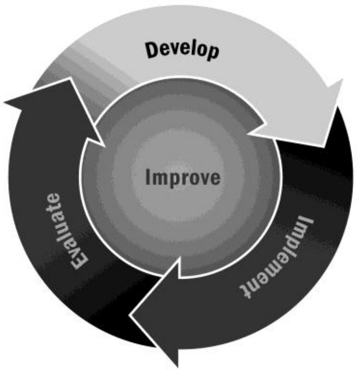
Tool 41

Program Plan Template



Directions: In crafting your program plan, use the Program Plan Checklist below to ensure that you have covered all possible sources of information. You may not be ready to include all of the sections listed here. Start with the information you have and add more as you go along. Try to be as comprehensive as possible. You may want to use a written report format, create a binder with dividers for each topic, or organize the information into a PowerPoint presentation. Choose a format that makes sense for you and your stakeholders. If you choose to compile your plan in a written format, you may use the sections for various purposes in the future (e.g., grant writing, writing an evaluation report).

Program Plan Checklist

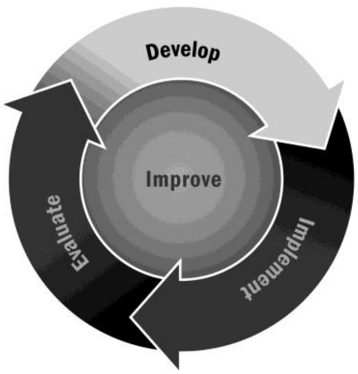
Title	• Name of the program and organization • Title of the program • Names (and organizations, if external) of the individual stakeholders involved in the planning process *Comment: Avoid the use of acronyms in the title page.*	❒
Table of Contents	• Provide sufficient detail to guide the reader through the report, including page numbers. • Include boxes, figures, tables, and appendices.	❒
Executive Summary	• State the vision for the program and the theory of change (if the theory of change is a visual only, do not include). • Define the program goals and activities. • Describe the program planning activities (asset mapping, market analysis, needs assessment). • Summarize the key program activities and partners. *Comment: The executive summary should serve as a stand-alone component of the program plan because intended users of the plan may refer to the summary rather than the larger document. The executive summary should not include any information that is not covered in the report.*	❒
Program Vision and Theory of Change	• This section should clearly state the **vision** for the program and the **theory of change.** *Comment: If the theory of change is primarily a visual representation, provide a brief narrative describing the thinking behind it, including citations of any relevant literature/research.*	❒

Background/ Supporting Information	• Briefly outline the literature base/research in the field of afterschool and expanded learning, stating the benefits of such programs. Hint: The references for this *Toolkit* should provide you with a good start! • If you are targeting a certain content area (e.g., STEM), make sure to include a sentence or two on the importance of that content area and the literature/research that supports it. • Describe the context of the program. This should include the community characteristics, the local school(s), and any relevant information about local assets, family information, and other local programs. Source: **market analysis and/or asset map.** • Explain how the idea for program originated, relating this to the organization's mission, program vision, and population needs. Make sure to support this presentation with research literature and community **needs assessment** findings where possible. • State the demand, gap in the field, or interest in the program. Source: **market analysis, asset map, and needs assessment.**	❐
Goals, Action Steps, and Outcomes	• State clearly each of your program **goals**. • Under each program goal, detail the **action steps** you will take to achieve the goal. • The action steps should be practical and specific, and they should identify who is responsible for the action. • You may choose to associate a timeline or start and end dates with your action steps. • State the intended outcome for each goal. *Comment: If you have a program **logic model**, you should include this here, making sure to explain the elements in detail.*	❐
Program Structures, Reach, and Partners	• Describe the scale of the program, detailing the size and details of the target population (grades, ages). • Describe the program setting. This should include both the space for the program and the time of year and day it is offered. • Identify and describe the key partners that collaborate with your organization in the delivery of the program. Source: **asset map.**	❐
Organizational Capacity Statement and Fundraising Plan	• Describe the program's resource capacity, providing details of the total human resources (e.g., staffing plan) and financial **budget** supporting the program. • Describe any fundraising activities planned for the year to earn revenue.	❐

