

# Action Planner

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Steps for Developing a Comprehensive  
Campus Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program

PROMISING  
PRACTICES

CAMPUS  
ALCOHOL  
STRATEGIES

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This Action Planner outlines a sequence of strategies designed to help campuses better address issues, questions, and problems related to alcohol and its use. The process begins with establishing a Task Force and concludes with institutionalization; it's a long-term ongoing process that evolves over time. Thus, program planners and those guiding the strategic planning processes have "a job that is never done." Feedback is continuous through loops of services, information, and resources, with resulting refinement of the processes, programs, and policies.

While many look for a simple solution to address problems associated with alcohol, no simple solution is forthcoming. The complexities surrounding alcohol-related problems are clear; similarly, the strategies toward providing solutions are complex. It is the premise of this resource that the ultimate solution lies in the process of addressing this issue in an organized way. This is not a simple process; it requires a long-term view and a significant amount of hard work by many individuals and groups on campus.

Ultimately, if change is desired, difficult decisions need to be made and heartfelt attention needs to be given. Leadership is essential to make a difference; strategies do exist and the steps for movement and progress are presented in this resource. A well conceived, comprehensive alcohol abuse prevention program is a major undertaking, and one which requires substantive commitment to its planning, preparation, implementation, and sustenance.

College drinking is an issue of concern for campus communities throughout the U.S.A.; administrators, faculty and staff, students, and parents all acknowledge that action is needed. What that action is and who does it depends on the perception of the problem. Campus strategies to prevent alcohol-related problems, as well as to respond to them, have been increasingly implemented by colleges and universities over the past three decades. However, single one-shot solutions are not able to effectively deal with the breadth and depth of problems associated with alcohol misuse. A comprehensive long-term perspective to address alcohol problems on campus is needed. Implementation of an integrated approach requires “shared responsibility” by the individuals and groups on campus.

### **Groups and Individuals:**

- Campus Leadership
- Coordinator
- Health and Counseling
- Student Life
- Police and Security
- Faculty
- Residence Life

Many campuses are puzzled about how to proceed; some report that the task of planning an alcohol prevention initiative is so daunting that they don't know where to start; others acknowledge the importance of giving priority to immediate needs such as behavioral concerns and policy violations. Still others state a desire for proven strategies prior to investing resources, personnel, and time in their campus' efforts. Whether or not a campus has a long standing or relatively new programmatic effort, developing a long-term plan remains elusive to many; it is critical that campuses experience a renewed impetus to re-think and organize campus-based strategies. The goal of this Action Planner is to assist campus and community leaders to develop and implement campus alcohol strategies that are a part of a long-term and well-planned comprehensive approach.

**Why a resource of this nature is needed** Though colleges and universities have been undertaking a wide range of efforts for many years, heavy use of alcohol and problems related to alcohol misuse have continued with little change; “successes” are often tenuous at best and relatively short lived. The national solicitations that resulted in *Promising Practices: Campus Alcohol Strategies* found that campuses currently lack:

- specific goals,
- clarity of messages, and
- an organized plan for program design and implementation.

Coordinated, long-term efforts hold the best possibilities for making a permanent and meaningful difference in alcohol misuse and related problems. The Action Planner attempts to contribute to reducing alcohol-related problems among college and university students by outlining a process that will result in the institutionalization of a comprehensive alcohol abuse prevention program.

**Benefits of this resource** What each person who reads this text will be able to implement will vary according to his/her position and circumstances. A president may be able to orchestrate the development and implementation of a comprehensive campus-based program, a campus alcohol abuse prevention coordinator may work at connecting with other interested parties both on and off campus, and a student group may continue to provide alcohol awareness days. Though the outcomes differ, it is important to acknowledge that each person/group is providing a service.

The Action Planner has been designed to help campus leaders build institution-wide commitment, to identify specify strategies for key individuals with campus influence and/or interest, and to ultimately institutionalize the campus effort. We strongly advocate action and provide specific steps and tools to achieve this model.

**The Action Planner's Eight-Step Model:**



Building from the establishment of a campus-wide Task Force (Step 1), the guiding principles are determined (Step 2); goals are then set to reflect the current and future of the alcohol abuse prevention program (Step 3); and needs are clarified and resources are assessed (Step 4). Campus leaders then move to prioritize action (Step 5) and clearly articulate and communicate the themes and messages to the campus community (Step 6). Coordination of these efforts (Step 7) sets the stage for the ultimate goal of institutionalizing the campus program (Step 8). Clearly, each of these steps, while somewhat sequential in nature, are accomplished over time, evolve due to local situations, and need to be continuously refined. The process of building and ultimately institutionalizing the program requires a coordinated approach and campus-based effort.

The Action Planner presents each of the elements with respect to four dimensions: what the step is; why it is important; how it should be accomplished; and who should be involved. The priority emphasis for each of these elements is the "how;" therefore, worksheets for use on individual campuses are provided in these sections. Implementation of the eight steps of the process will assist colleges and universities develop locally appropriate strategies in support of their plan.

*A Task Force serves as a critical foundation for organizing a campus' alcohol abuse prevention effort. Not only does this help in the efficiency of campus efforts, but it also engages key stakeholders in the process.*

**Definition of a Task Force** A Task Force formally meets on a regular basis to address alcohol use and related problems on campus; it may be called a policy group, a presidential commission, an advisory panel, or a “blue ribbon” committee. Individual members may be appointed and have specific terms of service; others may be identified by the nature of their position, and others may volunteer to serve because of their interest. The Task Force provides advice and assistance to the leadership in conceptualizing, organizing, and implementing the campus effort. The Task Force may also form formal subcommittees, which are responsible for a specific topic (e.g., underage drinking on campus) or informal subcommittees, which can be made up of other members of the campus community. Both types of subcommittees help to move the process along:

- **Formal subcommittees** gather information on specific topics and report their findings to the Task Force as a whole; the reports are often used as part of the formal document, which is presented to campus leadership.
- **Informal subcommittees** engage individuals and groups on campus that have positions that need to be heard by the Task Force; information from the informal subcommittees provides perspective to the committee as a whole and also motivates the members of the informal subcommittee to buy into the process.

**Role of the Task Force** A resolution in the 1999 Higher Education Amendment called upon all institutions of higher education in the U.S.A. to appoint a Task Force to help to reduce problems associated with alcohol on campus. By so doing, the U.S. Congress acknowledged the need for colleges and universities to establish a Task Force as the foundation to address this issue.

The Task Force is essential to develop and implement a meaningful, long-term and comprehensive campus initiative to address alcohol problems. The range of tasks and responsibilities needed for the campus effort demonstrates the need for “shared responsibility.” Policy development, enforcement, counseling, problem identification and referral, prevention, administration, needs assessment and evaluation, training, public presentation, staff consultation, research, media relations, and more, require a team approach. Since the ultimate aim is institutionalizing

the campus initiative, ownership must be held by the numerous individuals and offices representing the variety of constituencies on campus.

**Members of the Task Force** As with all campus committees, leadership is essential. The Chair of the Task Force should be designated by campus leadership; though the Chair doesn't have to be the highest ranking person on the committee, the person has to have enough clout to assure that the group functions. Of course it's also helpful if the Chair is connected to many of the groups on campus and viewed positively. Membership on the Task Force should include individuals and organizations that are representative of the campus.

Though

a range of constituencies is important for inclusion in the group, it is also necessary that the size of the group be functional. A Task Force of thirty members might have difficulty meeting regularly; if that is the case, subcommittees should be formed early. Since it is easy for a group to lose momentum, care needs to be taken to charge the subgroups with a task and designate a reporting date. In this way, the Task Force as a whole feels that they are moving forward toward fulfilling their charge.

**Members of the Task Force will be from a range of campus and community offices and agencies, including but not limited to:**

- r upper level administration
- r academic affairs
- r student services
- r health and counseling
- r police and security
- r faculty
- r student government
- r fraternities and sororities
- r judicial affairs
- r fraternity and sorority affairs
- r student activities
- r sports teams
- r alumni
- r residence halls
- r athletics
- r students
- r community agencies
- r other constituencies

**Note:** Students must be well represented on the Task Force; in addition to those listed above, student representation should be reflective of the overall student body. Alumni representation is important as is representation of parents of the present students; the views of these groups will add to the process. In addition, community members have an important role to play and may include local government, law enforcement, owners of retail establishments, and other social services.

