10i. Did you receive this service?			
26iii. [if not provided:] Offered by other agencies in your service area?	12ii. Please mark each service that was referred out by your agency during the last fiscal year.				
		10ii. How useful was this service? 10iii. Did you need this service?		2. Were there services offered that were not helpful or not needed? 3. If you received services, which ones were useful?	1. If you or some-one you know was victimized, what services did you find useful?

Oregon Victims of Crime Needs Assessment (continued)
CROSSWALK OF INTERVIEW/SURVEY ITEMS (Draft 6/03/02)

Service Provider Interview (P)	Referral Source Survey (R)	Victim Survey (V)	Key Informant Interview (K)	Focus Group Questions (F)	Public Meeting Questions (M)
26ss. Which services are provided by a person who has been victimized by crime?					
6uu. Which service, of all those available in your community, do victims usually start with?		11. What was the first agency you contacted for help after the crime?			
		12. Overall, how accessible were all the services you received or needed?			
26e. Did you offer Victim Notification of Offender/Case Information?	12e. Did you offer Victim Notification of Offender/Case Information?	5. If the crime was reported, were you kept informed of the status of the offender?		4. If your case was prosecuted, did you understand the information you received about the case? If not, what were the problems you encountered?	

Oregon Victims of Crime Needs Assessment (continued)
CROSSWALK OF INTERVIEW/SURVEY ITEMS (Draft 6/03/02)

Service Provider Interview (P)	Referral Source Survey (R)	Victim Survey (V)	Key Informant Interview (K)	Focus Group Questions (F)	Public Meeting Questions (M)
		6. If the crime was not reported to the police or sheriff, what was the primary reason for not reporting it?			3. What ideas do you have about addressing the problem of not reporting?
26g. Did you offer assistance with or support for preparing a Victim Impact Statement?	12g. Did you offer assistance with or support for preparing a Victim Impact Statement?	7. Did you write or orally present a Victim Impact Statement for the courts to consider at the sentencing hearing for the offender? 7a. If NO, why not?			
		9a-n. Please rate how helpful [family, friends, law enforcement officer, victim assistance liaison, etc.] were in assisting you as a crime victim/survivor.			

SECTION 2 TOOLS ENDNOTES

1. Portions adapted (with permission) from Arizona Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting, 1998, 1*998 Strategic Planning and Performance Handbook*, Arizona Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting, www.state.az.us/ospb/handbook.htm.
2. Don A. Dillman, 1978, *Mail and Telephone Surveys: The Total Design*, New York: John Wiley & Sons.
3. See Denver Victim Services 2000 publication at the following website: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/publications/bulletins/.
4. Morrie Warshawski, 2001, *Organizational Self-Assessment Checklist*. Washington, DC: NEA. The Organizational Self-Assessment Checklist can be accessed at the National Endowment for the Arts' Web site at the following Web address: http://arts.endow.gov/pub/Lessons/Lessons?WARSHAWSKI.HTML.
5. See the following Web site for the Complete Fitness Test for Nonprofit Organizations: www.managementhelp.org/np_progs/fit_mod/fitness.htm.
6. The McKinsey Capacity Assessment Grid can be accessed online at the following website: www.venturephilanthropypartners.org/usr_doc.
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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

Non-SMART Objective	SMART Objective
■ To end drunk driving deaths on the highway.	■ To reduce drunk driving fatalities by 20 percent between January 2003 and January 2004.
■ To improve victim restitution.	■ 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).
■ To sensitize judges to victims' needs.	■ 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 STATEMENTS[1]

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 Checklist[5]

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.

SECTION 4. IMPLEMENT

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[1]

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*[2] offers action plan steps, format and samples. An example of a victim services improvement action plan can be found at www.ccvs.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)[3] by the National Institute of Corrections, Washington D.C., which can be downloaded from: 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:[4]

- **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 www.fdncenter.org
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.	Contact Federal, state, or local government agencies directly by telephone or via the Internet to request an application. 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.
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	www.ucp.utica.org/uwlinks/directory.html
The Foundation Center	www.fdncenter.org
University development and grants offices	University websites
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA)	www.cfda.gov
Grants.gov, a clearinghouse for Federal grants	www.grants.gov
Federal Register	www.access.gpo.gov

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.

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 or 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.[5] 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.[6]

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.

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.

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.

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

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

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).[i] 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[2]

Reviewing the Program Logic Model and Intended Outcome Indicators[3]
(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 nontrivial 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

Objective		You should make sure that you map an **objective** that you identified in **Section 3, Create**.
Action		The **action** is a task that will help you achieve the objective. Some objectives will have more than one action.
Owner		The **owner** of the action is the person who is accountable for ensuring that the action is completed.
Timeline		The **timeline** shows the general timeframe in which the action needs to be addressed.
Deadline		The **deadline** is the final date by which the action needs to be completed.
Milestones		**Milestones** 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[4]

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?
❑ Personnel			
❑ Training			
❑ Facilities			
❑ Hardware			
❑ Software			
❑ 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.

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.

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.

SECTION 5. COMMUNICATE

Marketing the strategic plan

Most likely, you can identify many people who have a vested interest in your organization. Aside from your staff, you also have community partners, financial backers, or even members of the government. All of them want to know how your organization is changing and how well it is succeeding in meeting its strategic goals and objectives. Your organization depends on its stakeholders; keeping them informed is crucial to gaining their support, and ultimately their buy-in, for your strategic plan.

Effective vision and organizational mission statements cannot be forced upon the masses. Rather, they must be set in motion by means of persuasion.

—Donald T. Phillips

Many organizations are aggressive about letting stakeholders know that they are creating a strategic plan, only to fail later to inform those stakeholders about how well the plan is working. In order to create acceptance of the strategic planning process, it is important to develop and implement a "marketing strategy" that keeps planning team members, key constituencies, and others informed of the plan and its progress. Marketing strategies are not a one-time announcement, they are a continual conversation.

What is in this section?

This section outlines the steps you will need to take to effectively communicate your strategic plan. We discuss:

STEP 1. ASSESSING YOUR STAKEHOLDERS' INFORMATION NEEDS

STEP 2. CHOOSING AN EFFECTIVE DELIVERY METHOD FOR COMMUNICATING YOUR STRATEGIC PLAN

STEP 3. CREATING A SIMPLE COMMUNICATION PLAN

STEP 1. ASSESSING YOUR STAKEHOLDERS' INFORMATION NEEDS

As you prepared your strategic plan, you spent time identifying your stakeholders. These stakeholders include anyone your organization regularly deals with—crime victims, service providers, criminal and juvenile justice officials, policy makers, funding groups, and allied professionals. When you market your strategic plan, you will need to target and communicate with each of these groups.

It is easy to take a blanket approach and send all of the groups the same information, but your information will be more effective if you take the time to identify the information that each group wants and needs. For example, crime victims and victim groups will be most interested in elements of your plan that identify improvements to your victim services. Financial backers, on the other hand, may be most interested in how efficiently you are managing your budget.

Tools for Section 5, Step 1 includes a chart to assist you in listing your stakeholders. It also contains areas for you to assess what information they would like to receive about your strategic plan, and asks you about how concerned the stakeholder is about your plan.

STEP 2. CHOOSING AN EFFECTIVE DELIVERY METHOD FOR COMMUNICATING YOUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Once you have identified your stakeholders and their needs, you need to choose the best method for communicating with them. You have many possible delivery options: from static information, (like newsletters) to dynamic information (like interactive briefings). You can choose from a range of techniques to deliver the message to stakeholders.

Choosing the best delivery method for information about your strategic plan

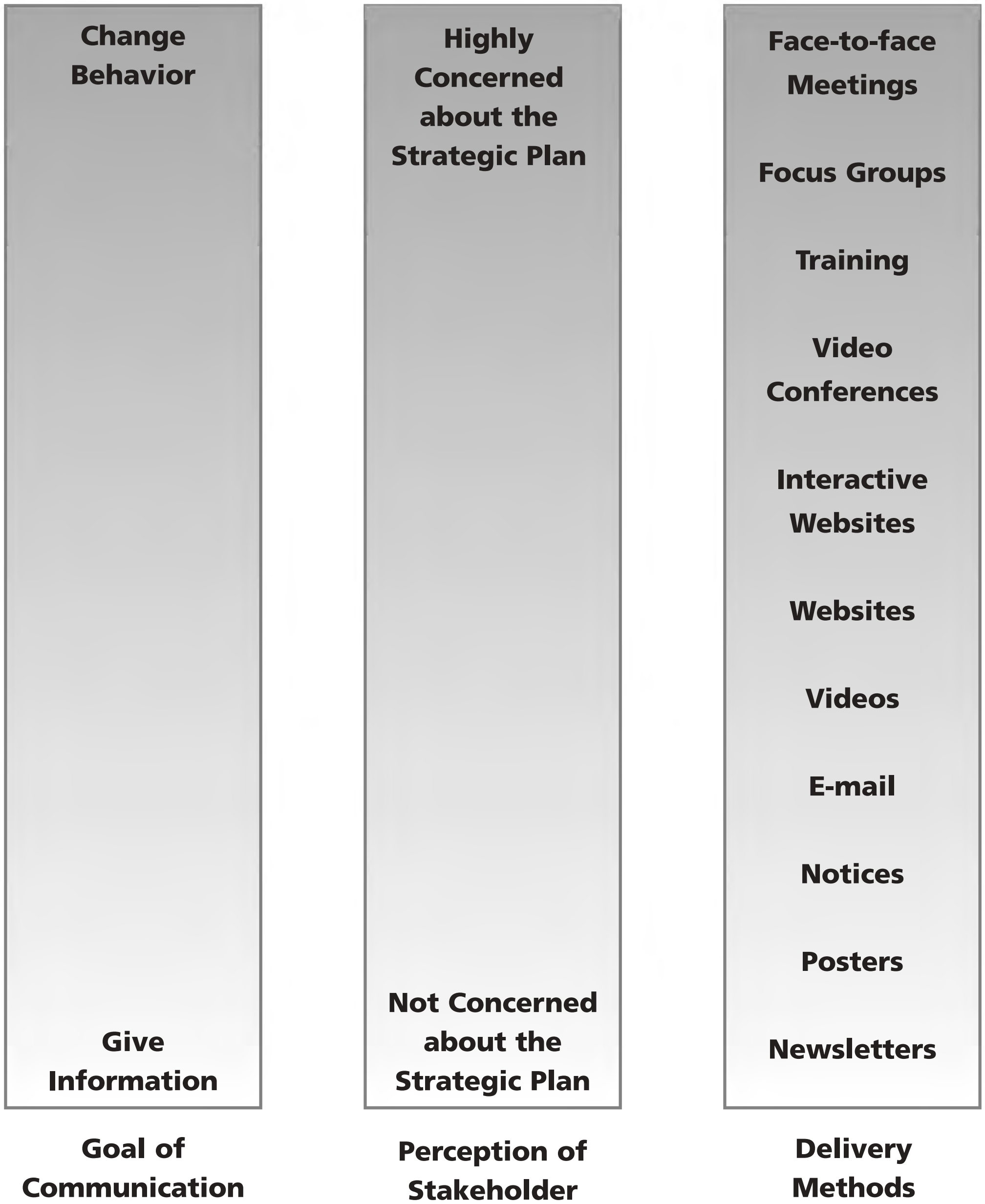
Financial constraints will dictate part of the choice. Some delivery options are much cheaper than others. However, you can use other factors to help you choose the best methods of delivering information to your stakeholders.

The following graphic shows a means of choosing media based on two factors:

1. The goal of the communication.
2. The perception of stakeholders.

The first two columns show the two major factors that you need to consider as you select delivery options. The last column shows possible delivery methods based on those two factors. For example, if your goal is merely to give information, then static delivery methods like newsletters or notices might work just fine. However, if your goal is to change behavior and you know that your stakeholders are anxious about the strategic plan, then you will need to use more interactive methods like briefings, focus groups, or face-to-face meetings. The more concerned your stakeholders are and the more you want to change behavior, the more interactive your communication with them should be.

Stakeholder Information Delivery Range



Highly interactive delivery methods

- Create processes to keep key project team members informed of progress, such as a list serve, updates provided at the beginning of each group meeting, etc.
- Develop training modules that highlight the key components of the strategic plan, as well as its impact on specific constituencies (i.e., 60-minute, 90-minute, and lengthier, detailed modules).

