Developing Project Strategies and Activities

Clear strategies and activities are essential for setting out detailed work plans that will achieve the desired outcomes set out in your project goals and objectives. Strategies are broad concepts or approaches to achieve the project objectives while activities are actions that are undertaken within these strategies. Using the Arkansas Exertional Heat Illness Project as an example, "*Research and develop an educational film on Exertional Health Illness for target audience*" is a strategy the project adopted. An activity under this strategy was: "*Research best practices in identification and management of Exertional Health Illness Events*." When developing strategies and activities, you must keep in mind the resources that will be required to implement the activities.

Guidelines for identifying project strategies, activities and resources

a. Involve several different groups of stakeholders when appropriate, seeking their expertise. It is important to involve those who are going to implement the project as well.
b. Brainstorm potential strategies with the stakeholders- the key question is 'what do we need to do to reach the objective?' Ask them to review the evidence you have gathered on what has been done in other places and for their ideas on strategies' and activities.
c. Review existing activities your program may already offer and identify those activities that you can harness with this new project. Look at your programs SWOT analysis- you may be able to draw on your programs strengths here.
d. Consider the financial and human resources needed. Think about additional partners to help with financial or in-kind support. Be clear with what is feasible within existing resources and what needs to be put on 'hold' until further resources are found.

Writing Project Strategies and Activities

For each of your project objectives create a list of major strategies, the specific activities for each strategy and who is responsible for implementing the activity and by when. Strategies should be written to pass the SMART test, too. If you implement SMART strategies, not only can you monitor the progress and outputs of your project, but you will also have a good chance of meeting your project objectives and effecting positive change. When writing your activities, use 'active' verbs and be very clear on what needs to be done.

Be sure to include time to review your strategies and activities with your stakeholders.

ACTIVITY

In small groups select one person's project. Identify one of their project objectives following the guidelines above and work together as if you were the project stakeholders to develop a strategy appropriate to implement. Think about the resources (material and people) and time needed to conduct these activities.

Note questions and challenges your group had in completing this activity to share with the larger group.