**Implementing the Task Force** Utilizing the expertise, perspectives, authority, and access held by the variety of members, the Task Force has a wide range of roles. Responsibilities should be clearly specified at the beginning of the planning process and reviewed on a periodic basis; specific activities of the subcommittees and Task Force as a whole need to be determined and assigned dates for completion.

**The Task Force can be used to:**

- r *Identify existing efforts and programs on campus.* This acknowledges that programs have been developed and provides a sense of reality to the campus.
- r *Develop an overall vision and plan.* This includes an understanding of campus needs, local situations, the desired campus environment, and issues facing students.
- r *Develop campus policies and institute continual update and review.* This requires the broad-based representation of the Task Force.
- r *Use their influence as a group to gain support for policies and strategies.* This may assist change efforts by using the power of the group.
- r *Monitor and review the campus efforts.* This would be accomplished based on changes in student needs, as well as a review of evaluation data regarding the effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and effort involved in campus strategies.
- r *Serve as a clearinghouse for ideas for campus strategies and implementation.* The Task Force members, with their knowledge of research and other strategies nationwide, may suggest strategies to implement or emphasize.
- r *Provide contacts to the faculty, community, and other resources.* Based on their relationships with groups and individuals on campus, Task Force members may personally solicit involvement or support from campus entities.
- r *Implement campus strategies as individuals or as subgroups.* The Task Force can motivate the implementation of campus strategies such as assessment and evaluation.

The reporting relationship and placement of the Task Force within the institution are critical. To achieve the ultimate aim of institutionalization, it is important that the Task Force report to as high a level as possible in campus leadership, such as the president or a senior vice president.

Other critical issues include a clear specification of the Task Force's mission or assignment, as well as a defined scope of responsibility. The Task Force needs to meet on a specified and agreed upon schedule; monthly meetings usually enable the Task Force to achieve the various functions that are identified for it. Once institutionalization has been achieved, the Task Force can schedule fewer meetings and use the time together to review progress. Finally, there should be significant acknowledgment of participation on the Task Force, as it is a very time-consuming endeavor.

*Determining the guiding principles is critical for the campus alcohol abuse prevention initiatives, as it is the foundation of the program's goals and strategies.*

**Clarity of Terminology** Central to determining the guiding principles is clarity of terminology. It is important to distinguish between the nonuse of alcohol and the various types of alcohol consumption, including use, misuse, problems related to use, problem drinking, abuse, and dependency. It is also important to specify the context of alcohol consumption; where alcohol is consumed, for what purpose, to what extent, the reason for drinking, etc. Terms such as problems related to use, problem drinking, and binge drinking need to be defined, as their meanings may be different to members of the Task Force as well as to various groups in the campus community.

#### **Definition of Terms**

**USE:** Consumption of any amount of beverage alcohol for any reason at some time during a specified period of time.

**MISUSE:** Inappropriate use of alcohol; this may relate to circumstance (e.g., consumption while taking medication), quantity (e.g., drinking to the point of intoxication), or setting (e.g., while driving an automobile).

**PROBLEMS RELATED TO USE:** Use of alcohol that results in a problem; consumption does not need to be related to quantity or frequency, although it may be. For example, a person under the minimum legal drinking age may wind up with a problem because he/she attempted to purchase alcohol. Another example would be a person who drank to the point of intoxication and then fell and hurt her/his foot. Also one person's use of alcohol may result in negative consequences for another person, such as assault or intimidation.

**PROBLEM DRINKING:** A pattern of consumption that creates problems for the individual, whether directly or with another person, is considered problem drinking.

**ABUSE:** Recurrent use of alcohol in a fashion that causes major life problems for the individual is considered alcohol abuse.

**DEPENDENCY:** A drinker who is dependent on alcohol (e.g., addicted) is not able to stop drinking even though significant life problems are occurring due to his/her alcohol consumption.

**Definition of Terms cont.**

**BINGE DRINKING:** A binge occurs when an individual consumes alcohol to point of intoxication for a long period of time (e.g., two or three days). Unfortunately, the term “binge” has been used in recent years to refer to a drinker who has consumed a specific number of drinks (e.g., five for males and four for females). The number of drinks fails to take into account what the person is drinking, how large the drinks are, how much the person weighs, and how long the drinking experience is. Because of the missing information, assumptions and conclusions regarding the behavioral outcomes of the drinking occasion cannot be made. Using the term “binge” to describe college drinking creates communication problems with students, as they correctly resent being labeled “bingers” simply because of drinking a certain number of drinks. Honest discussions are better served by using terms such as high-risk drinking, heavy drinking, and drinking that results in problems.

**Philosophical Foundation** The guiding principles provide the framework of the program. Unfortunately, this element is often one of the most misunderstood factors of the alcohol abuse prevention program. For example:

- **Zero Tolerance** is a philosophy opposed to alcohol use for most, if not all, on-campus events. This may result in a dry campus with disciplinary consequences for use.
- **Responsible Decision-Making** acknowledges the individual's right to choose whether to consume alcohol and supports responsibility of the individual and the group regarding alcohol consumption.
- **Harm Reduction** focuses on reducing/minimizing problems and risks related to alcohol consumption.

As the Task Force discusses the philosophical position that reflects their vision of the campus alcohol abuse prevention strategies, it needs to consider the implications of that position and if it is possible to achieve on campus. All too often, a philosophical position (e.g., alcohol will not be consumed on campus) is stated; everyone then looks the other way when alcohol is consumed. This results in problems that go underground, little or no programming, and different campus groups (e.g., student services, campus police) handling situations from conflicting philosophical bases.

**Implications to Consider** As the implications of differing philosophical positions are discussed, it is important for the Task Force to consider the type of campus that it is designing.

- Would they want to live on such a campus?
- Would they spend money there?
- Would the school be able to keep students on campus over the weekends or would it be turned into a weekend commuter school?
- Would the members of the Task Force send their sons and daughters to this school?

The strategies to be implemented reflect the guiding principles. For example, if one wants students to understand the impact of alcohol on them, a program explaining the relationship between number of drinks, body weight, and length of time of drinking experience can be developed. Such a program would fit in a responsible decision-making philosophy as well as in harm reduction; however, it would not fit in a zero tolerance approach.

It is important that consensus be reached on the philosophical base that will guide the program. Resolving the discrepancies inherent in different positions such as the health orientation of the medical community, the emotional health and safety considerations of the counselors, and the legal and public safety considerations of the law enforcement personnel is critical to the program's success. If one over-riding approach is not present, the various positions of the disparate groups will create ambivalence or confusion on campus.

Dissemination of the campus' overall philosophy regarding alcohol issues, whether addressed in the context of substance abuse or wellness, and the content to be included or excluded, is the core of this step. The philosophy (e.g., zero tolerance, responsible decision-making, harm reduction) should be widely published, so that all groups on the campus understand the philosophical base and its impact on programs.

**Importance of Guiding Principles** Determining the guiding principles is central to the campus' effort because different approaches yield different outcomes. With clearly specified guiding principles, a clear and unified message is not only identified but can also be communicated to the campus and surrounding communities. Without guiding principles, the campus-based effort may appear, and may actually be, unorganized and undirected; such

an unfocused approach would have limited, if any, results. Clearly defined guiding principles also help to eliminate conflicting messages and programs that are at cross-purposes in the campus community. Consistent messages reduce the ambiguity of the program's orientation and assure that a common goal exists.

Because the guiding principles serve as the foundation for the development and implementation of the campus effort, they need to be reviewed and modified on an ongoing basis to continue to reflect the college/university's goal. Each college/university needs to develop its own principles based on their history, traditions, laws, and current needs, as they will serve as the foundation for the remaining steps leading to institutionalization of the campus program.

**Discussion Strategies** Through the use of one of the following discussion strategies, consensus among the Task Force members can be gained. Note that multiple items in each cluster of issues may be selected; however, caution must be used to assure that the selected ones are complementary and not adversarial. In determining the philosophy, parallelism is needed among the behavior, problem, and/or issue of concern with the type of approaches that may be considered for implementation. For example, some types of strategies are more appropriate for certain needs (Presenting Behavior) than others; these considerations are highlighted in the chart found in Step 5.