- Prepare briefings for legislators and/or executive branch staff on a regular basis to keep them informed of any progress, allow opportunities for input, and link strategic plan findings to the need for legislative reform (if applicable).
- Conduct presentations about the strategic plan for conferences, coalition meetings, agencies, etc. that reflect its application to the specific audience.

Moderately interactive delivery methods

- Engage the media by distributing press releases about the purpose of the planning process; its goals and objectives; who is involved in the process; and outcomes (including their benefits to victims and the communities in the media's jurisdiction).
- Hold a press conference to discuss the strategic plan and/or its progress on meeting milestones.
- Conduct periodic audio or video teleconferences to provide status reports about the planning process.
- Develop a web site that provides:
  - An overview of the strategic planning process (including goals, objectives, and project timeline).
  - Information about who is involved and in what capacity (i.e., leadership, advisory councils).
  - Progress reports.
  - Summaries of key findings as they are obtained.
  - Copies of data collection methodologies that can be replicated by local jurisdictions and agencies (such as survey instruments, focus group discussion guides, evaluation tools, performance measures).
  - Links to other web sites that contain information about strategic planning and related victim issues.
  - Capacity to "contact us" with questions.

Less interactive delivery methods

- Project-specific letterhead that includes the mission statement of the overall project.
- Create constituent-specific list serves (i.e., crime victims, victim service providers, legislators, justice officials) and e-mail periodic updates, with opportunities provided for feedback.
- Provide periodic written updates in areas that key stakeholders access regularly, such as:

- Agency or coalition web sites.
- Agency internal “intranets” of staff and volunteers.

■ Create a quarterly newsletter that features updates about the strategic planning process.

■ Develop a summary brochure that highlights the components of the strategic plan.

■ Prepare a detailed summary of the overall strategic plan, as well as an “executive summary” that can be used to inform and educate key stakeholders.

TOOLS FOR SECTION 5, STEP 2 includes a table for you to fill out, which will help you determine what type of delivery method to use with each stakeholder. When you rate the involvement and your goal, you then take the number assigned to that stakeholder and see which types of communication would be best.

STEP 3. CREATING A SIMPLE COMMUNICATION PLAN

Once you have identified your stakeholders and selected some delivery methods to get your message out, then you will need to create a communication plan. Your communication plan simply puts in writing the choices that you have made. It helps you ensure that you stay clear on *when* and and *how* feedback will be provided so that you fulfill your commitments in a timely manner.

To create a simple communication plan, you can work with your strategic planning team to fill out a grid. All of the stakeholders that you identified earlier should be represented under on this grid. Sometimes, one delivery method will serve more than one audience. For example, you could send a general newsletter to many of your stakeholders. However, you should try to ensure that you address key stakeholders—and especially those who have major concerns about the strategic plan—with specific, interactive delivery methods that suit their individual needs.

TOOLS FOR SECTION 5, STEP 3 includes a Communication Plan Organizing Grid for you to help determine how to create a simple communication plan. This grid requests you to put your delivery method in the first column, and then has you record who the main stakeholder is, what the main ideas you want to communicate are, what the timeline is, and who is in charge of the effort.

TOOLS FOR SECTION 5: MARKETING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

What is in this section?

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

STEP 1. ASSESSING YOUR STAKEHOLDERS' INFORMATION NEEDS

- Stakeholders Needs Table

STEP 2. CHOOSING AN EFFECTIVE DELIVERY METHOD FOR COMMUNICATING YOUR STRATEGIC PLAN

- Delivery Method Determination Table
- Delivery Method Determining Grid

STEP 3. CREATING A SIMPLE COMMUNICATION PLAN

- Communication Plan Organizing Grid

STEP 1. ASSESSING YOUR STAKEHOLDERS' INFORMATION NEEDS

Using a table to identify stakeholder needs

Stakeholder Needs Table

Fill in this table for each of your stakeholders.

Who is the stakeholder?	What information would they like to receive about the strategic plan?	How concerned is this stakeholder about my strategic plan?

STEP 2. CHOOSING AN EFFECTIVE DELIVERY METHOD FOR COMMUNICATING YOUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Creating a table to determine your delivery method

We have provided a table for you to determine which delivery method would be most appropriate to adequately communicate your strategic plan to your stakeholders. You will need to seriously consider each stakeholder's position in your strategic planning process, as you did in the above table, and also establish what your goal is in communicating with this stakeholder. These considerations will help you decide which delivery method to use.

- **Step 1. List stakeholders.** Fill in the stakeholders from your stakeholder needs table in column one.
- **Step 2. Rate stakeholders on involvement in strategic planning process.** Rate each stakeholder on a scale of 1-10 (with 1 being the lowest, and 10 the highest) as to his or her concern in your strategic planning process. For example, if one of your stakeholders has been extremely involved, and very concerned, he or she would receive a score of 10 in column two of the chart. List your answer in column two.
- **Step 3. Rate stakeholders based on your goal of communication.** Rate each stakeholder on a scale of 1-10 (with 1 being the lowest, and 10 the highest) as to your goal in communicating with him or her. For example, if your goal is to simply inform the stakeholder, enter a 1. If, however, your goal is to change the stakeholder's behavior, enter a 10. If your goal is somewhere in the middle, enter a 5 or 6. List your answer in column three.
- **Step 4. Average your ratings.** Add the two numbers together and divide by two to compute the average rating number. Place this in column four.
- **Step 5. Match your final rating to the delivery method.** When you have determined your final, averaged rating score, take that number and find it on the scoring guide below the table. The delivery methods that correspond to your final rating score would be most appropriate for you to use when communicating with this stakeholder. List these in column five.

Delivery Method Determination Table

Fill in the table below to decide how to deliver information to your stakeholders.

Stakeholder	Involvement rating (1-10)	Communication goals rating (1-10)	Average rating score	Appropriate delivery methods

Delivery Method Determining Grid

Match your final averaged number to the corresponding delivery method here. Enter the appropriate delivery methods in column five in the previous table.

Score	Delivery Method
1-2	Posters, newsletters
3-4	Brochures, notices
5-6	Videos, websites, email
7-8	Training, video conferences, interactive websites
9-10	Face-to-face meetings, coaching, focus groups

STEP 3. CREATING A SIMPLE COMMUNICATION PLAN

Communication Plan Organizing Grid

Fill in the grid below to help organize information for your communication plan.

What is the delivery method?	Who is the main stake-holder audience?	What are the main ideas we need to communicate?	What is the timeline for development and delivery?	Who is in charge of this effort?

SECTION 6. EVALUATE

DETERMINING HOW WELL YOUR PLAN IS WORKING

Once goals and a strategy for moving forward in strategic planning have been established, you should plan to measure progress. Tracking your plan can reveal start-up problems, serve to verify pre-project assumptions, allow for mid-course corrections, and ultimately indicate whether or not the project succeeded in achieving its goals. Since there is little that is a 100% success or failure, an assessment can indicate what aspects of the project succeeded and to what degree. It is also likely that conditions have changed, or new, unanticipated factors have arisen. An assessment can indicate what those factors are, as well display any positive or negative unintentional consequences of the project. Feedback can contribute to refinement and a continual cycle of improvement.

It is not the strongest of species that survives, nor the most intelligent; it is the one that is most adaptable to change.

—Charles Darwin

In **Section 4, Implement**, we talked about the importance of obtaining funding for your plan. Funding sources are always eager for evidence that a program is effective. Evaluation data can help a great deal in making sure that a good program continues.

WHAT IS IN THIS SECTION?

This section outlines the steps you need to track the results of your strategic plan. We discuss:

STEP 1. DECIDING WHY YOU ARE CONDUCTING AN EVALUATION

STEP 2. IDENTIFYING WHO WILL HELP WITH THE EVALUATION

STEP 3. CHOOSING YOUR EVALUATION STRATEGY

STEP 4. WRITING YOUR EVALUATION PLAN

STEP 5. COLLECTING DATA

STEP 6. REPORTING RESULTS

Using a model to evaluate your strategic plan

Fundamentally, program evaluation research seeks to answer the basic question of whether or not the program is achieving its stated goals as they were set forth in the strategic plan.

There are many types of program evaluation or evaluation research methods. This section contains a basic model that can help you get started on your evaluation.

STEP 1. DECIDING WHY YOU ARE CONDUCTING AN EVALUATION

Evaluating your strategic plan will take time and resources. Therefore, it is important to take time upfront to identify why you are conducting the evaluation and what you hope to achieve. Once you have outlined the primary goals for your evaluation, you will better be able to structure it to meet those goals. You will also be able to get buy-in from members of your organization.

Evaluations can benefit your organization[1]. They can:

- **Enhance the quality of services.** Well-crafted evaluations can tell you about clients' needs and satisfaction levels. They can also help you cite areas for improvement and take appropriate actions.
- **Improve management practices.** Evaluations can provide an objective way to gauge performance. By identifying the performance that you want in place, managers can operate their programs to achieve the specific results. This builds employee morale and confidence and, at the same time, holds everyone accountable.
- **Support continuous improvement.** Evaluations can point to problems with plans, programs, or processes. You can then use this information to develop targeted and continuous solutions.
- **Aid in the budget development process.** Evaluations provide a way to assess the level of resources needed to support activities. They can also identify the level of products or services that are possible at varying funding levels. This information can bring greater clarity to the budget development process.
- **Make programs more understandable.** Evaluations can help others see how well your organization is working. This serves two purposes: policy makers can see the quality of service you are providing, and the public can see what is being done with their tax dollars or charitable contributions.
- **Assess policies, plans, and programs.** Evaluations can help decide what is next for your organization. They help decision makers decide whether to continue, modify, or eliminate a particular policy, plan or program.[2]

As you decide why your organization is conducting an evaluation, you should also think about the parameters of the evaluation. Because evaluations can be costly—in terms of time and resources—it is vitally important to ensure that you are structuring your evaluation to be practical and effective. Some of the considerations in developing an evaluation plan are:

- **Utility.** Ensure that an evaluation will serve the practical information needs of intended users.
- **Feasibility.** Ensure that the evaluation will be realistic, prudent, diplomatic, and frugal.
- **Propriety.** Ensure that an evaluation will be conducted legally, ethically, and with due regard for the welfare of those involved in the evaluation, as well as those affected by its results.
- **Accuracy.** Ensure that an evaluation will reveal and convey technically adequate information about the features that determine the worth or merit of the program being evaluated.

STEP 2. IDENTIFYING WHO CAN HELP WITH THE EVALUATION

Before developing an evaluation plan you should decide who will be a part of the evaluation. One of the first decisions you will need to make is whether you want to conduct the evaluation with your own staff or whether you would like to work with an outside evaluator or consultant who specializes in this area. Both alternatives have advantages and disadvantages:

Questions to Consider	Using Your Own Staff to do the Evaluation		Using an Outside Consultant to Do the Evaluation	
	Advantages	**Disadvantages**	**Advantages**	**Disadvantages**
1. Who could provide the best information about our organization?	Staff members know the organization and how it works.	They may be less objective.	The consultant may see things that staff within the organization cannot see.	The consultant does not know the organization and may misinterpret information.
2. Do we have the expertise to do the evaluation?	Staff may have experience in evaluation or can learn about it.	Mistakes could be made that threaten the validity of the evaluation.	The consultant has more experience and expertise in the area of evaluation.	Consultants can vary in terms of their expertise and work quality.
3. What are the monetary costs?	Staff may not need to be paid additional money to work on the evaluation.	Staff may not have the time to devote to the evaluation due to other duties.	The consultant would be under contract to perform certain work.	Outside consultants may charge a lot for their services.

Evaluations conducted by your staff can be as useful and informative as those conducted by an outside consultant. However, you should choose the option that best matches the time, resources, and expectations that you have for the evaluation.

If you have already hired a consultant to assist with the strategic planning, that person should also be prepared to monitor results and evaluate. If you choose to use the consultant in this way, you should remember that the consultant will now become a part of the process and may be less objective about the results.

Even if you decide to hire someone, the following steps in this section are worth reviewing to help you better understand the consultant's work.

TOOLS FOR SECTION 6, STEP 2 includes a questionnaire to help you decide whether you should conduct an evaluation using your own staff or whether you would be better off hiring a consultant. There are several elements you need to consider while filling out this questionnaire: keep your evaluation goals in mind, remember the resources dedicated to evaluation, and know the strengths of your staff.