Evaluation Plan	• Clearly state the evaluation questions and tie the questions to the following bullets: ▪ Describe the types of data that you will collect (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed). ▪ Describe who you will collect information from (e.g., program participants, staff, community members, stakeholders) and how these individuals will be selected to participate in the evaluation. ▪ Explain what data collection tools you will use, how they were chosen, and how the data produced is intended to answer the evaluation questions. ▪ Explain how stakeholders will participate in the evaluation. ▪ Explain the ethical considerations you are taking into account when conducting the evaluation. Make sure to explain how you are protecting the **confidentiality** of respondents. *Comment: It is ideal to think about the evaluation plan at the beginning of the program design phase, using your logic model. However, you may not feel ready to do this yet. This section can be added later, but don't wait too long because the earlier you plan your evaluation activities, the easier it is to seamlessly integrate them into your program.*	❐
Conclusions, Challenges, and Recommendations	• Conclusions should summarize the program plan into one comprehensive paragraph. • The challenges should outline for the reader practical problems to the execution of the plan and recommended solutions to that challenge. For example, a challenge may be that the contract for programming needs to be executed before the school year begins so that the organization can take the appropriate time required to hire skilled staff.	❐
Appendices	• Summary findings from the market analysis, asset mapping, and needs assessment • Blank tools (surveys, interview protocols) that were used to conduct the market analysis, asset mapping, and needs assessment • Lists of individuals interviewed, including position titles • Sample monthly planners, or any tool that illustrates the program clearly for the reader	❐
References	• A comprehensive list of sources, including documents reviewed.	❐

Tool 37

Goal Setting Worksheet



Directions: *This worksheet can be used to record both goal areas and specific goals. First, write down the vision statement you created with your stakeholders. Do not attempt to create goals without first knowing your vision. Next, think about the areas in which you want to set goals. Record these in the column on the left. A few examples are provided to get you started. Then, in the middle column, record your specific goals for each area. Make sure your goals support your vision. Use the third column to indicate a timeline for achieving each goal (e.g., this month, this program year, within two years, etc.). Finally, use the last column to make notes about your goals—for example, you might include specific staff members tasked with overseeing the goal or notes on partnerships or resources that can help you accomplish the goal.*

Goal Setting Worksheet – Example

Vision Statement

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Goal Areas	Specific Goals	Timeline	Activities/Notes
Programming	*Ensure programming integrates youth development principles.*	*This month*	*Conduct a review of activity plans to see whether youth development principles are represented.*
Fundraising			
***SMART** Outcomes (See **Tool 38**)*			
Community Participation			

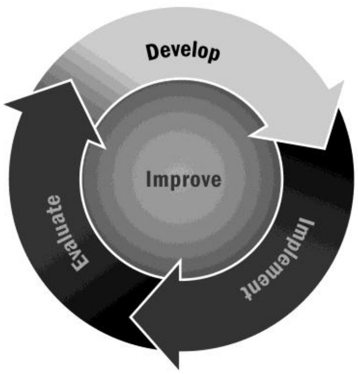
Goal Setting Worksheet – Template

Vision Statement

Goal Areas	Specific Goals	Timeline	Activities/Notes

Tool 39

Developing a Theory of Change



Directions: *Developing a theory of change can be a complex process, and there are many great resources out there to help you. Rather than tell you exactly how to create one, this tool will provide you with important definitions and resources so you can explore the topic yourself in more depth.*

What Is a Theory of Change (TOC)?

A TOC is a visual representation of what your program is going to do to achieve its larger vision or goals. Simply put, it shows the change you are going to make and how that change is going to happen. A good TOC can help guide your programming decisions and serve as a communication tool for funders and other key stakeholders.

How Is a TOC Different From a Logic Model?

Many people use the two terms interchangeably, but they are actually two different and separate documents. A TOC shows a causal link between strategies and outcomes. A logic model goes into a bit more detail about your activities, your inputs, and your outcomes but doesn't necessarily show how one affects another.

Is There a Specific Format I Should Use?