### **Behavioral Results Desired:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| r Abstinence   | r Reduction of adverse consequences to self or others             |
| r Elimination of alcohol on campus                                   | r Decrease in alcohol abuse                                       |
| r Adherence to local and state laws                                  | r Reduction of alcohol dependence for individuals                 |
| r Responsible drinking   | r Establishment of environment which encourages low-risk behavior |
| r Responsible decision-making regarding the use or nonuse of alcohol | r Identification of person experiencing alcohol problem           |
| r Minimization of risks related to alcohol                           | r Referral to treatment of alcohol dependent person               |
| r Harm reduction   |   |
| r Group standard setting (establishment of group behavioral norms)   |   |

**Underlying Emphasis of Programmatic Effort:**

- r Respect for the rights of others
- r Respect for property
- r Responsibility for one's own actions
- r Responsibility for group's actions
- r Opportunity to make an informed personal choice
- r Awareness of the impact of behavior on self
- r Awareness of the impact of behavior on others
- r Preventive approaches to reduce risks
- r Focus on negative consequences on campus

**Focus of Campus Efforts:**

- r Environmental change
- r Individual change
- r Systemic, organized emphasis by intact groups
- r Prevention of problems
- r Provision of treatment and aftercare services
- r Campus-community partnerships
- r Usage patterns (use, abuse, problems, dependence)
- r Emphasis on knowledge and attitudes
- r Emphasis on behavioral results

**Audience Served:**

- r Students overall
- r Student subpopulations (athletes, fraternity and sorority members, residence hall students, first year students, transfer students, graduating students, policy offenders)
- r Parents of present students
- r Administrators
- r Faculty
- r Staff
- r Alumni
- r All members of the college community
- r Members of the local community

**Context:**

- r Addressing alcohol problems is best done within a comprehensive and long-term focus.
- r Campus based problems and concerns are reflective of the societal context.
- r Students' knowledge, attitudes, and practices manifest their upbringing and overall societal background.
- r Factors which underlie the area of concern (such as predisposing variables) should be addressed.
- r Causes of the behavior of concern should be identified.
- r Increases in knowledge can make a difference in individual behavior.
- r Individuals should take responsibility for their own behaviors.
- r The university has an obligation to promote the well being of all members of its community (administrators, faculty, staff, and students).
- r Institutions are primarily engaged in the academic development of students.
- r Students learn best when they are not encumbered by alcohol use or negative consequences related to alcohol.
- r The institution should generate an environment which promotes critical thinking skills among all members of the campus community.
- r When a person's alcohol use negatively affects campus life, individualized consequences should result.
- r Alcohol misuse by all members of the campus community should be addressed.
- r The majority of individuals in society and on campus make responsible decisions about alcohol most of the time.

**Process of Implementation:**

- r Base in the historical context of the institution.
- r Actively involve all members of the college community in a meaningful way.
- r Link to the local community.
- r Involve parents and alumni.
- r Coordinate the planning and implementation efforts.
- r Collaborate with campus organizations and groups.
- r Engage individuals in the decision-making process to better obtain their investment in the results.
- r Promote information, resources, and strategies which enhance active learning.
- r Demonstrate a caring style.

**Gaining Consensus and Agreement** Each of these issues can be the subject of endless hours of debate and discussion. It is important to engage in the discussion process to determine consensus and/or find where the greatest agreement exists on each of these, as well as other, issues. It is also important to consider what to do if consensus is not reached. If this occurs, it might be necessary to discuss the differing positions with the campus leadership, add more individuals to the Task Force to broaden its base, and/or designate additional informal subcommittees to discuss positions.

A range of approaches can be used to identify the level of agreement:

- Facilitate a discussion on the issues to determine the level of agreement or consensus.
- Orchestrate discussions with targeted groups such as faculty, staff, student leaders, student government, and other constituencies on campus.
- Conduct focus groups of students to get a sense of the philosophical position that receives broad-based support.
- Prepare these issues in a questionnaire or needs assessment format with a scale regarding level of agreement (from strongly disagree to strongly agree) or appropriateness for the campus. Distribute this to desired audiences; after compiling data, the Task Force can decide ways to incorporate points of view.
- Conduct town meetings open to the campus community, surrounding community members, and/or identified constituencies for discussing these issues.
- Have individuals prioritize or rate each of these issues; react to the summary of all ratings collected in the process by reviewing and re-prioritizing the issues.
- Use live, interactive technology to respond to these issues and their relevance and/or appropriateness for the campus initiative.

Acknowledging the formative nature of this process, the philosophical base should be disseminated, reviewed, and revised as needed. Development of a mission statement by the Task Force is now possible and should be considered.

**Engaging Individuals and Groups** Deciding which individuals and groups to engage in the process of determining the guiding principles is a key decision for the Task Force. At a minimum, the Task Force itself needs to grapple with the range of issues within the broad topic areas specified; it is also important to reach for input from others, as those who are engaged in the decision-making process are more likely to feel ownership and support the results.

Though necessary time must be allocated for discussing key issues; many of them may not have an easy or quick resolution; therefore, an overall timetable should be established. The agenda should be manageable and workable to facilitate the group's accomplishments; acknowledgment of the group's reaching various milestones should be made. It is important to coordinate the process of establishing guiding principles while knowing that concurrently, immediate needs and programmatic opportunities exist on the campus. Though the tasks of determining the philosophical base, as well as implementing programs, will undoubtedly be a challenge, it will ultimately provide for a campus-based effort which is well grounded and able to meet the challenge of addressing alcohol issues and concerns.

*Developing vision and setting goals evolve from the guiding principles and provide a focused framework for the campus effort.*

**Definition of Vision and Goals** In a formalized planning process, attention is given to elements such as mission, vision, goals, objectives, and action steps. While the distinctions among these elements are helpful for many purposes, for the purpose of this step, these are blended for ease of understanding and movement in the overall strategic planning process. Thus the focus on vision and goals has the endpoint that the Task Force desires to achieve.

Incorporating the philosophical position established by the Task Force, the vision and goals evolve over time based on changes in needs as well as a re-defining of the guiding principles. Within the context of the institution's mission, the vision provides general direction and the program goals provide a more focused endpoint for the campus program addressing such issues as what the program wants to accomplish and what should be different as a result of implementing strategies. The specificity of the goals facilitates measurement.

**Reason for Vision and Goals** Clearly specified goals promote clarity and focus the alcohol abuse prevention program's direction. The importance of clearly specifying goals:

- focuses the effort and determines which strategies are selected for inclusion in the overall program design; the clarity and focus also assist in the allocation of limited resources in a meaningful and planful way.
- helps emphasize a theme of a "shared vision" much as the theme of "shared responsibility" mentioned earlier. The shared vision of the campus effort enhances the opportunity to achieve the desired outcomes. By contrast, without a shared vision, a campus effort may suffer from competing interests or, as is frequently the case on many campuses, flounder due to lack of focus.
- sets the stage for evaluation. Unfortunately, evaluation of campus programs is rare; one of the primary reasons for this is the lack of clarity of program outcomes, another is the lower value attributed to this effort. Clearly specified goals allow for a thorough and appropriate evaluation to be conducted.
- helps promote the campus effort.

**Setting Vision and Goals** Though the clarification of vision and goals can be multi-faceted, many of the processes used parallel those identified in Step 2 in determining the guiding principles. A range of approaches can be undertaken to prepare the vision and goals. The critical point is that preparation of the vision and goals is undertaken by the group guiding the process. It is important not to get bogged down with all the details and the differences among approaches; what is important is to reach agreement on the vision and goals.

To envision the future, one must first develop vision. The Task Force or others that it wishes to engage in this process should use an exercise, such as provided by the *Worksheet A: Vision*, to help in this process. This helps people identify, in an open-ended way, their vision; it also provides some clarity about what they want to prevent and what they want to promote.

**Worksheet A: Vision**

**How do you envision the future of campus alcohol-related issues?**

**What is your vision of students' alcohol-related behavior?**

**What, specifically, do you want to prevent?**

**What, specifically, do you want to promote?**

The process may also be one of considering the ideal vision of the campus vis-a-vis alcohol abuse issues, campus living environment, socialization, academic life and other issues; this may include brainstorming what these will look like 5, 10, and 20 years from now. This process may also be undertaken in a private way by individuals; the group may then brainstorm each of these issues in an open unencumbered way. Other constituencies may also be engaged in the process of specifying their vision; focus groups, town meetings, class writing projects and assignments, e-mail solicitations, staff discussions, and other inclusive approaches can facilitate this process. An important objective for the Task Force is to gather insight through whatever vehicles are appropriate and to blend the information into their planning.