STEP 3. CHOOSING YOUR EVALUATION STRATEGY

Assessing strategic plan progress can be done on many levels. At a minimum you will want to monitor your strategic plan as it is implemented. An evaluation goes beyond this monitoring, to also encompass whether the new plan is working or not. There are several different types of evaluation that are appropriate at different times and for different purposes. You may only want to attempt one type of evaluation or you may combine several types to get a more complete picture. The common evaluation strategies discussed here are:

- Monitoring,
- Process evaluation,
- Outcome evaluation,
- Impact evaluation, and
- Empowerment evaluation.

Monitoring

Monitoring activities are focused on whether the plan is being implemented as it was designed. For example, your strategic plan may focus on increasing the security of victims that testify in court. To do this there may be a new police assignment policy in your jurisdiction. To monitor the success of this effort you would see whether the police are actually being assigned as planned. In contrast, whether the new assignment policy actually results in more security for the victims is an evaluation question.

Two important questions to consider when monitoring your plan are[3]:

- **Are you reaching your target audience?** Victim services agencies are usually trying to deliver services to a particular target audience. For example, a rape crisis center is trying to deliver services to victims of sexual assault. When monitoring a new initiative you should measure the extent to which you are reaching them. Some of the data that you would want to track are the number of participants in your program and their characteristics. In the example of a rape crisis center, the center might want to see how many participants are in their program compared with crime rates or victimization rates for the area they serve.

  Another issue is whether the program is reaching everyone it is intending to reach. Some groups may be overrepresented and others may be underrepresented. In the case of the rape crisis center, there may be a particular group, such as college students, that never call the center. You can keep track of participation through existing records or you may want to conduct a survey of a sample of the participants in your program to learn their characteristics

- **Is your strategic plan being implemented the way it was designed?** It is easy to blame the strategic plan, and label it faulty when goals are not met, but organizations need to implement their plans as designed in order to fully meet stated goals. To monitor how the plan is being applied, you should assess the following features of your program as they were actually delivered:
- **In what context did you deliver your program? Did this match the planned context?**
  - Where did the program take place? What facilities were used?
  - What staff participated in services delivery?
  - What resources were used?
- **What procedures and activities took place?**
  - Did staff deliver the services as planned? Did they follow the planned procedures?
  - What activities did the participants engage in? Were these the planned activities?

Process evaluation

A process evaluation investigates the way in which the organization conducts its business, looking at items such as:

- How are services provided?
- Who receives your services?
- Who provides your services?
- What resources are available to the program?
- How are these resources used?
- What resources seem lacking in the program?
- How is the organization structured?
- What is the impact of this structure on services?
- How are staff members recruited, screened, selected, trained and supervised?
- How are decisions made in the organization?

- For collaborative efforts, what are the nature and operations of these relationships?
- If the agency does not collaborate with others, should it?

Process evaluation is very useful and is suggested not only in its own right, but in conjunction with outcome evaluations and impact evaluations, discussed next. The reason this is helpful is because if program outcomes and impacts can be improved, then the process evaluation may help lead the program to an understanding of any operations shortcomings. If mended, these shortcomings could improve outcome results and impact results.

Outcome evaluation

Outcome evaluation looks more specifically at whether or not the program achieved its goals and had its intended effect on the target population. An outcome evaluation will focus on questions such as: Has the program actually aided or assisted victims, and how?

The outcome of a program is always a change in a measurable indicator. In the earlier example of a program that wants to increase the security of victims that testify in court, a possible outcome is that more victims participated in the program. Another possible outcome is that they are more likely to testify. A good strategic plan will have goals and objectives that should lead to measurable outcomes. Measuring those outcomes becomes the key to an outcome evaluation.

Impact evaluation

This type of evaluation asks the question, "What was the impact of this outcome on the various systems involved?" An impact evaluation goes one step beyond the outcomes to see what effects the outcomes have on the ultimate goals of the program. Returning again to the example of the program that wants to increase the security of victims that testify in court, an impact evaluation could look beyond the outcomes of the victims' increased participation and their willingness to testify, to whether they actually report feeling more secure. This security would be a measurable impact of the program

The basic focus of an impact evaluation is, "What actual results did the program produce?" In addressing this question, negative results may appear which would not have been evident before.

For example, perhaps you conducted a process evaluation on a victim program that measured things like the number of client contacts, numbers of referrals, and fulfillment of information requests. These measures could report impressive process numbers. However, if you look at some victim impacts, such as client satisfaction or improved emotional or mental health status, the program may not indicate good results. In general, impact evaluations are more difficult to elicit a positive result. If you can show positive impact results, your overall program has been very successful.

Empowerment evaluation[4]

Empowerment evaluation is appropriate for the strategic planning setting in that it includes not only evaluation for the program, but also *capacity building* within the program to produce better program monitoring and evaluation.

In empowerment evaluation, the role of the evaluator evolves into one of collaborator, and not merely one of an outside expert. Evaluation of this type begins with your organization holding an open forum for the community to participate in a review of the newly implemented program and any problems. The empowerment evaluator is not an individual, but a group member. This evaluative system causes an on-going process of improvement, instead of a one-time assessment of the program's value or success. Since strategic planning needs constant review and revision, this evaluative measure complements it well.

Suggested resources

For more information on program monitoring and evaluation, please review:

- Tomz and McGillis'[5] *Serving Crime Victims & Witnesses.*
- OVC's National Victim Assistance Academy[6].

TOOLS FOR SECTION 6, STEP 3 includes a questionnaire to help you choose the best evaluation strategy for your organization's needs. This questionnaire helps you identify the most important issues for your evaluation, and guides you to the most appropriate strategy.

STEP 4. WRITING YOUR EVALUATION PLAN

Once you have decided upon your evaluation strategy, you will need to develop a structured plan for your evaluation that will guide the collection of data. Your evaluation plan should be a written document that all parties involved in the evaluation can use as data is collected. It should contain the following sections:

- Background,
- Evaluation purpose and goals,
- Method,
- Data Analysis,
- Time Schedule, and
- Assumptions and Limitations.

Background

Describe the context for the evaluation in terms of the strategic plan. Specify the scope of the plan, how many years will be covered by the evaluation, and the key personnel involved in the evaluation.

Evaluation purpose and goals

Describe the purpose of the evaluation and the goals that the evaluation is trying to achieve. Specify the type of evaluation you have chosen to use.

Method

Describe how you will evaluate, including information about:

- **Subjects**. Describe who will be included in the evaluation.
- **Performance measures.** Describe the performance measures that you will collect.
- **Assessment Instruments.** Describe any instruments, such as surveys or focus group protocols, that you will use in the evaluation.
- **Sampling Plan**. If you are going to create a sample to collect the data, describe how you will choose participants for the study.
- **Design**. Describe when you will collect data.
- **Procedures**. Describe the procedures you will use for collecting data for the evaluation.

Data analysis

Discuss how the data will be analyzed after collection is completed. For example, you may plan to compare the percentage of victims who are willing to participate in your program before you instituted the new plan to those willing to participate after you instituted the new plan.

Time schedule

List the tasks you will complete for the evaluation and when you will complete each one.

Assumptions and limitations

Describe any assumptions that you are making in the design. For example, you may be assuming that participants selected for the evaluation study will be available and willing to participate. Also, describe any limitations to the evaluation plan. For example, your study may rely only on subjective data (opinions) of participants, rather than other more objective data (numbers). Another limitations possibility is that you may not have any baseline data that can measure performance "before" the strategic plan to use to compare against "after" performance.

Tools for Section 6, Step 4 includes an evaluation plan outlining tool to help you write your own evaluation plan. The outlining tool contains all of the sections above, including background, evaluation purpose and goals, method, data analysis, time schedule, and assumptions and limitations. It also provides questions for you to answer for each section in order to help you develop your evaluation plan.

STEP 5. COLLECTING DATA

No matter what type of evaluation strategy you have chosen, you will need to collect data. The purpose of collecting this data varies by the type of evaluation you have chosen. Regardless of the type of evaluation, however, you will be collecting data about performance. To collect data about performance, you will need to establish and track clear performance measures.

5.1 ESTABLISH PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures provide detailed information that can be used by strategic planners to assess whether or not desired results are actually accomplished.

Performance measures can be quantitative (expressed as a number or degree of change) or qualitative (non-numeric measures such as perceptions and observations).

Examples of quantitative data include:

- Reported crimes.
- Arrests.
- System resources (e.g. manpower, facilities, equipment, budgets).
- Demographics:
  - Total population.
  - Offender population.

Examples of qualitative data include:

- Perceptions (e.g. opinions, observations).
- Psychological factors (e.g. fear of crime).
- Policies and procedures (e.g. agency structure).

When developing performance measures you should evaluate them according to the following scheme. Appropriate performance measures should address "the five Cs":

- **Client-focused**. Obtain and include the perspectives of key clients and stakeholders.
- **Culturally competent**. Reflect the diversity of the range of culture, ethnicity, gender, and geography represented in both clientele, as well as the strategic planning team.

- **Credible**. Based on reliable and thorough data collection and analysis.
- **Comparable.** To initial benchmarks established by the strategic planners, as well as to other data over the period of the strategic plan.
- **Comprehensive**. All areas of the strategic plan's programs can be measured.

The Arizona Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting uses an excellent model that incorporates five common performance measures: input, output, outcome, efficiency and quality.[7]

- **Inputs**. Inputs measure the amount of resources needed to provide services. They include labor, materials, equipment and supplies, and can also represent demand factors, such as target populations. Input measures are useful to show the total cost of providing services; the mix of resources used to provide the service; the demand for services; and the amount of resources used for one service in relation to other services.
- **Outputs**. Outputs measure the amount of services provided. Outputs focus on the level of activity in a particular program. Workload measures, which are designed to show how staff time will be allocated to respond to service demand, are most commonly reported. Outputs are useful in defining what a program produces. However, they are limited because they do not indicate whether the program goals have been accomplished, and they do not reveal anything about the quality or efficiency of the service provided.
- **Outcomes**. Outcomes measure whether services are meeting proposed targets. Outcomes reflect the actual results achieved, as well as the impact or benefit of programs. Both intermediate and long-term outcomes can be evaluated. Policy makers are generally most interested in outcome measures.
- **Efficiency**. Efficiency measures are also known as productivity measures. Efficiency can be measured in terms of the cost per unit of output, the ratio of outputs per unit of input, and the ratio of outputs per unit of time. Ratios help express the relationships between different performance measures to convey more information about the productivity and cost effectiveness of a program.
- **Quality**. Quality measures reflect the effectiveness in meeting the expectations of clients or stakeholders. Measures of quality include reliability, accuracy, courtesy, competence, responsiveness, and completeness associated with the service provided. Lack of quality can also be measured: the resources devoted to performing work over again, correcting errors, or

resolving client complaints. Both the positive and negative sides of measuring quality can be important to track.

5.2 TRACK PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Data should be collected for each performance measure and reported at a regular interval. Progress reports on performance measures could be in the form of data tables or presented in charts or graphs.

A comparison of actual performance, as reported in the monitoring document, to the "planned" performance (e.g. target) provides the basis for periodic evaluation of the strategic plan and the planning process. The leader(s) of the strategic planning process should use the results of the quarterly or monthly reports to identify reasons for not meeting expected results, and use this information to review and revise policies, procedures, goals, and objectives, as necessary.

Tracking performance and reporting results is an important way to measure progress toward meeting the goals in the strategic plan.

Establish boundaries for all your tracking activities

- Set specific cut-off times for reporting all activities.
- Pay special attention to continuity of data collection and calculation during personnel changes. You must train new staff about how to calculate the measures in accordance with previous methods you have established.
- Construct effective internal controls to ensure that information is properly collected and accurately reported. It is difficult and embarrassing to take back information once it is disseminated.

Compare actual performance you have measured to your proposed performance level

You should address the following questions:

- How does the reported performance compare to previous periods?
- Is the comparison result because of the successful achievement of the goal?
- Do external factors affect performance to the extent that targets may not be met?
- Is the comparison result due to a faulty project of performance?
- Are there unanticipated effects resulting from the comparison?

Prepare data for the tracking document

You should address the following questions:

- How frequently and in what form will you prepare performance information?
- What kind of exploratory data are needed to explain trends and results?
- How will the data/information be verified and checked for accuracy?
- What kinds of controls, tests, and/or audits are appropriate?
- What kinds of unintended results can be expected from implementing the strategies?
- How can you avoid these results?
- How will the data be used to evaluate, improve, and change the programs?
- How will someone know if a program is inefficient or ineffective?
- What can be done to fix it?

Report from your tracking document

You will want to choose information to report based on the particular program you are tracking. However, you should always report certain basic information:

- **Progress and non-progress on all steps**. You should report progress-to-date on steps in the action plan that are completed or ahead of schedule, and that are on schedule.
- **Reasons for non-progress or changes to plans**. If things are not progressing according to plan, you should explain the reasons why.
- **Steps you are taking to rectify any non-progress, or scheduled slowdowns**.
- **The status of each step of your action plan**. For example, is each step on schedule, delayed, canceled, ahead of schedule, or in the planning stages? Enough information should be provided to offer an honest, accurate assessment of the status of the overall strategic planning process.

TOOLS FOR SECTION 6, STEP 5 contains a short checklist to help you ensure that you have included the most important issues in your tracking document. It also contains a sample Tracking Document for you to customize to your own needs. This document includes all of the necessary information listed above.

STEP 6. REPORTING RESULTS

The final step in evaluating your strategic plan is to analyze the results and then present this information in a way that others can use and understand. You will probably want to develop internal as well as external reports.

Internal reporting

Internal reports can take various forms. Chief among these are program performance evaluations, planning and budgeting activities, and implementation of improvement activities. These reports can be more detailed, and are usually more frequent than those for policy makers. They may also include process information. Sometimes, the data may be separated in order to clearly convey patterns. For example, results may be more meaningful if reported by geographic area, or type of victimization.

Each state or agency will establish its own guidelines concerning how often performance information is to be collected and reported. At a minimum, data for each measure will have to be collected annually, but some measures may be calculated more frequently. For example, a decision might be made to have internal management reports about key volume/caseload indicators every month, with reports to the administration or leadership on a quarterly or semiannual basis.

External reporting

External stakeholders, public policy makers, providers, and clients want to know how well the organization and its programs are performing. If performance measurements show a continual improvement process with a positive impact on results, stakeholders' concerns may be allayed.

Reports for policy makers should be clear and concise. Reports are often easier to read if the data are presented graphically. Performance measures can also be incorporated in annual reports.

Make sure you fully explain your evaluation results in reports. Rarely can all the variables be measured, nor the true "cause and effect" relationships identified, but be sure to include all of the relevant information necessary for understanding.

Include the following to help communicate results:

- Include targets as well as actual results. For example, knowing that your target was to increase the number of police trained in rape victim sensitivity by 20 percent, puts an increase of 25 percent in context.

- Include explanations where performance varies significantly from previous levels or targets. If your new training system of working with consultants has enabled you to reach twice the number of potential trainees, you should mention that in your report and explain what led to the change.
- Develop reports that are user friendly and that victims, service providers, and other stakeholders will be able to understand. Use words and vocabulary that fit your target audience. Even if your evaluation used sophisticated statistical methods to analyze your progress, present the results in terms that the common person can understand.
- Decide whether you want to report results for many separate groups or only for the organization as a whole. Whatever level you decide, try to be consistent throughout the report.
- Do not include more information that an external audience would need. Other information can be included in internal reports to maintain a record of what you did.
- Give the report to some members of your target audience to review before you finalize it.

Addressing poor performance

Evaluative measures will sometimes show poor performance. Organizations do not always have control over ultimate results; the economy or events in people's lives can influence a program's outcome. When poor performance evaluations occur, use these as a springboard to improvement. Strategic planning leaders must determine what needs to be-or can be-done differently to produce better evaluations.

Tools for Section 6, Step 6 contains a sample Monitoring Report to help you collect and compile evaluation data. You can customize this report to your own data.

Endnotes

1. One of the most comprehensive handbooks on program monitoring and evaluation is the *Managing for Results Guidebook: A Logical Approach for Program Design, Outcome Measurement and Process Evaluation for Sub-recipients of STOP, VOCA, and Family Violence Grants*. Written specifically for community- and system-based victim service programs, it was developed by the Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Planning with assistance from Performance Vistas, Inc. The Guidebook can be accessed at: www.state.tn.us/finance/rds/victimshomepage.htm

2. Ibid.

3. This is discussed in Chapter 4 in P.H Rossi, H.E. Freeman, & M.W. Lipsey, 1999, *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach (6th Ed.),* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

4. D.M. Fetterman, S.J. Kaftarian, and A. Wandersman, (eds.), *Empowerment Evaluation: Knowledge and Tools for Self Assessment and Accountability*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 5.

5. J.E. Tomz and D. McGillis, 1997, *Serving Crime Victims & Witnesses*, Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice (NCJ# 163174). Available at www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/163174.pdf.

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7. Arizona Governor's Office, 1998, *1998 Strategic Planning and Performance Handbook*, Phoenix, AZ: Office of the Governor, Strategic Planning and Budgeting, available at www.state.az.us/ospb/managing_for_results_june19-02.cfm

TOOLS FOR SECTION 6: EVALUATE

WHAT IS IN THIS SECTION?

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

STEP 2. IDENTIFYING WHO CAN HELP WITH THE EVALUATION

- Self-Evaluation Versus Outside Evaluation Assessment Questionnaire
- Client Analysis Checklist

STEP 3. CHOOSING YOUR EVALUATION STRATEGY

- Most Important Issues For Your Evaluation Questionnaire

STEP 4. WRITING YOUR EVALUATION PLAN

- Evaluation Plan Outlining Tool

STEP 5. COLLECTING DATA

- Tracking Document Checklist
- Sample Tracking Document

STEP 6. REPORTING RESULTS

- Sample Monitoring Report

STEP 2. IDENTIFYING WHO CAN HELP WITH THE EVALUATION

In the following questionnaire, you will need to seriously consider your goals in performing this evaluation. For each question, you should pick one option, and put a check next to the option that you choose in the last column.

Self-Evaluation Versus Outside Evaluation Assessment Questionnaire

Questions	Your need/Your ability		Type of evaluation	(check one box per answer)
1. Do you want a deep understanding of your organization or a broad overview?	Deep insight	→	Self-evaluation	
	Broad understanding	→	Outside evaluation	
2. Do you need absolutely unbiased information regarding your organization, for political or other reasons?	Information cannot be biased	→	Outside evaluation	
	Information may be biased	→	Self-evaluation	
3. Does your staff have experience in evaluation? Could you train them?	Staff has experience or could be trained	→	Self-evaluation	
	Staff does not have experience and could not be trained	→	Outside evaluation	
4. Do you have the money to conduct a thorough evaluation?	Money is available for evaluation	→	Outside evaluation	
	Money is not available for evaluation	→	Self-evaluation	
5. Do you have staff time to dedicate to a thorough evaluation?	Staff can be made available for evaluation	→	Self-evaluation	
	Staff can not be made available for evaluation	→	Outside evaluation	
			Number of checks for Self-evaluation	
			Number of checks for Outside evaluation	

After honestly assessing your answers to each of these questions, add up the checks to see whether your answers point more often to a self-evaluation or to an outside evaluation.

After you have added up the number of checks for either a self-evaluation or an outside evaluation, be sure you weight your answers honestly. Depending on your organization, some of your needs will be more important than others. Sometimes, if your checks are evenly balanced, you will want to make your decision on the importance of each factor in the assessment.

STEP 3. CHOOSING YOUR EVALUATION STRATEGY

To help you understand what evaluation is best for you, ask yourself which of the following questions you most need answered by your evaluation. Read through the list, and then check the ones that you feel are the most important for your evaluation to answer. You may check more than one question in each box. Some boxes might have no checks.

Most Important Issues For Your Evaluation Questionnaire

1. ____

- ☐ Are you reaching your target audience?
- ☐ Where did the program take place?
- ☐ What facilities were used?
- ☐ What staff participated in the delivery of services?
- ☐ What resources were used?
- ☐ What procedures and activities took place?
- ☐ Did staff deliver the services as planned?
- ☐ Did they follow the planned procedures?
- ☐ What activities did the participants engage in?
- ☐ Were these the planned activities?

2. ____

- ☐ How were program services provided?
- ☐ Who provided the services?
- ☐ What resources are available to your program and how are these used?
- ☐ What resources seem lacking in your program?
- ☐ How is your organization structured?
- ☐ What is the impact of your structure on services?
- ☐ How are your staff members recruited, screened, selected, trained and supervised?
- ☐ How do you make decisions?
- ☐ How do any collaborative relationships function?
- ☐ If your program does not collaborate with others, should you?

3. ______________________________

- ☐ Has your program actually assisted victims?
- ☐ What are your program's actual results?
- ☐ Are your program's results positive or negative for victims?
- ☐ Are your program's results positive or negative for your organization?
- ☐ What were your program's goals?
- ☐ Have you reached your goals?
- ☐ Are your goals being measured accurately?
- ☐ Are your goals written to measure your program's success?

4. ______________________________

- ☐ How have your outcomes impacted your the various systems involved in your program?
- ☐ How do participants feel after being involved in your program?
- ☐ Should you reevaluate your program's goals?
- ☐ Are the outcomes affecting victims' lives positively or negatively?
- ☐ How have your outcomes affected perceptions about your program and your organization?
- ☐ How have your goals affected perceptions about your programs and your organization?
- ☐ Has your program had unexpected consequences? For victims? For your organization? For an outside agency?

5. ______________________________

- ☐ How can they way you deliver services be improved?
- ☐ How can evaluators build on their assessment of your program?
- ☐ How can your program become more collaborative?
- ☐ How can you use this evaluation to identify areas to build your organization's capacity to evaluate itself?
- ☐ How can you increase participation in the evaluation process?
- ☐ How can you involve more outside participants in your evaluation process?

Do a majority of the questions you think are most important for your evaluation to answer fall in one area of the table? (Keep in mind that it is accepted, and even encouraged to adopt more than one evaluation method, or design a combination of several methods.)

In the following table:

- Questions in the first block are those that **program monitoring** could answer.
- Questions in the second block represent information a **process evaluation** could answer.
- Questions in the third block represent information an **outcomes evaluation** could answer.
- Questions in the fourth block are those that an **impact evaluation** could answer.
- Questions in the fifth block are those that an **empowerment evaluation** could answer.

STEP 4. WRITING YOUR EVALUATION PLAN

Once you have the information you need, writing your evaluation plan becomes a process of logically ordering the information that evaluators will need to do their jobs. The following tool can help you ensure that all of the pieces of your evaluation plan are in place.

Evaluation Plan Outlining Tool

Section	Section contents
Background	What is the context for your evaluation? - What is the scope of your evaluation plan? - What are the years your evaluation will cover? - Who are the key personnel involved?
Evaluation purpose and goals	What is the purpose of your evaluation? - Why are you evaluating? - What do you hope to find out? - What are your goals for your evaluation?
Method	How will you conduct your evaluation? - Who will be included in the evaluation? (Subjects) - What performance measures will you collect? (Performance measures) - What instruments, such as surveys or focus group protocols, will you use in the evaluation? (Assessment instruments) - If you are going to sample to collect the data, how will you choose participants for the study? (Sampling plan) - When will you collect data? (Design) - What procedures will you use for collecting data for the evaluation? (Procedures)
Data analysis	How will you analyze your data to find results? For example: - Will you compare the percentage of victims who are willing to participate before you instituted the new plan to those willing to participate after you instituted the new plan? - Will you assess qualitative data for themes and big ideas? - Will you compare before and after statistics? - How else will you transform your raw data from the initial data collected to statistics and comparisons?

Time schedule	How long will you take to complete your evaluation? - What tasks are involved in your evaluation? - What is the deadline for completing each task? - What is your overall deadline?
Assumptions and limitations	What assumptions is your evaluation based on? How is your evaluation limited? For example: - Are you assuming you will find willing participants for surveys or other data collection tools? - Are you limited by collecting only subjective data (such as opinions or feelings) rather than objective data? - Are you limited by a lack of baseline data to make comparisons with?