In many instances, it has been quite difficult for campus leadership to clearly articulate what it is that they want to see differently as a result – direct or indirect – of their program’s efforts. Building upon the visioning activities, a clear delineation of the desired outcomes will emerge. This may be a focus on individual behaviors and attitudes or group activities or some of the intermediate factors that are central to the environment. Using *Worksheet B: Desired Outcomes*, campus personnel can determine the importance of specific outcomes.

| <b>Worksheet B: Desired Outcomes</b>  |                             |   |   |   |                       |
|---|-----------------------------|---|---|---|-----------------------|
| <b>Individual</b>   | <b>Not at all Important</b> |   |   |   | <b>Very Important</b> |
| Reducing frequency of alcohol consumption   | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |
| Reducing overall quantity of alcohol consumed per week  | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |
| Reducing quantity of alcohol consumed per drinking occasion                                     | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |
| Reducing occasions of high-risk drinking  | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |
| Reducing harm associated with drinking  | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |
| Reducing negative consequences associated with drinking   | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |
| Reducing environments which promote harmful drinking  | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |
| Promoting protective and positive health factors among individuals                              | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |
| Promoting individual productivity and academic performance                                      | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |
| <b>Group</b>  |                             |   |   |   |                       |
| Requiring party registration  | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |
| Requiring that servers of alcohol be trained prior to the event                                 | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |
| Requiring that non-alcoholic beverages and food be available whenever alcohol is served or sold | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |
| Promoting group responsibility during events  | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |
| <b>Environmental</b>  |                             |   |   |   |                       |
| Promoting program visibility  | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |
| Increasing use of alcohol-free events and activities  | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |
| Increasing use of alcohol support services  | 1                           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5                     |

Specifying the desired outcomes helps to provide clarity for the Task Force to plan strategies. Desired outcomes are not an either/or approach but rather focus on the extent to which each one is rated to be “very important.” This process should assist program planners to prioritize the strategies with which they are to engage.

Should the program planners have differences of opinion regarding the desired outcomes, attempts can be made to blend these within the context of the guiding principles and campus-based vision. Alternatively, campus planners may determine that different desired outcomes can be accepted for a period of time within the context of exploring and gaining greater clarification of the various constituencies on the campus. As the campus effort becomes institutionalized, greater consistency in the campus programs will evolve. As discussed earlier, this is a formative process that requires time.

**Who Sets Vision and Goals** It is the primary responsibility of the Task Force to manage the process of gathering information. As the overall coordinating group for the campus effort and one which facilitated the process of building the guiding principles, the Task Force is in the position to clarify the vision and the goals.

It is important that the Task Force's visioning and goal-setting process be connected to a high level of the institution. At least for the initial phases:

- The Task Force should report to the office of the president or a senior vice president of the institution.
- It is important to have a timetable for the establishment of the vision and goals or the revision of the existing vision and goals.
- The results of this process should be published on a regular basis so that the larger campus community will be informed and given opportunities for input.
- Though the Task Force as a whole is responsible, it is important to have a facilitator who is organized, inclusive and attentive to the management processes to get results in a timely way to accomplish these important foundation tasks.

*Complementing the process of providing the groundwork for the campus program are the tasks of clarifying needs and assessing resources. These tasks provide the opportunity for the Task Force to begin to review what's happening on campus and what resources are currently being used to support the existing efforts.*

**Definition of Clarifying Needs and Assessing Resources** Clarifying needs is a process that compiles information on the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of various segments of the campus community; this information is used to plan the implementation strategies. The information may also be used programmatically as well as shared with the campus community (e.g., Did you know that a certain percent of students at this university agree that an attractive alcohol-free program is needed?). In addition to the assessments, which focus on the campus community, needs assessments can monitor regional and national issues which may have an impact locally. A variety of related issues are also part of the needs assessment, such as political pressures, immediate needs, and the desires of specific constituencies and stakeholders (such as parents, local citizens, and alumni).

Assessing resources isn't limited to finding new money to hire personnel, rent space, and buy materials. It means that we creatively look at existing resources to determine the possibility of using them to support the program. Examples are:

- Keeping a pool open at night might mean reallocating the personnel's work time.
- Identifying students who are exhibiting signs of a problem related to alcohol may require additional staff training.
- Opening a coffee house on campus may require additional funds.

It is important that existing resources, as well as new ones, be considered for the program. Campus reality mandates that the Task Force be honest and objective about the cost of recommended items (e.g., training program). It is also helpful if the Task Force acknowledges that all recommendations that require resource reallocation cannot be made immediately; prioritizing the items that require reallocation of resources, as well as new resources, is also critical.

Assessing needs and resources is an ongoing process; as needs and resources change, new concerns and questions will be identified.

**Reasons for Clarifying Needs and Assessing Resources** Most projects conduct a needs assessment to ensure that the activities are grounded in the current state of affairs; maintaining continuity between the needs, the strategies, and the desired project outcomes is important. Identifying existing needs is helpful so that the efforts can be better targeted and focused. Clarifying needs can highlight:

- staffing requirements,
- message preparation, and
- evaluation and overall implementation.

Assessing resources is also extremely important because resources for implementing the campus program are limited, necessitating that resources and personnel be used well. Criteria can be established for monitoring changes and progress over time, as well as identifying awareness of services, gaps in implementation, concerns, and additional considerations for those providing leadership.

Since needs and resources continuously evolve, a monitoring process should be established. New students arrive on campus, transfer students enroll in classes, new faculty and staff members are employed, and other campus, local and societal changes occur creating a different campus each year. Changes in service delivery are needed to respond to the emerging needs.

**How to Clarify Needs and Assess Resources** Clarifying needs can be done in a variety of ways and by a variety of individuals, including student groups, faculty members, and other campus personnel. The important thing in implementing a needs assessment is to ensure that some assessment activities are conducted, rather than belaboring the precise standards and doing a “perfect assessment” (which may result in no assessment at all).

Needs assessments can examine the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of various segments of the campus community. The first step is to identify what information and topic areas will be particularly useful.

**Potential issues around which questions can be framed and information gathered include:**

- r Demographic information
- r Personal use or non-use of alcohol
- r Circumstances of use of alcohol
- r Perception of others' use of alcohol
- r Settings for alcohol use
- r Reasons for alcohol use or non-use
- r Age of first use
- r Family background
- r Awareness of campus policies and procedures
- r Enforcement of campus policies and procedures
- r Ease of access to alcohol
- r Awareness of campus resources
- r Helpfulness of campus resources
- r Perception of the role of various campus and community groups
- r Perception of self and others
- r Personal attitudes
- r Perceptions of others' attitudes
- r Knowledge about alcohol
- r Information desired
- r Awareness of referral services
- r Helpfulness of referral services
- r Perception of campus environment and culture
- r Negative consequences related to personal alcohol use
- r Negative consequences due to others' use of alcohol
- r Perception of harmfulness of consequences
- r Perception of campus problems associated with alcohol misuse
- r Perception of campus leadership's position in addressing alcohol problems
- r Health considerations regarding misuse/abuse of alcohol and its consequences

Second, there are a wide range of approaches that can be used to gather information; some of these are:

- **Written survey:** This can be distributed through the mail, before a class, at a meeting, as an appendage to other materials, in lines for services, and in chance encounters. Questions may be objective (with responses on a 1-to-5 scale, a yes/no, and/or individually generated numbers) or open-ended.
- **Telephone interviews:** Individuals may be asked to respond to specific questions (which are quantified and/or open ended in nature). These individuals may be randomly selected or identified based on leadership or other designated roles.
- **Group discussions:** Open-ended questions can be asked in a facilitated discussion; target groups (such as staff) or random individuals gathered for these discussions can be used.
- **Online computer processes:** Electronic processes can provide a range of perspectives, including monitoring listservs, reviewing e-mail responses to a general solicitation, and hosting an online questionnaire.
- **Individual interviews:** Selected individuals, either based on position or randomly identified, may be contacted for a private interview to gather insights.
- **Town meeting:** An opportunity for members of the college community (or surrounding community or specific targeted groups) to address issues of concern to them is provided in an open forum.
- **Focus group:** These relatively small groups, comprised of individuals who are similar to the audience(s) to be targeted with services, express their needs and/or react to materials and approaches.
- **Archival data:** Information already gathered by various sources (health services, counseling services, police and security, admissions offices, residence halls, etc.) can be examined to ascertain trends in incidents, as well as differences among specific groups and sub-groups.
- **Key informant interviews:** Individuals in identified positions can be asked their perceptions of the needs of targeted populations and audiences.
- **State and national data:** Demographic trends, patterns and behaviors, evolving needs, and results of others' studies and assessments can be examined. These may incorporate social factors and programmatic elements that can be informative for campus efforts.