STEP 5. COLLECTING DATA

Tracking documents will have to be tailored to the programs they track. However, you will always need to include certain elements for a workable tracking document. The following checklist will help you ensure that you have included all the basic elements a tracking document needs.

Tracking Document Checklist

Does your tracking document include:

- ☐ Goals?
- ☐ Objectives?
- ☐ Performance measures?
- ☐ Action plans?
- ☐ An explanation of the actions taken to date?
- ☐ Information about the current status?
- ☐ Room for comments?

Remember that by adding space for comments and the current status of each action step, the action plan you created in **Section 4, Implement**, may work as the tracking document.

Sample Tracking Document

Tracking report for: (Program name or task name) ________________________

Dates covered: ____________________

1. What are the program's overall goals?	1a. Are these goals being met?
____________________	____________________
____________________	____________________
____________________	____________________

2. What are the program's goals for these dates/tasks?	2a. Are these goals being met?
____________________	____________________
____________________	____________________
____________________	____________________

3. What are the program's overall objectives?

3a. Are these objects being met?

4. What are the program's objectives for these dates/tasks?

4a. Are these objectives being met?

5. What performance measures were used to track this task?

5a. Why were these performance measures used?

6. For any goals above, how are they not being met? Why are they not being met?

7. What action plans have been developed to address unmet goals?
Individual, team, agency, section(s), or division(s) responsible for implementing:

Actions taken to date:

8. For any objectives above, how are they not being met? Why are they not being met?

9. What action plans have been created to address unmet objectives?
Individual, team, agency, section(s), or division(s) responsible for implementing:

Actions taken to date:

10. What is the current status of the program?
Is the program on schedule? Why or why not?

Additional comments:

STEP 6. REPORTING RESULTS

Sample Monitoring Report

Date of Report:

Implementation Objectives	Date

Performance Objectives	To date	Projected	Goal

Objectives	Accomplished	Not accomplished

Findings

Positive finding(s) (list)

1. ______________________________

2. ______________________________

3. ______________________________

Negative finding(s) & general problems with this grant (list) (assume the need for a corrective action)

1. ______________________________

2. ______________________________

3. ______________________________

Corrective Action(s): Who? Will do what? By when? Consequences of non-compliance?

1. ______________________________

2. ______________________________

3. ______________________________

APPENDIX A. SUGGESTED READING LIST ON STRATEGIC PLANNING

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APPENDIX B. SUGGESTED FEDERAL GRANT FUNDING RESOURCES

Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)
(Administered by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime)

The Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (VOCA) created a repository of fines, fees, and bond forfeitures from convicted Federal offenders. These monies are to be used for crime victims. To help victims and victim service providers, OVC distributes money from the fund in the form of formula and discretionary grants.

OVC awards formula grants to states according to formulas established in VOCA. OVC distributes approximately 90 percent of the money collected by the fund in the form of two major formula grant programs to state agencies: Victim Compensation and Victim Assistance. Through the following programs, funds are made available to states and territories for crime victims and their service providers:

- VOCA Crime Victim Compensation Program, and
- VOCA Crime Victim Assistance Program

The average amount of a program's VOCA grant award is less than $20,000, representing only a small portion of the average program budget.

Under its discretionary grant program, OVC has some flexibility in the topics and grantees it selects. VOCA authorizes OVC to make discretionary grants to improve and enhance the quality and availability of victim services. Such grants can be awarded to states, local units of government, individuals, educational institutions, private nonprofit organizations, and private commercial organizations. Discretionary awards typically (but not always) are competitive. Discretionary funds support a wide range of activities, programs, and services, including initiatives that address:

- Federal crime victims,

- Promising practices,
- Indian Country, and
- Terrorism and mass violence crimes.

OVC awards formula and discretionary grants in accordance with the *VOCA Grant Program Guidelines and the Office of Justice Programs' Financial Guide*. Both of these publications are accessible (and can be downloaded in PDF or ASCII format) from the OVC Web site: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/fund/. Additional information about discretionary grants, including OVC's Program Plan for funding, is also available on this site.

For more information about the Crime Victim Assistance and the CJA Tribal Grant Programs, contact OVC at (202) 307-5983.

STOP Violence Against Women Act Program (VAWA)
(Administered by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office on Violence Against Women)

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) is dedicated to enhancing victim safety and ensuring offender accountability by supporting policies, protocols, and projects that call for zero tolerance of all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. OVW administers one formula and four discretionary grant programs authorized by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

OVW is committed to working in partnership with state, local, and tribal government officials, as well as non-profit organizations, to encourage the development and support of innovative, effective programs for preventing, identifying, and stopping violence against women and ensuring womens' safety. VAWA envisions comprehensive community efforts to create and adopt locally responsive approaches that encourage collaboration among all segments, including victim service providers, victim advocates, criminal justice authorities, health care providers, and community organizations representing educators, businesses, members of the clergy, and others involved in the fight to end violence against women.

For more information on OVW, visit their Web site at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawo/ or contact them at: (202) 307-6026.

The Children's Justice and Assistance Act Program
(Administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau)

The Children's Justice and Assistance Act amended the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). CJA authorizes grants to states to improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect cases, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation cases, and the handling of child fatality cases in which child abuse or neglect is suspected. CJA directs that such cases be handled in a manner that limits additional trauma to the child victim.

For more information about the Children's Justice and Assistance Act Program, contact the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau at (202) 205-8076 or visit their Web site at www.acf.hhs.gov.

Family Violence Prevention and Services Program
(Administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services)

The purpose of the Family Violence Prevention and Services Discretionary Funds Program is to distribute funding under the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act.

The priorities for funding include several elements:
1. To help states increase public awareness about family violence, to prevent family violence, and to provide immediate shelter and related assistance for victims of family violence and their dependents; and
2. To provide technical assistance and training related to family violence programs to states and local public agencies, including law enforcement agencies, courts, legal services, social services, health care professionals, and non-profit organizations.

For more information about the Family Violence Prevention and Services Discretionary Funds Program, contact the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services at (202) 401-5529 or visit their Web site at www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ocs.

The Preventive Health and Human Services Block Grant (PHHSBG)
(Administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control)

In 2000, Congress approved amendments to the Public Health Service Act requirements for a Rape Prevention and Education (RPE) Grant Program. The new requirements for the RPE Grant Program became law under the Violence Against Women Act provisions of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000. This law designated the NCIPC at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as having programmatic responsibility for the new RPE Grant Program, and outlined legislative requirements regarding the administration of these funds.

For more information about the RPE Grant Program, contact the NCIPC Division of Violence Prevention at (770) 488-1424 or (770) 488-1506 or visit their Web site at www.cdc.gov/ncipc/.

Bureau of Justice Assistance
(Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice)

BJA contains these departments which administer grants:

1. The State and Local Assistance Division, which administers formula grant programs such as Byrne Formula Grants and Local Law Enforcement Block Grants.
2. The Program Development Division, which administers Byrne Discretionary Programs, including the Open Solicitation and a number of targeted funding programs.

For more information, contact BJA at (202) 514-6638 or visit the Web site at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bja.

The Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Formula Grant Program

(Administered by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance)

The Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program makes direct discretionary grant awards to states, units of local government, and private non-profit groups for the support of state and local criminal justice system initiatives.

At the national level, Byrne monies support a number of initiatives that incorporate victims' rights and needs, including the National Crime Prevention Council, National Judicial College, and Chicago's Family Violence Intervention Program. While states have discretion about how Byrne dollars are spent, a number of states have utilized this Federal funding source to support programs and services such as victim/offender mediation and automated victim notification.

For more information about the Byrne Program, contact the Bureau of Justice Assistance at (202) 514-6638 or visit the Web site at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bja.

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)

(Administered by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice)

COPS provides grants to tribal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to hire and train community policing professionals, acquire and deploy cutting-edge crime-fighting technologies, and develop and test innovative policing strategies. COPS-funded training helps advance community policing at all levels of law enforcement-from line officers to law enforcement executives-as well as others in the criminal justice field.

The COPS Office distributes funding through a wide range of programs, both as grants and cooperative agreements. The COPS Web site outlines funding programs, including those through which additional funding may be available, such as hiring, technology, and school safety grants.

For information on COPS funding opportunities, visit their Web site at www.cops.usdoj.gov. The COPS Resource Center can be reached at (800) 421-6770 or (202) 307-1480.

National Institute of Corrections (NIC)
(Federal Bureau of Prisons, U.S. Department of Justice)

NIC provides training, technical assistance, information services, and policy/program development assistance to Federal, state, and local corrections agencies. Through cooperative agreements, NIC awards funds to support its program initiatives. NIC also provides leadership to influence correctional policies, practices, and operations nationwide in areas of emerging interest and concern to correctional executives and practitioners as well as public policymakers. NIC also participates in intergovernmental partnerships with other Federal agencies to provide services related to juvenile corrections, sex offender issues, and use of 1994 Crime Bill funds allocated to states.

For more information, contact the NIC Information Center at (800) 877-1461 or (303) 682-0213, or visit their Web site at www.nicic.org.

Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Program
(Administered by the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice)

The Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative is a comprehensive effort that addresses both juvenile and adult populations of serious, high-risk offenders. It provides funding to develop, implement, enhance, and evaluate reentry strategies that will ensure the safety of the community and the reduction of serious, violent crime. This is accomplished by preparing targeted offenders to successfully return to their communities after having served a significant period of secure confinement in a state training school, juvenile or adult correctional facility, or other secure institution.

For more information about the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative, visit their Web site, www.ojp.usdoj.gov/reentry/, send an e-mail to askreentry@ncjrs.org, or call the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at (800) 421-6770 or (202) 307-1480.

National Institute of Justice (NIJ)
(Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice)

NIJ is the research, development, and evaluation agency of the U.S. Department of Justice and is solely dedicated to researching crime control and justice issues. NIJ provides objective, independent, non-partisan, evidence-based knowledge, and tools to meet the challenges of crime and justice, particularly at the State and local levels. NIJ is the primary Federal sponsor of research in crime and criminal justice and of evaluations of programs to reduce crime. NIJ emphasizes projects that best meet the needs of the criminal justice system and whose results can be put to practical use in the field.

For more information, contact NIJ at (202) 307-2942 or visit their Web site at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
(Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice)

OJJDP provides national leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent, treat, and control juvenile delinquency; improve the effectiveness and fairness of the juvenile justice system; address the problem of missing and exploited children; and contributes to developing the full potential of America's youth.

OJJDP provides funding to States, territories, localities, and private organizations through block grants and discretionary funding. Block funding, through regular formula grants and State Challenge and Prevention money, goes to states and territories. Discretionary funding is awarded through competitive peer review.

For more information about funding opportunities, contact OJJDP at (202) 202-307-5911 or visit their Web site at www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org.

Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants Program
(Administered by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice)

Through the JAIBG program, funds are provided as block grants to states that have implemented, or are considering implementation of legislation and/or programs promoting greater accountability in the juvenile justice system. Accountability in juvenile justice means assuring that as a result of their wrongdoing, juvenile offenders face individualized consequences that make them aware of and answerable for the loss, damage, or injury perpetrated upon the victim.

Applications for JAIBG funds are available through each state's designated JAIBG agency. Any local government (city, county, township or other political subdivision) or tribal government can apply through their designated state agency.

Development Services Group, Inc. (DSG), was competitively selected by OJJDP to manage the JAIBG national technical assistance effort. DSG operates the JAIBG National Training & Technical Assistance Alliance and can provide or arrange linkages with technical assistance, training, materials, or other sources of assistance. To make a request for training or technical assistance, contact DSG toll-free at 1-877-GO-JAIBG (46-52424) or visit their Web site at www.dsgonline.com/projects_jaibg.

Office of Justice Programs Anti-Terrorism Funding Sources
(Administered by the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice)

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) in the U.S. Department of Justice administers several grant programs to state and local agencies to address their anti-terrorism efforts.

OJP resources that can be used by state and local jurisdictions to prepare and respond to domestic terrorism are available primarily through four OJP components: the Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP), the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), and the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). In addition, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) collects and analyzes statistical data and provides financial and technical support to state governments in developing state capabilities in criminal justice statistics and data.

Additional information about OJP and its programs, including how to contact individual OJP agencies, is available on OJP's Web site at www.ojp.usdoj.gov.

Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP)
(Office for Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice)

The Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP) (formerly The Office for State & Local Domestic Preparedness) is the program office within the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for enhancing the capacity of state and local jurisdictions to respond to, and mitigate the consequences of incidents of domestic terrorism.

ODP's State and Local Domestic Preparedness Training and Technical Assistance Program provides direct training and technical assistance to state and local jurisdictions to enhance their capacity and preparedness to respond to domestic incidents.

For more information, contact the ODP Help Line at (800) 368-6498 or visit their Web site at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
(U.S. Department of Homeland Security)

FEMA has leadership responsibilities for the Nation's emergency management system. Local and state programs are the heart of the Nation's emergency management system, and most disasters are handled by local or state governments. When the devastation is especially serious and exceeds the capability and resources of local and state governments, states turn to the Federal government for help. FEMA supports state and local emergency management programs by funding emergency planning, training emergency managers and local officials, conducting large-scale tests and sponsoring programs that teach the public how to prepare for disasters.

For more information, contact FEMA at (202) 566-1600 or visit their Web site at www.fema.gov.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
(Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

SAMHSA is charged with improving the quality and availability of prevention, treatment, and rehabilitative services in order to reduce illness, death, disability, and costs to society resulting from substance abuse and mental illnesses. SAMHSA works in partnership with states, communities and private organizations to address the needs of people with substance abuse and mental illnesses as well as the community risk factors that contribute to these illnesses.

SAMHSA's Federal block grant funding enables states to maintain and enhance substance abuse and mental health services. Targeted Capacity Expansion grants give local communities resources they need to better identify and address emerging substance abuse and mental health service needs at their earliest possible stages. Across the country, SAMHSA-supported programs are implementing, testing and assessing new prevention and treatment methods in the community through Knowledge Development and Application Grants.

For more information, contact SAMHSA's Office of Policy & Program Coordination (OPPC) at (301) 443-4111 or visit their Web site at www.samhsa.gov.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
(U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development)

HUD works closely with communities and with faith-based organizations to meet the housing needs and related issues and funds initiatives in these areas.

For more information, contact HUD at (202) 708-1112 or visit the Web site at www.hud.gov.

U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)
(U.S. Department of Transportation)

The Department of Transportation annually funds approximately $32 billion in grants and cooperative agreements. Guidance for departmental formula and discretionary grant programs is contained in their authorizing legislation, program regulations, or departmental regulations. This guidance generally includes project management requirements and the limitations, if any, on spending authority. Departmental grants are generally made to state and local governments, with a lesser amount going to Indian tribes, universities, and nonprofit organizations. These grants are normally used to assist these entities in the planning, design, and construction of transportation improvements (e.g. highway, transit, and airport improvements). A limited amount of funding is available for research and development projects.

For more information, visit their Web site at www.dot.gov.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
(U.S. Department of Transportation)

NHTSA is responsible for reducing deaths, injuries, and economic losses resulting from motor vehicle crashes. This is accomplished by setting and enforcing safety performance standards for motor vehicles and motor vehicle equipment, and through grants to state and local governments to enable them to conduct effective local highway safety programs. Approximately $2.3 billion is authorized for highway safety grant programs for fiscal years 1998-2003.

For more information, contact NHTSA at their national toll-free number (888) 327-4236 or visit their Web site at www.nhtsa.dot.gov.

National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

(U.S. Department of Commerce)

NTIA's Office of Telecommunications and Information Applications (OTIA) assists state and local governments, educational and health care entities, libraries, public service agencies, and other groups in effectively using telecommunications and information technologies to better provide public services and advance other national goals. This is accomplished through its administration of the Technology Opportunities Program (TOP).

The Technology Opportunities Program (TOP), is a grant program that brings the benefits of digital network technologies to communities throughout the United States. TOP gives grants for model projects demonstrating innovative uses of network technologies.

TOP makes matching grants to state, local and tribal governments, health care providers, schools, libraries, police departments, and community-based non-profit organizations. TOP projects demonstrate how digital networks support lifelong learning for all Americans, help public safety officials protect the public, assist in the delivery of health care and public health services, and foster communication, resource-sharing, and economic development within rural and urban communities.

For more information, contact TOP at (202) 482-2048 or visit their Web site at www.ntia.doc.gov/top.

Private Grant Programs

Extensive research was conducted for this project at The Foundation Center in Washington, D.C., to identify private funding sources for criminal justice and victim-related initiatives. The research identified thousands of state and local foundations and other entities that support victim-related issues.

Information provided through The Foundation Center database included:

- Name of foundation and contact information.
- Members of Boards of Directors.
- Funding priorities.
- Funding cycles.
- Amount of money given annually and to whom (when available).
- Any restrictions/limitations, such as, state- or community-specific, non-acceptance of unsolicited requests, etc.
- Application information.

For more information, visit their Web site at www.fdncenter.org.

APPENDIX C. FIVE STATE STRATEGIC PLANNING INITIATIVES

Highlights of the Strategic Planning Process

Leaders in five states (Colorado, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Vermont) have shared their experiences of strategic planning and their ideas about the strategic planning process. The following is a synthesis of the key points and themes that emerged from interviews with these five states' leaders. These states' experiences may be helpful to you as you pursue strategic planning in your state or organization.

The following questions represent the key information state leaders provided:

- What were the driving forces behind the decision to develop a statewide strategic plan?
- What were your stated goals and objectives for the strategic planning effort?
- Who were the Stakeholders/Key Players involved in organizing and implementing the strategic plan?
- What were some of the processes used in your strategic planning?
- What were some major outcomes of the strategic planning process?
- What evaluation methods are you using for the strategic planning process?
- What were barriers to strategic planning?
- What were the benefits of the strategic planning process?

What were the driving forces behind the decision to develop a statewide strategic plan?

All five states began their strategic planning initiatives under the direction of a state lead agency. Funding and effective victim delivery service systems were the impetus for beginning strategic planning.

The primary driving force in four out of the five states was making funding decisions based on updated, accurate, objective information. In particular,

- In Pennsylvania, change occurred frequently, and they wanted to identify and anticipate positive and negative political factors and influences that affected crime victim services. They began planning to help build strong relationships among individuals and agencies, and to create networking.
- Ohio had recently passed its state-level victims' rights constitutional amendment, which enhanced a number of victims' core rights, including the rights to be informed, to submit victim impact statements, and to a speedy trial. Ohio saw this as the perfect time to organize victims' programs.
- Oregon wanted to make justified victim services funding decisions and to be held accountable for the use of these resources.

Whether a state was expecting significant increases in funding for victims or projecting funding deficits, all states expressed the need for enhanced decision-making about how to allocate limited resources.

Three of the five states, as a secondary desired result, expected to be better able to organize and coordinate state services for victims and survivors by building stronger relationships and networks among individuals and agencies.

What were your stated goals and objectives for the strategic planning effort?

Several states produced strong statements that reflected their goals for entering into the strategic planning process.

Colorado's goals and objectives

Colorado's strategic planning goal was ensuring that crime victims received effective services through well-coordinated programs. Two key project phases helped them work toward that goal:

1. Gathering information, research, and analysis.
2. Implementing identified necessary corrections.

In addition, Colorado developed the following comprehensive mission statement:

"To improve the lives of those affected by crime by:

- Providing increased resources to communities (through legislation, education, information and additional funding);
- Developing strategies for implementation of local priorities;
- Identifying and responding to the varied needs of crime victims throughout the state;
- Identifying and responding to local stakeholders;
- Incorporating the voice and experience of victims of crime in decisions that affect the field of victim services; and
- Supporting the prevention of crime."

Oregon's goals and objectives

Oregon, through the Department of Justice Crime Victims Assistance Section, selected Portland State University to create an Oregon Crime Victim Services Needs Assessment. The overall goals included having information to allow them to:

- Determine funding based on an objective, true need determination, instead of a subjective decision, and
- Evaluate the current delivery system.

More specifically, the final written report will address the following objectives:

- Identify significant gaps in services for crime victims.
- Identify underserved populations of victims, including information indicating the reasons for a lack of quality services to the target population; identify model service programs to improve services.
- Present contractors' recommendations, best practices, and service models along with priority needs for underserved populations, based on collected data.
- Assess how effectively crime victims' services are linked in order to meet the needs of victims. For example, are crisis lines linked with appropriate follow-up services such as shelters and mental health services?
- Identify obstacles preventing more effective partnerships and continuity of response.
- Evaluate the quality of existing services, as determined by victims' and providers' perception of services.
- Assess how Crime Victim's Rights are implemented in Oregon.

Vermont's goals and objectives

Vermont, having received a VS 2000 grant, used a multi-stage approach to strategic planning. They began by hiring a Victim Services 2000 Project Director. The Vermont Attorney General convened a 40-member Advisory Group to develop a project overview, discuss Victim Services 2000 grant requirements, obtain initial project implementation input and ideas, and discuss needs assessment. Vermont VS 2000 developed a two-tiered plan:

- **Tier 1:** Creating a statewide strategic planning mission, vision, and goals, with priorities developed in conjunction with local programs.
- **Tier 2:** Outreach to victims and service providers in three counties to identify their needs, and obtain input about how to close gaps in services.

Who were the Stakeholders/Key Players involved in organizing and implementing the strategic plan?

All states emphasized inclusivity in their planning processes. All states had similarly organized planning groups, but each with its own perspective.

Colorado's planning team

In Colorado, the planning group created a nine-member victim services statewide Planning Committee, with specific duties for each member. They deemed it critical to have all of the victim coalition Executive Directors involved, along with each victim funding board chair, and they left open the option to add to the team as needed.

Oregon's planning team

The Crime Victims Assistance Section of the Oregon Department of Justice staff manages their project with Portland State University, the contractor for the Oregon Crime Victim Services Needs assessment. Oregon also established a 13-person Victim Advisory Group, with crime victims and survivors as members. Many members also serve as victim service professionals. The Group meets quarterly with the project team, helps review all survey and focus group questions, and assists with developing victim-sensitive survey wording. Members also help identify and reach out to victims and develop the focus groups.

Ohio's planning team

To guide the planning process, Ohio used a 16-member, Attorney General-appointed board consisting of members from organizations directly involved with victim services. The board included members from the following agencies or constituencies:

- Victim/witness associations,
- Local victim service programs,
- Elderly victims,
- Domestic violence victims,
- Probation Departments or Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction Victim Services,
- County Prosecutors Associations,
- City Law Directors,

- County sheriffs,
- Township or city police departments,
- Common plan judges,
- Municipal or county court judges,
- Private citizens, and
- The House of Representatives.

Pennsylvania's planning team
Pennsylvania's governor appointed a 15-member Victims' Services Advisory Committee (VSAC) to lead the planning process. It included representatives from:

- Statewide coalitions,
- Prosecutor based Victim/witness coordinators,
- Juvenile justice based victim/witness coordinators,
- District Attorneys,
- Department of Aging,
- The Department of Public Welfare,
- County commissioners,
- State police,
- Children's victim services,
- The Department of Corrections,
- Victim Advocate groups,
- The judicial system, and
- Victims/survivors.

What were some of the processes used in your strategic planning?

Oregon and Colorado contracted with research-based institutions to direct their planning efforts. Vermont hired a professional facilitator to guide the strategic planning process including its meetings and Pennsylvania used a consultant to conduct focus groups. All states conducted a form of a statewide needs assessment, primarily to assess service gaps.

The most frequently cited data collection methods used were:

- Focus groups,
- Written victim service providers surveys,
- Telephone surveys of victims,
- Client satisfaction surveys,
- Oral interviews, and
- Contractors and researchers reviewing and organizing current data.

Colorado's planning processes

In Colorado, strategic planners created four committees to establish victim service priorities complete with measurable goals and action steps with timelines. They labeled the committees:

- State and Local Funding Boards Committee.
- Law Enforcement, District Attorney, Courts, and Post-conviction Issues Committee.
- Evaluation of Victim Services Committee.
- Evaluation of Existing Funding Sources Committee.

Ohio's planning processes

Ohio's strategic planning process involves board meetings twice a year to make funding recommendations to the Attorney General. Ohio also has an interagency advisory committee that meets quarterly to discuss emerging issues or concerns, and assists with legislative changes that directly benefit crime victims. The committee includes representatives from the state agencies that administer victim grant funds:

- Ohio Department of Criminal Justice Services (Byrne and VAWA).
- Department of Health (state funding).