- **Observations:** Informal information about the existence or non-existence of services and resources can serve as a helpful planning tool.
- **Central location intercept interviews:** Individuals at a specified location or at the end of a scheduled campus program are asked a question or series of questions or asked to respond to a stimulus situation.

Needs assessment approaches can be supplemented by other efforts to identify additional information. The process of assessing needs is a formative one that evolves over time. Gathering information and insights from one source raises new questions and stimulates the need for additional information. Information obtained from multiple sources, and then triangulated or blended, provides a more accurate representation of the actual needs of the specified audiences. *Worksheet C: Needs Assessment Approaches* will be helpful in this process.

| Worksheet C : Needs Assessment Approaches |                 |   |               |
|---|-----------------|---|---------------|
| Needs Assessment Strategies               | Target Audience | Coordination or Leadership Responsibility | Date or Event |
| Written survey                            |                 |   |               |
| Telephone interview                       |                 |   |               |
| Group discussion                          |                 |   |               |
| Online computer process                   |                 |   |               |
| Individual interview                      |                 |   |               |
| Town meeting                              |                 |   |               |
| Focus group                               |                 |   |               |
| Archival data                             |                 |   |               |
| Key informant interview                   |                 |   |               |
| State or national data                    |                 |   |               |
| Observations                              |                 |   |               |
| Central location intercept interview      |                 |   |               |

The processes used to assess needs should be done in as scientific manner as possible. Using quasi-experimental research designs that acknowledge the limitations of scientific rigor, information can be gathered that makes the results as reliable as possible. Since decisions about programs and strategies are based on this information, it is important to minimize problems with internal validity, thereby maximizing the usefulness of the information.

Based on resource and budget limitations, it is also important to gather information that is useful and timely. One consideration in this process is whether the information is gathered from the population overall (e.g., student body) or subpopulations such as athletes, fraternity and sorority members, student leaders, or residence hall students. Another important consideration is the timing of data collection; gathering information adjacent to a weekend may be helpful for one purpose yet skew the results for a different purpose. Similarly, questions about the use of alcohol in the last 30 days, if asked after a major campus event such as homecoming or spring break, will have limitations.

It is also important to gather all the necessary and relevant parts of the information; that is, if a person is asked how much alcohol she/he consumed during the last drinking occasion, the size of the drinks, the person's body weight, and the length of time of the drinking experience must also be asked. Without all the information, it is not possible to determine the consequences of the consumption or to identify elements to target programmatically.

Assessing resources also can be carried out by a variety of individuals and groups. Members of the Task Force will know or be able to identify existing programs and the resources used to support these. Determining costs to keep a pool open, train counselors, etc. are manageable; locating the source of new funds is often much more difficult. However, one can make the case that enhanced alcohol abuse prevention programming will enable a campus to decrease its drop-out rate and therefore maintain the tuition base.

Through the process of assessing resources, campus leaders can:

- Review the existing programs on campus.
- Determine the resources currently being used for each program.
- Determine the flexibility of reallocating existing funding or resources.
- Identify each new recommendation that requires resources.
- Prioritize the recommended strategies and programs.
- Set amounts needed to make each recommended strategy/program a reality.

**Who Should Clarify Needs and Assess Resources** Central to clarifying needs and assessing resources is engaging others in the planning and implementation. On many campuses, specialists in academic departments, institutional research offices, and other support services exist that have expertise in these areas. Using specialists on campus aids legitimacy and enhances the appropriateness of the gathered information. In addition, engaging others in the ownership of the project also promotes the project's institutionalization.

Various campus departments can serve as partners; for example, student groups may be interested in assisting and gathering data. This is also an opportunity for faculty members to engage students in the process of designing, collecting, reporting, and interpreting information through class projects. Not only does this provide students with a practical academic experience, it also helps to accomplish the desired tasks. Through this collaboration with on-campus and off-campus groups, technical assistance, in-kind services, expertise, and involvement and ownership can be accomplished.

With the range of individuals and groups that can be involved, it is essential to identify a coordinating office that will manage the information. Ultimately the Task Force will be charged with the challenge of reviewing and interpreting the findings and making decisions regarding which specific campus strategies will be implemented. *Worksheet D: Needs Assessment* and *Worksheet E: Resource Assessment* are provided to assist in the process of determining needs and assessing resources.

Step 4: Clarify Needs and Assess Resources

| Worksheet D: Needs Assessment |            |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| Desired Information           | Strategies |
|                               |            |
|                               |            |
|                               |            |
|                               |            |
|                               |            |
|                               |            |
|                               |            |
|                               |            |
|                               |            |
|                               |            |

| Worksheet E: Resource Assessment |            |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Desired Information              | Strategies |
|                                  |            |
|                                  |            |
|                                  |            |
|                                  |            |
|                                  |            |
|                                  |            |
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|                                  |            |

*The emphasis of this step is on prioritizing action to develop a comprehensive program that incorporates a wide range of strategies to meet the needs of diverse constituencies on campus.*

**Prioritize Action** A comprehensive campus-based alcohol abuse prevention effort integrates policies and programs on the campus. It requires a broad-based effort, exemplified by program components and groups and individuals that need to be involved. The comprehensive approach attends to the range of issues designed to promote the desired outcomes and to address the identified needs. It also deals with the diverse groups and audiences with distinct needs and issues.

Eight program components are identified for a comprehensive program:

- Policies and Implementation,
- Curriculum,
- Awareness and Information,
- Support and Intervention,
- Enforcement,
- Assessment and Evaluation,
- Training, and
- Staffing and Resources.

In addition to incorporating the eight program components, to be fully comprehensive, the program must also be articulated and coordinated. Although these elements go hand-in-hand, they are distinguished in this Action Planner to provide appropriate emphasis on each. Simply including the range of strategies is not sufficient; also, simply getting others involved is not sufficient. To obtain the ultimate goal of institutionalization, these must be coordinated and implemented for and by a wide range constituencies.

**Reason for Prioritizing Action** The importance of prioritizing action in the development of a comprehensive approach is based on the fact that individuals have different needs. Some individuals need assistance in stopping their problematic use of alcohol, while others need help to deal with specific circumstances. Some individuals who do not wish to use alcohol

need support for maintaining that decision, while others may require treatment for dependency on alcohol. In addition, individuals learn and make behavior changes based on different approaches; some individuals learn by doing, while others learn by reading. Some individuals learn best through behavioral modification and strong consequences, while others learn from a caring discussion with a professional. In addition, individuals are motivated to act and change their own behavior based on a blend of different approaches, messages, and messengers. With an issue as complex as how decisions are made about alcohol and its use or non-use, it is critical to have a range of approaches.

| Presenting Behavior             | Appropriate Strategies                                |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Non-use                         | Education, public service announcements, peer support |
| Use                             | Education, public service announcements, peer support |
| Misuse                          | Education, documentation, policy response             |
| Problems related to alcohol use | Assessment, documentation, policy response            |
| Problem drinking                | Assessment, monitoring, individual counseling         |
| Abuse                           | Assessment, referral, individual and group counseling |
| Dependency                      | Treatment, support groups                             |

It is also important to have a series of approaches over a period of time that reinforce one another. Messages should be targeted with different approaches since learning styles differ. While the message and approach may vary based on populations on campus, these should all be constituted within the larger consistent orientation of a unified philosophical position.

A comprehensive approach engages a range of individuals, groups, and organizations in its implementation. Campus leadership, faculty, staff, students, and the community, provide an opportunity for focused involvement. Not only will their involvement generate greater ownership, but it will also be helpful in the reception of the message; that is, student athletes may respond better when the messenger is another student athlete or a coach, as compared with other sources of information.

The comprehensive approach encourages participation by those with “shared responsibility.” As some groups become involved in implementing strategies, others will also be encouraged to do the same. When groups are rewarded for their involvement, others will be encouraged to join the effort.