- Department of Jobs and Family Services (Family Violence Prevention funds).
- Office of the Attorney General (VOCA).

The committee also includes agencies that work with victims, such as the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, Ohio Department of Youth Services, and statewide coalitions.

What were some major outcomes of the strategic planning process?

Colorado's major outcomes

Colorado's funding priorities reflected the most significant change after the strategic planning process's research portion. Due to needs identified through the focus groups and surveys, the Planning Committee realized it needed new sources of victim services funding, and sought creative alternatives, such as using Housing and Urban Development (HUD) money for transitional housing. They also found that they needed to regulate collection rates for local victim assistance programs' victim compensation surcharges due to inconsistent ordering by judges. Additionally, the program resulted in training for judges, law enforcement personnel, and district attorneys.

Ohio's major outcomes

Due to increased publicity, and a proven need, Ohio found victim assistance programs garnering additional funding sources such as private sources, fund-raisers, and county commissioner support. Program support grew through both the community and financial sectors.

Oregon's major outcomes

While Oregon's state-wide needs assessment project continues to evolve, the information contributes to their ongoing strategic plan development. Their findings will also help develop legislative agendas and impact funding requests and allocation.

In the year following the project, CVAS plans to present information and findings at numerous statewide conferences, such as those for law enforcement, district attorneys, victim assistance, domestic violence workers, and child abuse workers. In addition, CVAS hopes to promote local level action planning based upon the information presented, including summaries of victims' needs by type of crime, and tools to help local victim service providers access more funding.

Pennsylvania's major outcomes

Pennsylvania's outcomes include the following:

- Commonwealth-wide committee structure development and implementation.
- Letters providing feedback to participants after planning process completion.
- Conference workshops, such as an annual research/evaluation conference.
- Presentations to state and local victim services coalition leaders and members.

In addition, Pennsylvania also established committees to address a wide range of victims' needs, with new committees created as need occurred. This structure allowed each committee to develop and implement committee-specific goals and objectives. Pennsylvania is also looking at outcome-based tools for victim service programs and victim service use evaluations.

Vermont's major outcomes

Vermont's outcomes included the following:

- Identifying underserved victim populations, such as victims with disabilities, and developing new services to meet their needs.
- Receiving significant feedback about stated needs from respondents, with the top stated need listed as more training.
- Creating a Victim/Survivor of Crime Council, which focused on translating system language and processes so that they could be easily understood by victims and survivors.

What evaluation methods are you using for the strategic planning process?

Colorado's evaluation methods

Colorado established a Victim Services Committee evaluation, but did not measure methodology or the planning process itself. Program participants engaged in informal discussions of problems and solutions.

Ohio's evaluation methods

In Ohio, CVA Office program specialists conduct annual site visits to funded programs, where they interview area staff and allied professionals to ensure that service coordination occurs. Each funded program also provides annual performance reports that identify key issues and problems. In addition, the CVA closely monitors funded programs' financial obligations.

Oregon's evaluation methods

Oregon evaluates its project continually. PSU meets monthly with CVAS and provides updates; the Victim Advisory Committee meets quarterly. In addition, PSU submits any needs assessment processes that include direct contact with crime victims to their Human Subjects Committee. This committee approves methodology prior to its use. CVAS staff also facilitates or attends certain public and Victim Advisory Council meetings to remain updated on developments outside of formal progress meetings.

Pennsylvania's evaluation methods

Pennsylvania evaluates its planning process through the VOCA application process, surveys of victim service providers, and focus groups. Committees meet consistently to evaluate the planning process. In addition, Pennsylvania conducted a statewide telephone survey of the general public to determine public knowledge about the existence of victim services and how to access them. PCCD also funded a follow-up evaluation study to be conducted by Millersville University on the use and effectiveness of victim services.

Vermont's evaluation methods

An evaluation survey was sent to all participants in the Vermont process, and the University of Vermont School of Social Work conducted additional evaluations through Victim Access Project participant interviews. The Office for Victims of Crime also contracted with Caliber to evaluate the project.

What were barriers to strategic planning?

This list represents all barriers mentioned during the interviews.

- Lack of funding.
- Need for participation by agency and department heads—the movers and shakers—rather than assigned representatives.
- Confusion as to which participants should be included in the project.
- Lack of a designated support staff.
- Difficulty reaching underserved victim groups for identification.
- Difficulty obtaining public input; minimal public attendance at forums.
- Difficulties working with some county prosecutors who object to victim assistance programs. This problem was solved by including the state prosecutors' association in the advisory board and conducting a training session at their annual meeting.
- Distributing funding fairly, as some victim advocate groups became competitive over funding.
- Finding unbiased and objective consultants without links to a specific victim services or allied professional group but who were also familiar with the underlying concepts of victim services.
- Remaining gaps in services that need to be identified and funded.
- Despite numerous training opportunities for victim service professionals, there is an on-going need for supplemental professional development.
- No statewide general victim services network.

What were the benefits of the strategic planning process?

All states reported many more benefits than barriers. They were excited about the progress made and the potential for the future.

Vermont's benefits from strategic planning

Vermont listed the following results from their strategic planning efforts. Many of these ideas were also incorporated into other states' reports.

- The strategic planning process identified the need for standards and for the provision of victim services, which are currently under development.
- The Department of Corrections built a closer relationship with its victim services.
- Vermont created new victim assistance positions.

- The DOC funded five Victim Service Coordinator positions out of its own budget, showing agency support and statewide commitment.
- The state established the Vermont Victim Assistance Academy.
- Vermont developed and implemented new training programs for members of the faith community, law enforcement, and crime victims with disabilities.
- Victim services integrated and cooperated.
- The state created a victim services resource directory, and cross-trained project members.
- The planning team continued their strategic planning process to form an all-advocate statewide conference.
- Project members created a brochure about victims' rights and services, including contact information, and offered a summary of victim assistance in Vermont.
- VS 2000 published a quarterly newsletter that highlighted victim services across the state.

Other states' benefits from strategic planning

The other four states cited many additional benefits. Some of these benefits were that:

- Service agencies cooperated to solve problems.
- States reached underserved victims, including victims of color, homicide family survivors, victims of drunk-driving accidents, and victims who came through the children's advocacy center.
- Statewide victim service organizations and the attorney general's office provided increased training, including interactive workshops, to victim service providers, social workers, and criminal justice officials. These entities gained more respect and knowledge regarding the role each plays in serving victims.
- Key players involved in the planning process took the information and recommendations back to their respective organizations for review and implementation. As a result, these organizations gained a new understanding and appreciation of victims, and their own roles in victim services.

- Funding coordination for victim assistance programs was improved, while victim services funding distribution decisions were based on current data and objective criteria.
- States identified best practices to be conducted statewide.
- Future victim services programs will be more accessible.
- The experience of working with local elected officials was enriching.
- States disseminated more information about victim services.
- Statewide multi-jurisdictional groups increased their dialogue and cooperation.
- New legislation granting victim services programs additional funding is anticipated.
- Established more court-based programs not only in felony court but municipal and juvenile courts, increasing victims' trust in the criminal justice system.
- Identified gaps in service delivery that need to be filled, including training needs.
- Programs continually build their capacity with grant writing and administration workshops.

Who contributed to this synthesis?

OVC thanks the following victim assistance leaders for their significant time and resource contribution to this project and for their willingness to share their insights and strategic planning tools.

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Judy Rex
Jac Patrissi
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GLOSSARY OF STRATEGIC PLANNING TERMS

Action plan	A detailed description of the strategies and steps used to implement a strategic plan.
Baseline	Base level of previous or current performance that can be used to set improvement goals and provide a basis for assessing future progress.
Benchmarking	Gathering information about model efforts or best practices by other organizations engaged in similar endeavors to help establish project targets and goals.
Buy-in	Obtaining agreement from key stakeholders that the proposed plan is acceptable.
Capacity building	The development of an organization's core skills and capabilities, such as leadership, management, finance and fund-raising, programs and evaluation, in order to build the organization's effectiveness and sustainability. The process of assisting an individual or group to identify and address issues and gain the insights, knowledge, and experience needed to solve problems and implement change. Capacity building is facilitated through the provision of technical support activities, including coaching, training, specific technical assistance, and resource networking.
Capital	Assets that are available for on-going business needs to produce income.
Capital improvement	Addition to an organization's fixed assets. Capital improvement is the result from an outlay of funds over a specific and finite period of time that results in a permanent addition to an organization's fixed assets.
Capital plan	A plan for maintaining assets to continue programs.
Case study	A study containing qualitative data (such as observations and information drawn from interviews) about one subject. These studies are typically based on what is termed anecdotal evidence. A series of case studies can provide useful information that something of significance is happening that may merit further study.

Client	Anyone whose interests are served by an organization, or who receives or uses an organization's resources or services. Clients can be internal to an organization, for example one department may be the client of another department, or external to the organization.
Collaboration	To work together sharing ideas and resources, especially in a joint intellectual effort.
Compensation	Money or another item of value given or received as payment or reparation for a service or loss.
Constituency	A group served by an organization or institution; a clientele.
Corporation	A group of individuals legally empowered to transact business as one body.
Cost-benefit analysis	A management tool that involves calculating or estimating the monetary costs and potential benefits of a proposed course of action.
Crosswalk	A research tool used to guide analysis and reporting, particularly when there are multiple data sources. A crosswalk does not present any of the findings or results, just the types of information that has been gathered from the different data sources.
Cultural competence	A set of values, behaviors, attitudes, and practices which enable people to work effectively across racial/ethnic and cultural lines.
Demographics	The characteristics of human populations and population segments, especially when used to identify consumer markets.
Descriptive statistics	Numbers that describe or summarize information about a sample. Three basic descriptive statistics (generally known as measures of central tendencies), are the mode, median, and mean. The mode is the number, item, score or other value that occurs most often. It is the most frequent occurrence in the sample. The median is the middle or midpoint of a distribution. Therefore, it is the number, item, score, or other

	value that has 50 percent of the others above and 50 percent of the values below it. The mean, perhaps the most often-used measure of central tendency, is the average number, item, score, or other value in the distribution.
Diversity	Difference, distinctness, variety.
Dynamic information	Information that is characterized by continuous change, activity, or progress.
Empowerment evaluation	An evaluation approach that includes collaborative and training functions within a goal of the empowerment of management and program staff to continuously assure quality of services.
Evaluation	A study to determine the extent to which a program or project reached its goals.
External Assessment	Analysis of the elements or forces that affect the environment in which an organization functions—also called an "environmental scan."
Facilitator	A person who makes it easier for other people to accomplish objectives by offering advice and assistance in solving problems, either with technical issues or with other people.
Feasibility	Capable of being accomplished or brought about; possible.
Federal mandates	Any provision in a bill or joint resolution before Congress or in a proposed or final Federal regulation that would impose a duty that is enforceable by administrative, civil, or criminal penalty or by injunction (other than a condition of the bill or joint resolution or implementing regulation).
Fiscal	Related to finance or finances.
Focus group	A qualitative research process designed to elicit opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions from individuals to gain insights and information about a specific topic.
Gap analysis	The identification of the difference between the desired and current state.

Goal	A desired end result.
Grant	A giving of funds for a specific purpose.
Impact evaluation	Evaluations that look specifically at whether or not the program achieved its goals and had its intended effect. An outcome or impact evaluation measures the final results of a program or initiative. (See also, Outcome Evaluation).
Inclusivity	Broadness in orientation or scope (frequently used in terms of broadness of culture and ethnicity).
Inputs	The "nouns" of projects; the resources that are used to make the project happen (such as people and equipment).
Instrument	Research tool used to assess variables during an evaluation. Examples include surveys, questionnaires, telephone interview protocols, executive interview protocols, or focus group protocols.
Internal assessment	Analysis of an organization's position, performance, problems, and potential.
Interview	A research process that obtains structured information from an individual or group of individuals, usually based upon an established set of questions and/or probes.
Jurisdiction	The limits or territory within which authority may be exercised.
Legislation	A proposed or enacted law or group of laws.
Litmus test	A test that uses a single key indicator to prompt a decision.
Mission statement	A brief, comprehensive statement of purpose of an agency or program.
Monitoring	Assessing the inputs and activities of a project.
Needs assessment	A structured process to determine the needs of a designated survey field, i.e., individuals, an agency, a system, etc.