**Ways to Prioritize Action** Prioritizing action to create the comprehensive campus effort is exciting; it is at this point that specific strategies are identified in response to the vision, goals, and needs that have been determined. From the hundreds of strategies identified in the *Sourcebook* ([www.promprac.gmu.edu](http://www.promprac.gmu.edu)), the Task Force can select specific ones to address their campus’ unique needs and goals. Use of *Worksheet F: Strategies* will assist in correlating the goal and need with the strategy. Since all strategies cannot be implemented at one time, the following order is suggested:

- prioritize the specific goals (related to identified needs) that the campus planners would like to address,
- generate strategies for each of these needs, and
- prioritize the strategies.

| Worksheet F: Strategies |      |            |
|-------------------------|------|------------|
| Goal                    | Need | Strategies |
|                         |      |            |
|                         |      |            |
|                         |      |            |
|                         |      |            |
|                         |      |            |
|                         |      |            |
|                         |      |            |
|                         |      |            |
|                         |      |            |

Of further assistance in the planning process is *Worksheet G: Audience*, which connects the audience or sub-group with a strategy. Planners may find it helpful to focus specifically on strategies for a specific sub-group (such as faculty, students involved in athletic organizations, fraternities or sororities, first-year students, on-campus students, or other sub-groups).

| Worksheet G: Audience |            |
|-----------------------|------------|
| Audience or Sub-group | Strategies |
|                       |            |
|                       |            |
|                       |            |
|                       |            |
|                       |            |
|                       |            |
|                       |            |
|                       |            |
|                       |            |
|                       |            |

To prioritize the specific strategies for inclusion in the comprehensive approach, the Task Force may wish to review the eight program components identified earlier for a comprehensive program. When considering the strategies identified in each of these areas (such as Awareness and Information), each strategy should be reviewed to determine:

- If it is currently being conducted on campus.
- What group is conducting the strategy.
- How well it is being conducted on campus.
- Whether it should be continued as part of the overall campus effort.

Following this assessment, the strategies within each of the eight categories can be listed to illustrate where gaps appear. That is, it may be discerned that 20 awareness and information strategies are provided while only two support and intervention approaches are currently available; this would indicate a need for some adjustment in the campus program.

Another important consideration for the comprehensive approach is the groups and organizations that have an important role to play. Increasing the investment of the groups and organizations and their shared responsibility in the implementation of the comprehensive program is desirable because this enhances the receptivity by the audience toward the messages received. In planning the comprehensive program, each of these groups should be looked at to determine:

- Ways in which they are currently involved,
- Quality of their involvement,
- Potential ways in which they could be involved, and
- Ways in which they may wish to be involved.

Specific ways of articulating and coordinating the involvement of the many groups and organizations will be discussed in the next steps.

**Forming Subgroups** In addition to the ten groups identified in the Task Force Planner, sub-groups, formed from the group as a whole, are important to the process. For example, in the health and counseling group, there may be two sub-groups: health services and counseling services. Student life incorporates the sub-groups of judicial offices, student activities, dean of students, orientation, fraternity and sorority affairs, incoming and transfer students, international students, and others. With student groups, there may be sub-groups for athletics, fraternities and sororities, intramural activities, clubs, and other student organizations.

**Task Force  
Planner Groups:**

- Campus Leadership
- Coordinator
- Health and Counseling
- Student Life
- Police and Security
- Faculty
- Residence Life
- Student Government
- Student Groups
- Community

Though the Task Force provides the leadership in planning and coordinating the comprehensive program, the ultimate aim is to share the responsibility of the program and the task.

*Articulating and marketing the message and philosophy of the campus alcohol abuse prevention program requires a clear message and policy statements, which are based in the philosophy.*

**What It Means to Articulate and Market the Program** Articulation is an important element of the strategic planning and implementation process for the campus effort. Reasons for this include:

- It incorporates getting the message out and ensuring that it is received by the variety of audiences affected by the campus effort.
- It clarifies the institution's position on alcohol issues as well as on related topics at every opportunity.
- It presents the university's vision and goals, as well as the vision and goals of the campus-based effort.

Articulation clearly states the philosophy and guiding principles upon which the program is based. Marketing the program is important for internal as well as external purposes. Three potential audiences are identified:

**Campus leadership.** (which includes a core management group, the Task Force, and an advisory group). Articulation with this audience reinforces principles that can be reviewed and updated.

**Campus community.** This includes the range of individuals and groups who are directly involved in the campus effort, whether they are involved in implementing various segments of the campus services or are recipients of the services. The clarity of the message and what the campus-based program stands for will help their understanding of ways in which this can have an impact on their lives.

**External community.** The external community includes those not directly involved with the campus, but those for whom the campus has a role to play. This may include local community members and leaders in the area surrounding the campus, businesses, parents, alumni, state leaders, and others connected to the campus. Articulation to this audience includes making them aware of the existence of and orientation to the campus-based effort.

Articulating the campus philosophy, as well as marketing the campus programs and strategies, helps to gain others' awareness of, interest in, and hopefully support of, the campus effort.

In addition, it is important that messages communicated to specific audiences be done in a manner that is credible and appropriate to them. Thus messages for faculty may be different from those for staff, those for alumni may differ from those for students, those for new students from those for graduating students, etc. Though targeted to the needs of the various groups, the messages should be consistent with the campus philosophy. The appeal and relevance of the messages will make a difference in the extent to which these are received. It is also important that these messages be communicated through a variety of channels, including:

- print materials,
- electronic messages,
- advertisements,
- banners,
- policy statements,
- radio and television public service announcements,
- articles,
- letters to the editor, and
- feature stories.

They should also be emphasized in training of faculty and staff, peer educators, student leaders, and students so that a consistent theme is communicated.

**Reasons to Articulate and Market the Program** Articulating is important to help reinforce the guiding principles and establish the priority of the goals of the campus-based prevention. This process helps the program clarify its own messages and its own priorities; it further assists program planners to identify strategies that are linked to the guiding principles, as well as those that are inconsistent.

Campus program leaders should clearly articulate their guiding principles and messages in an appropriate and grounded way at every opportunity. Due to a lack of articulation, many

well-intended campuses typically do not clearly communicate their messages. In these cases, it is not surprising that students and other constituencies are not aware of the importance held by the institution regarding healthy decisions on alcohol use and the existence of campus services. An old saying of “how would you know unless I told you” is relevant in this regard. In addition, it is important for campus program personnel to specifically communicate the needs of their programs and services to obtain continued and additional resources and support.

With quality articulation, the messages and projects get reinforced to the individuals and the range of offices within the reach of the campus effort. Through this ongoing communication, some will accept the messages, some will question them and engage in dialogue, and still others will wish to join the effort as partners. Articulation also helps to clearly specify a range of issues, including policy matters, enforcement steps, suggested activities, considerations for individuals, and the choices involved. For example, if the policies clearly state the consequences for their violation, the result is shared understanding and ultimately adherence by the members of the campus community. Finally, by articulating the messages and issues, campus leaders can identify the next steps as well as their own review of the status of existing efforts.

Marketing the campus programs is also essential, if we expect individuals and groups to attend. This can be done by using:

- posters,
- campus radio announcements,
- advertisements in the student newspaper, and
- flyers to specific target groups.

Another type of marketing (i.e., social marketing) is popular on many campuses. This type of marketing publicizes information about student behaviors to focus attention on social norms. In order to do this, all the students on campus and/or specific groups need to be surveyed. An example of this would be to ask all students the number of drinks they usually have on a drinking occasion. Publicizing the fact that most students only have three drinks on a drinking occasion is viewed by many as a strategy that will reduce alcohol consumption on campus. Another example of social marketing would be to survey the student athletes to find out the number who do not drink and to reduce the peer pressure emanating from “imaginary peers.”

Marketing strategies would then promote the fact that a specific percentage of student athletes are non-drinkers. Those that use this methodology are hopeful that it supports athletes who do not drink. Social marketing receives good reviews from campuses where it is used because it does not focus on problems or the number of students who engage in high-risk activities. By presenting information about what the majority of students are doing, and doing this in a positive fashion, the emphasis is on the larger number of students who engage in positive behaviors.