Objectives	Specific and measurable targets for accomplishing goals.
Operating costs	The day-to-day expenses incurred in running an organization or project, as opposed to costs associated with production.
Operational definitions	Definitions for terms and research variables specific to one program or project; a definition used within a program or project. Research variables must be clearly defined. For example, if the term "recidivism" is being used in a study, it should be defined, such as "committing another criminal or juvenile offense." How these variables are measured has a great impact on the success of the study. For example, is "committing another offense" measured by arrest data, conviction data, or interviews that may identify additional violations?
Outcomes	The long-term end goals that are influenced by the project, but that usually have other influences affecting them as well. Outcomes reflect the actual results achieved, as well as the impact or benefit, of a program.
Outcome evaluation	Evaluations that look specifically at whether or not the program achieved its goals and had its intended effect. What were the "outcomes" of this program? An outcome or impact evaluation measures the final results of a program or initiative (see also, Impact Evaluation).
Output	A type of performance measure that focuses on the level of activity in a particular program.
Performance measures	Tools or information used to measure results and ensure accountability.
Pilot study	A "scaled down" version of a major effort conducted before a larger study to test feasibility. For example, a pilot test might test proposed measurement instruments, hone the research methodology, or see if there is a preliminary basis for supporting the hypothesis.
Proactive	Acting in advance to deal with an expected difficulty.

Process evaluation Investigates issues regarding the program's current operations or the implementation of new initiatives. Questions most often focus on what the program does, who does it, and how it is done.

Project logic A model that arrays the resources, activities and goals of a project to allow the relationships to be clearly viewed and understood.

Qualitative research Qualitative research is conducted in a more interpretive and contextual fashion and goes beyond the "facts and figures" gathered by objective measures. Qualitative research attempts to measure the complexity of a given topic and often involves narrative responses to questions, rather than categorical responses.

Quantitative research Quantitative studies rely upon statistics and measures that can be expressed numerically. In order to make valid inferences from quantitative research, certain rules need to be followed in terms of the research design and sampling methods.

Questionnaire Written documents that contain a series of questions that are answered by respondents. Typically some form of objective response is required, such as "true-false" or numerical scales (for example, "1 to 5" rankings).

Quasi-experimental research design These research designs are very typical in field research and program evaluations where, unlike true experimental designs, research subjects cannot be randomly assigned to their respective grouping in the study (for actual or ethical reasons).

Research questions Questions that ask what variables can and will be manipulated and studied. For example, do restraining orders issued on stalkers reduce violence to victims? Does having a restraining order, the independent variable, result in a reduced likelihood of the stalker hurting the victim, the dependent variable? A research design is based on research questions.

Resource allocation	The determination and allotment of resources or assets necessary to carry out strategies and achieve objectives, within a priority framework.
Resource plan	Part of the definition statement stating how the program will be resource loaded and what supporting services, infrastructure, and third party services are required. Also, a component of the program definition statement stating how the program will be resourced, and specifying what supporting services, infrastructure and third party services are required.
Restitution	The act of restoring to the rightful owner something that has been taken away, lost, or surrendered.
Results	The "outputs" of the activities of a project, directly measurable and within the control and influence of the project.
Request for Proposal (RFP)	A formal invitation containing a scope of work which seeks a formal response (proposal) describing both methodology and compensation to form the basis of a contract. An RFP is prepared by the customer to solicit proposals from potential providers.
Sample	Some smaller part of a larger population that is being studied. One of the key aspects of a sample is whether it is truly representative of the larger population. To be representative, the methods of drawing the sample are critical.
Service delivery	The method used to provide services to a client.
Stakeholder	Any person or group with a vested interest in the outcome of a project or plan.
Survey	A study where data are collected by way of questionnaires or interviews. Surveys can either be observational, if no intervention or treatment occurred, or can be used as pre-test and post-test measures before and after some intervention or treatment.

Strategic plan	A practical, action-oriented guide based on an examination of internal and external factors that directs goal-setting and resource allocation to achieve meaningful results over time.
SWOT analysis	An abbreviation used to denote analysis of an organization's internal Strengths and Weaknesses and external Opportunities and Threats. Also called an "internal/external assessment."
Survey instrument	The research tool used to conduct a survey-for example, a mailed questionnaire, a telephone script, etc.
Tracking systems	Systems set up to monitor progress, compile management information, and keep goals on track.
Underserved populations	Groups identified as potential clients who are not receiving the full extent of services an organization provides, often because of a history of exclusion due to race or ethnicity.
Unserved populations	Groups identified as potential clients who are not receiving any services an organization provides, often because of a history of exclusion due to race or ethnicity.
Values statement	A narrative description that outlines an organization's beliefs and guiding principles.
Vision statement	A narrative description of a future state to help keep project teams focused. A concise statement of what needs to change, typically the promoter, sponsor, or leader's "agenda." A compelling, conceptual image of the desired future.

Strategic Planning Toolkit: Needs Assessment Questionnaire

This Needs Assessment Questionnaire is a self-assessment tool that is designed to help you determine where your organization/agency is situated along the strategic planning continuum. This Questionnaire is a companion document to the Strategic Planning Toolkit and should be completed prior to reviewing the Toolkit. Once you have completed the Questionnaire, you will be able to identify those sections of the Toolkit that are most helpful and essential in your efforts to develop a strategic plan. This Questionnaire will also help you determine if this Strategic Planning Toolkit can assist your organization/agency or if more intensive technical assistance is required.

Using the scale below, please circle the number that best corresponds to your answer.

	No, not at all		Somewhat		Yes, definitely
1. Have you ever received training in strategic planning?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Have you ever been involved in strategic planning?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Do you currently have a strategic planning group?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Can you identify the key stakeholders that need to be included in the planning group?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Can you identify the individual interests of each key stakeholder?	1	2	3	4	5
6. Do you have buy-in from the stakeholders?	1	2	3	4	5
7. Is there a foundation of trust among stakeholders?	1	2	3	4	5
8. Do you know how to incorporate cultural competence in your planning process?	1	2	3	4	5
9. Do you have active, committed leadership for the planning process?	1	2	3	4	5
10. Can you identify who your clients are (i.e., all the groups of people who receive or use the resources and services provided by the your organization)?	1	2	3	4	5
11. Have you ever obtained feedback from clients and stakeholders?	1	2	3	4	5
12. Do you know how to incorporate client and stakeholder feedback into the planning process?	1	2	3	4	5
Add up the scores for Questions 1 – 12, and record it in the space provided.	**Subtotal A:**				
13. Have you ever used a structured method to gather information about your organization?	1	2	3	4	5
14. Are you familiar with any assessment models that provide a structured approach to gathering information?	1	2	3	4	5
15. Are you familiar with data collection tools that you can use in planning?					

	No, not at all		Somewhat		Yes, definitely
16. Do you know how to collect and use data to help you in the planning process?	1	2	3	4	5
17. Have you ever conducted a formal needs assessment?	1	2	3	4	5
18. Have you ever conducted a formal evaluation of the services your organization provides?	1	2	3	4	5
Add up the scores for Questions 13 - 18, and record it in the space provided.	**Subtotal B:**				
19. Has your organization developed a values statement?	1	2	3	4	5
20. Has your organization developed a vision statement?	1	2	3	4	5
21. Has your organization developed a mission statement?	1	2	3	4	5
22. Has your organization developed clear goals?	1	2	3	4	5
23. Has your organization developed specific, measurable objectives?	1	2	3	4	5
24. Has your organization prioritized the stated goals and objectives?	1	2	3	4	5
25. Do you know how to use the writing process of the plan to obtain buy-in from stakeholders?	1	2	3	4	5
Add up the scores for Questions 19 - 25, and record it in the space provided.	**Subtotal C:**				
26. Has your organization developed an action plan?	1	2	3	4	5
27. Has your organization developed a logic model?	1	2	3	4	5
28. Does your action plan define clear and achievable actions that support your objectives?	1	2	3	4	5
29. Does your action plan assign roles and responsibilities for each action?	1	2	3	4	5
30. Does your action plan set a timeline for each action?	1	2	3	4	5
31. Has your organization determined the resources needed to support the action plan?	1	2	3	4	5
32. Can you identify grant funding sources?	1	2	3	4	5
33. Can you identify successful grant-seeking strategies?	1	2	3	4	5
Add up the scores for Questions 26 - 33, and record it in the space provided.	**Subtotal D:**				
34. Can you identify the broader group of stakeholders that your organization regularly deals with?	1	2	3	4	5
35. Can you identify the different information needs of each group of stakeholders?	1	2	3	4	5
36. Can you identify the best method for communicating with each stakeholder group?	1	2	3	4	5
37. Has your organization developed a plan of communication with stakeholders?	1	2	3	4	5
Add up the scores for Questions 34 - 37, and record it in the space provided.	**Subtotal E:**				

	No, not at all		Somewhat		Yes, definitely
38. Has your organization developed goals for evaluation?	1	2	3	4	5
39. Has your organization determined who should conduct the evaluation?	1	2	3	4	5
40. Can you identify the different types of evaluations that can be used to assess strategic plan progress?	1	2	3	4	5
41. Has your organization determined the type of evaluation to conduct?	1	2	3	4	5
42. Has your organization written a structured plan for evaluation?	1	2	3	4	5
43. Has your organization established performance measures?	1	2	3	4	5
44. Does your organization track performance measures for evaluation purposes?	1	2	3	4	5
45. Does your organization know how to analyze and report evaluation results?	1	2	3	4	5
Add up the scores for Questions 38 - 45, and record it in the space provided.	**Subtotal F:**				
Add up Subtotals A-F, and record the TOTAL in the space provided.	**TOTAL:**				

Strategic Planning Toolkit: Needs Assessment Questionnaire Scoring Sheet

The following scoring sheet is intended to assist you in navigating through the Strategic Planning Toolkit. With your Needs Assessment Questionnaire in hand, write your subtotal score in the space provided on the scoring sheet. Next, for each subtotal, identify your score on the scoring sheet and review the corresponding recommendation. It is important to note that if you score a 1 on any question, you should review the corresponding information in the Strategic Planning Toolkit. The table of contents can help you quickly identify the appropriate section or subsection to review. Additionally, if your total score for the Needs Assessment Questionnaire is less than 90, you may need more assistance than what is provided in the Strategic Planning Toolkit. To obtain information on other assistance that may be available to you, contact OVC TTAC at 1-866-OVC-TTAC.

1. **Subtotal A: Questions 1 – 12**
   Score: ___________

   - If you scored 24 or less, you need to review Section 1.
   - If you scored 25 – 36, we strongly recommend reviewing Section 1.
   - If you scored 37 – 48, you may want to review Section 1.
   - If you scored 49 or above, Section 1 is optional reading.

2. **Subtotal B: Questions 13 – 18**
   Score: ___________

   - If you scored 12 or less, you need to review Section 2.
   - If you scored 13 – 18, we strongly recommend reviewing Section 2.
   - If you scored 19 – 24, you may want to review Section 2.
   - If you scored 25 or above, Section 2 is optional reading.

3. **Subtotal C: Questions 19 – 25**
   Score: ___________

   - If you scored 14 or less, you need to review Section 3.
   - If you scored 15 – 21, we strongly recommend review Section 3.
   - If you scored 22 – 28, you may want to review Section 3.
   - If you scored 29 or above, Section 3 is optional reading.

4. **Subtotal D: Questions 26 – 33**
   Score: ___________

   - If you scored 16 or less, you need to review Section 4.
   - If you scored 17 – 24, we strongly recommend review Section 4.
   - If you scored 25 – 32, you may want to review Section 4.
   - If you scored 33 or above, Section 4 is optional reading.

5. **Subtotal E: Questions 34 – 37**
   Score: ___________

   - If you scored 8 or less, you need to review Section 5.
   - If you scored 9 – 12, we strongly recommend review Section 5.
   - If you scored 13 – 16, you may want to review Section 5.
   - If you scored 17 or above, Section 5 is optional reading.

6. **Subtotal F: Subtotal Questions 38 – 45:**
   Score: ___________

   - If you scored 16 or less, you need to review Section 6.
   - If you scored 17 – 24, we strongly recommend review Section 6.
   - If you scored 25 – 32, you may want to review Section 6.
   - If you scored 33 or above, Section 6 is optional reading.