**Strategies for Articulating and Marketing the Programs** A range of approaches is inherent in articulating and marketing the variety of messages and philosophies associated with the campus program; three overall themes are included in articulation:

1. Be clear and consistent.
2. Repeat often.
3. Review.

To be *clear* and *consistent*, messages should be examined to ensure that they accurately present the philosophy espoused by the Task Force and the organization planners. Specific messages should be examined to ensure that they are consistent with one another; though messages for different audiences (e.g., faculty, staff, students) may be focused on the specific group, they need to espouse the overall campus philosophy. The issue of repeating the messages as often as possible is based on the need to reinforce and support the messages and themes inherent in the campus program. From a review perspective, the campus efforts should be examined to ensure that the messages received are indeed what was intended. Message review should occur prior to the distribution of the message by pre-testing a draft of the message to a sample of the intended audience; messages should also be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

In order to achieve these aims, the Task Force may conduct forums with various campus groups. These opportunities can be used to discuss the philosophies and messages as well as ways in which they are communicated on the campus. Also, focus groups can be conducted with specific groups (e.g., first-year students, new faculty members) to test various messages.

*Worksheet H: Message Assessment* can be used to examine the messages and philosophies being communicated; this worksheet can also be used to examine the extent to which various messages or philosophies are articulated and how respondents feel about the specific message or philosophy. This or portions thereof can be included in ongoing campus needs assessment and evaluation protocols, as well as at convenient opportunities in group meetings, programs (whether or not they are on alcohol issues), academic classes, and other data collection opportunities.

| <b>Worksheet H: Message Assessment</b> |                      |   |   |   |                |
|--|----------------------|---|---|---|----------------|
| Message/Philosophy _____<br>_____      |                      |   |   |   |                |
|  | Not at all Important |   |   |   | Very Important |
| Espoused                               | 1                    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5              |
| A priority for the institution         | 1                    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5              |
| Important to you                       | 1                    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5              |
| Important to your friends              | 1                    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5              |
| Important to most students on campus   | 1                    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5              |
| Communicated clearly                   | 1                    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5              |
| Consistently implemented               | 1                    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5              |

*Worksheet I: Message Review Summary* can be used in a similar way, addressing the same audiences with similar strategies. The review process, which can be conducted on an ongoing basis, is essential to all aspects of strategic planning.

| <b>Worksheet I: Message Review Summary</b> |   |   |     |     |     |     |
|--|---|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Message/Philosophy _____<br>_____          |   |   |     |     |     |     |
|  | 0 | 1 | 2-3 | 4-5 | 6-9 | 10+ |
| Frequency of message                       |   |   |     |     |     |     |
| Number of different types of sources       |   |   |     |     |     |     |
| What does the message suggest that you do? |   |   |     |     |     |     |
| How do you feel about the message?         |   |   |     |     |     |     |



When conducting an ongoing assessment of the message, four overall elements of the target audience should be examined:

- Awareness,
- Feelings and reactions,
- Importance of the message to their values, and
- Impact or result on their behavior.

The four elements also help assess marketing strategies. Individuals need to be aware of the program, feel positively toward attending, and identify the program's message as being in sync with their values. An evaluation of the program would measure if it had a positive impact on their behavior.

**Who is Responsible for Articulating and Marketing the Program** Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Task Force and others involved in the implementation of the campus programs to oversee the articulation of the campus philosophy and messages and monitor the quality and the extent of the messages; it is also important to analyze how the messages are received. This will be helpful to ensure that the campus philosophies are clearly and frequently articulated. To fully articulate the campus philosophies and messages, it is important to gain the support and involvement of a range of groups by having representatives join in the process.

Marketing of programs is usually handled by the individual or group responsible for the activity. However, it is important that the posters, advertisements, announcements, etc. be reviewed to assure that the campus' philosophy is supported. Programs and services that are not consistent with the campus position will result in a mixed message regarding alcohol use on campus. Social marketing, which was described earlier, is usually conducted out of student affairs offices; however, other departments may take the lead on disseminating messages that minimize drinking and alcohol-related problems on campus.

*Having a coordinated plan is essential to blend the activities and services of a range of people in an organized way.*

**Definition of Coordinating the Program** Coordination of the campus-based effort represents an integration of a wide range of strategies, demonstrating the linkages among the approaches and personnel discussed in prior steps. The aim of coordination is to have a unified and organized approach, as contrasted with an approach that is sporadic and unconnected. The coordination plan includes a schedule of activities and milestones, that will be helpful for program monitoring and review purposes. The clear specification of strategies allows the participants and team members to know what one another is doing and specifies the range of resources for programs.

**Reasons for Coordinating the Program** Coordination ensures that consistent messages are presented on campus. Building on the conceptual and theoretical grounding provides consistency in the implementation of strategies. Strategies that are inconsistent will be identified and refocused to promote consistency in the implementation of the plan.

Coordination also helps use the strengths of each of the participants to plan and implement the campus effort. By identifying the range of campus and community groups that are involved, methods to engage them to draw upon their respective areas of expertise need to be identified. Since diverse groups on campus have different needs and respond to different approaches, the involvement of a range of personnel and organizations in program implementation will assist in achieving the desired ends.

Another factor underlying coordination focuses on the evaluation approaches. A clearly specified and coordinated plan includes benchmarks for achievement as well as who is involved. The benchmarks provide opportunities for reviewing the accomplishment of the desired objectives; process evaluation helps identify the reach and scope of effort of participating individuals and groups that are involved.

This coordinated effort helps in resource allocation by avoiding duplication of services; it also helps to allocate necessary resources to meet the needs of specified audiences and to achieve identified goals. Institutionalization is assisted by having a coordinated effort which communicates consistent themes to the campus and surrounding community regarding the program and its efforts. The enhanced credibility leads to greater support and limits challenges to the program.

**How to Coordinate the Program** Coordination can be accomplished through several approaches. One is to maintain an up-to-date record of existing programs and services on the campus. This may be done on an annual basis, or if more convenient, on a semiannual or quarterly basis. The array of services demonstrates the overall outline of campus programs within a helpful framework.

Another approach to facilitate coordination is *Worksheet K: Action Planning*. Strategies identified for implementation are connected to the responsible person or group within a designated timeline.

| Worksheet K: Action Planning |                             |          |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| Strategy                     | Responsible Person or Group | Timeline |
|                              |                             |          |
|                              |                             |          |
|                              |                             |          |
|                              |                             |          |
|                              |                             |          |
|                              |                             |          |
|                              |                             |          |
|                              |                             |          |

Once the various elements are completed for each of the strategies, follow-up is needed to monitor their actual accomplishment. There are different ways to accomplish this:

- Monitoring each action step to ensure that it is accomplished. From an evaluation perspective, the elements that are not completed can be reviewed to determine the reason for lack of completion. Action planning can be focused on the strategy to be implemented in conjunction with those responsible for its implementation as well as the timeline for its accomplishment.
- Monitoring each strategy to ensure that the message conforms with the overall project messages, as well as with the specified goals for the campus effort. This can help ensure that approaches are consistent and viewed as such by the campus population.
- Monitoring and auditing each program to maintain a record of attendance as well as the reactions of those participating. Evaluation processes can be developed to solicit participant reactions, as well as to measure changes in their knowledge, attitudes, or behavior; this ensures that the program strategy is accomplishing its desired outcomes consistent with the stated goals.

**Overseeing the Coordination of the Program** The Task Force has the primary responsibility to maintain coordination. This can be done through the campus coordinator; however, if the campus doesn't have a coordinator, the Task Force should recommend hiring one to maintain the communications and the linkages among the individuals and offices involved. The coordinator will help to ensure that the activities take place and will engage in problem-solving efforts when strategies and action steps are not met in accordance with the timeline. In addition, specific ways in which each group will be involved in the action will be identified. With a routine review of different groups' involvement and contributions and lack thereof, modifications can be made to the program implementation design.

*The aim of the strategic planning process is to institutionalize the campus-based alcohol abuse prevention efforts. It is essential that, as part of institutionalization, the process continually evolves over time to allow for modification and refinement of the strategies and the overall program.*

**Definition of Institutionalizing the Program** Institutionalization means integration of the policy and programs into the fabric of what the institution stands for and the services deemed important for the institution to provide. It communicates a sense of permanence and indicates that the institution has every intent to maintain the program. Since alcohol abuse prevention efforts are often funded with grants, which appoint staff on a term-to-term and a project-to-project basis, campus-based programs often disappear without institutionalization.

Institutionalization also establishes the importance of the campus policy and programs with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and other constituencies on and off the campus. The test of this is having these constituencies view the alcohol abuse prevention program as integral and one that the institution “cannot live without.”

Administratively, institutionalization provides assurance that the funds needed for operating the campus effort, both for personnel as well as for other needed services, are included within the institution’s annual budget. That is, the program can exist without external grants and short-term projects; however, they may be used to provide extra services and resources to complement the necessary core services. Support for the program becomes institutionalized by allocating specific budget line items for personnel and other related expenses.

Within the context of viewing the comprehensive campus program in a broad sense, programmatic funding may be viewed in a less traditional way. The emphasis of a campus-based alcohol abuse prevention effort includes more than simply providing brochures, programs, training, needs assessments, and counseling; the concept of “shared responsibility” indicates that individuals and groups take responsibility for conducting a wide variety of approaches and services. The guiding principle that states that addressing underlying needs of students may be helpful might translate into providing a range of activities open at night (e.g, academic, recreation facilities, support services).

**Reasons for Institutionalizing the Program** An institutionalized program of services:

- Demonstrates the institution's clear support of addressing alcohol misuse and alcohol-related problems in a meaningful way.
- Demonstrates the nature of the issue of alcohol misuse and how it requires a comprehensive program with a long-range perspective.
- Demonstrates the need to maintain the program from a practical perspective, regardless of personnel changes. As volunteer and complementary staff, as well as core, full-time personnel, often change their job responsibilities, institutionalization offers more permanence and stability for the program. This is important because if a campus program is to be comprehensive and coordinated, ongoing public awareness and demonstration of this is critical.
- Helps provide time for the program to grow. Since the field of study of alcohol abuse prevention efforts in the college community is relatively new, it is important for program personnel to become established and to prepare the foundations of quality programs. This helps move campus-based strategies toward a greater research-based emphasis.
- Provides foundations for the program to develop so that its existence is not based on one individual's charisma or placement in the institution. Because of the problems and issues being addressed, as well as the relative newness of the effort, it may take time to demonstrate the success of the program's efforts.

**How to Institutionalize the Program** The primary consideration in institutionalizing the project is to understand the fact that institutionalization is a long-term process that requires years. Second, it is important to prepare strategies in an organized fashion. In such a logical, thoughtful, and grounded process, the prospects of institutionalization are maximized.

A third consideration in institutionalization is establishing the Task Force and/or coordinating office at a high level within the institution; to publicly recognize the project's importance, this should have a reporting line to the institution's president and/or vice president. Correlated with this is broad-based support for the campus-based effort to assure its highest probability of success.

One tool for assessing institutionalization is provided in *Worksheet L: Annual Resource Allocation*.

| Worksheet: L: /                       |            |                                 |                   |          |        |                    |
|---------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------|--------|--------------------|
|                                       | Task Force | Coordinator/Coordination Office | Faculty and Staff | Students | Direct | Indirect (In-Kind) |
| Policies and Implementation           |            |                                 |                   |          |        |                    |
| Curriculum Awareness and Information  |            |                                 |                   |          |        |                    |
| Support and Intervention              |            |                                 |                   |          |        |                    |
| Enforcement Assessment and Evaluation |            |                                 |                   |          |        |                    |
| Training Staffing and Resources       |            |                                 |                   |          |        |                    |

Use of the Annual Resource Allocation Worksheet allows program leadership to review the extent of institutionalization of the campus program by assessing the amount of time and actual funding allocated to the campus-wide alcohol abuse prevention strategies. Reflection will be helpful to determine the amount of time that each of the four broad categories of personnel spend with each of the approaches. For example, how much time does the coordinator or that campus office spend annually on policies and their implementation. The reviewer may assess that the coordinator spends approximately 500 hours annually on policies and their implementation, while the entire Task Force (including individual and group time) spends 50 hours. Students may spend 1,000 hours (because of student staff and student leaders) and faculty and staff may spend a set number of hours.

Funding is differentiated between direct and indirect. The direct funding is what is included in the project's budget – the "hard dollars"; indirect funding is allocated from other offices or provided with in-kind services and resources.

Completion of this worksheet produces an assessment of the gaps (e.g., limited personnel time, limited funding) in the institutionalization of specific program components. This will help provide direction for adaptations and enhancements to further ground the campus services both with respect to personnel and non-personnel resources.

A second review process is delineated by *Worksheet M: Campus Office Linkage*. The key question is the extent to which the range of campus offices are involved with the implementation of the campus program.

**Worksheet M: Campus Office Linkage**

|   | Not at all |   |   |   | Very Much |
|---|------------|---|---|---|-----------|
| Campus Leadership (President, Dean, etc.) | 1          | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5         |
| Coordinator                               | 1          | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5         |
| Health and Counseling                     | 1          | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5         |
| Student Life                              | 1          | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5         |
| Police and Security                       | 1          | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5         |
| Faculty                                   | 1          | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5         |
| Residence Life                            | 1          | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5         |
| Student Government                        | 1          | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5         |
| Student Groups                            | 1          | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5         |
| Community                                 | 1          | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5         |

With good institutionalization of the campus program, linkages will occur with multiple offices throughout the campus. In this way, the campus-based alcohol abuse prevention effort is integrated with multiple campus offices.

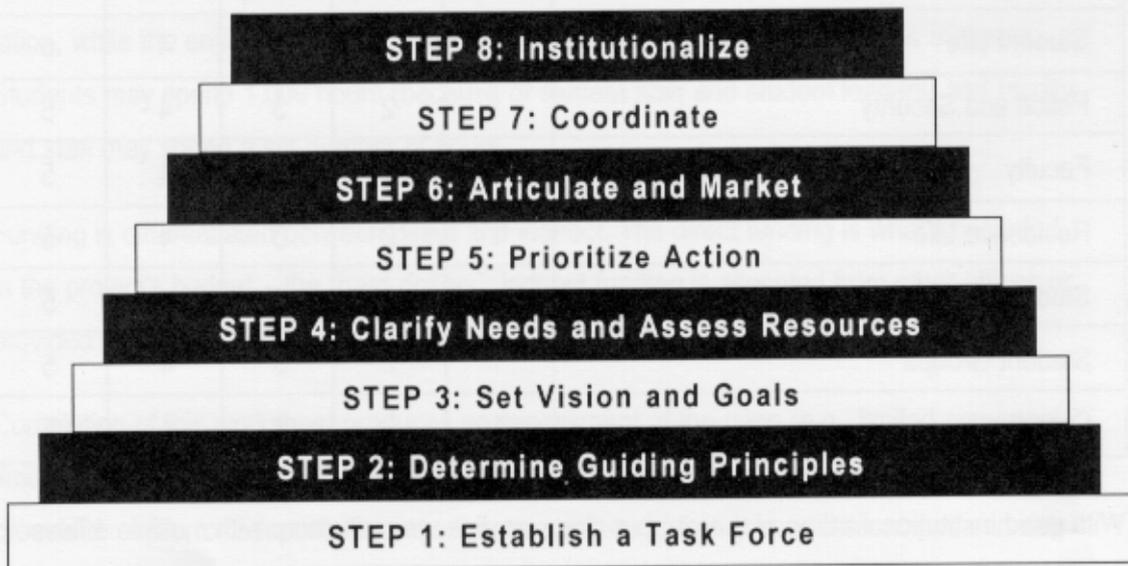
Ultimately, the strategy for institutionalizing the campus program is to make the program important to the key decision makers and those with power and influence on campus.

Therefore, the campus effort should be developed in a way that is essential for the campus.

A general strategy is to attempt to view priorities from the point of view of key decision makers and to frame alcohol/abuse prevention and the associated campus-based strategies in a way that is meaningful to them.

**Who is Responsible for Institutionalizing the Program** The responsibility for institutionalization rests with the campus leadership as well as the Task Force. It requires conscious leadership and constant attention to the processes underlying the permanence of the campus program. By raising the issue to public discussion, these individuals can review the current status of the campus-based effort and identify ways to further incorporate the effort in the fabric of the institution.

The complexity of alcohol issues and concerns on campus makes the development of a comprehensive integrated approach a long-term ongoing process. Action is needed to institutionalize the college and university's alcohol abuse prevention program. The Action Planner's eight-step model outlines the tasks and guides the strategies to accomplish this. It is our hope that colleges and universities use this model to initiate, review and revitalize their policies, programs, and services.



As we stated in the *Promising Practices: Campus Alcohol Strategies Sourcebook*:

“The goal of making our campuses healthier and safer living and learning environments is attainable; sharing our strategies and resources will enable us to more quickly maximize our students' potential. We are confident that vision, patience, and perseverance will help us to minimize alcohol abuse on campuses.”