No. There are different kinds of theories of change and different ways of graphically representing your program. Some are artistic, using images and pictures. Others are linear, using sets of boxes connected by arrows. The important thing is to show your intended goals and the strategies you will use to accomplish them. We can't tell you what format will work best for your program. It is best to look at a variety of examples to get ideas. Here are a few different ones to give you a sense of the range and styles organizations use:

- The Wallace Foundation's TOC for their philanthropy work: http://www.wallacefoundation.org/learn-about-wallace/approach-and-strategy/Pages/our-approach-to-philanthropy.aspx
- The Forum for Youth Investment's TOC for their Ready by 21 initiative: http://www.readyby21.org/what-ready-21/our-theory-change
- Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative's TOC: http://www.dsni.org/youth-opportunities-and-development-0

What Are Some of the Key Steps in Developing a TOC?

- **Determining the purpose of a TOC** – Before you start developing your TOC, you'll have to spend a little time thinking about how you want to use it. Is it for evaluation purposes? To communicate your program model to funders, legislators, and board members? As a guide for program leadership and staff? Determining your purpose will help you decide how to proceed with the next several steps.
- **Gathering stakeholder input** – It is important to involve a variety of key stakeholders in your TOC process. You may gather input from them individually or in small groups, or you may involve them in a large group TOC process.
- **Identifying assumptions** – Every afterschool and expanded learning program is built on a set of assumptions relating to how and why it is operating. Even before you develop your goals, it is a good idea to identify the assumptions that are built into your program. This might include things like "being in afterschool programming is better for the young people of our school than going home and being alone after school" or "youth in our school who are falling behind won't be able to catch up without additional academic support."
- **Developing goals** – Having clearly articulated goals is essential when developing a TOC. You have done this as part of your goal-setting process by using **Tool 37**. You'll want to revisit these as you start working on your TOC.
- **Outcome mapping (sometimes called backwards mapping)** – Developing an outcome map is often part of developing a TOC. This step involves brainstorming a list of outcomes (which can be short and long term) and linking them to specific strategies or program elements.
- **Creating a narrative to accompany your TOC** – Ideally, you'll want some kind of narrative to accompany your TOC in order to explain what people are seeing. You want your TOC to be understandable without a narrative, of course, but a paragraph explaining exactly what you hope will happen with your program can be useful when distributing the TOC to outside audiences.

Where Can I Learn More?

- ***You Can Get There From Here: Using a Theory of Change Approach to Plan Urban Education Reform***

  James P. Connell and Adena M. Klem of the Institute for Research and Reform in Education (2000), *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 11(1), 93–120. This article can be accessed online at http://www.irre.org/sites/default/files/publication_pdfs/jepc_0.pdf. It provides a definition of a TOC and explains how it is used, what features it should contain, and other relevant information.

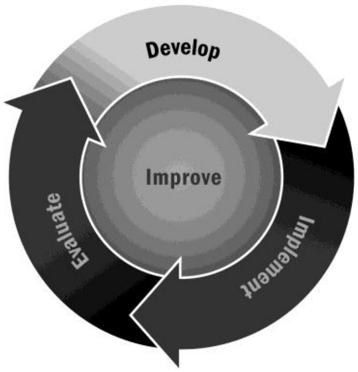
- ***Theory of Change: A Practical Tool for Action, Results and Learning***

  This document, prepared for the Annie E. Casey Foundation in 2004 by Organizational Research Services, contains a wealth of information about how to develop a theory of change in partnership with your community and contains several specific exercises to help you with the process. Learn more by visiting http://www.aecf.org/upload/publicationfiles/cc2977k440.pdf.

- ***Center for Theory of Change***

  The Center for Theory of Change is a nonprofit organization established to promote quality standards and recommendations for the development and implementation of a theory of change, with a particular focus on its use and application in the areas of international development, sustainability, education, human rights, and social change. Their website contains a variety of information about defining and building a TOC, which you can access at http://www.theoryofchange.org.

Logic Model Planning Tool



Directions: As we mention in the text, there are many different ways to create a logic model and many good resources out there to help you along your way. One of the best and most comprehensive is the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide, which can be downloaded from their website (http://www.wkkf.org). We offer one simplified approach below to get you started, but feel free to adjust, adapt, and seek out additional resources to support you as you develop a logic model that suits your program.

Step 1 – Bring Together Your Planning Group

A logic model should be developed in partnership with a strategic group—perhaps your advisory board or a group of representatives from your key stakeholder groups. It will likely take several meetings to develop your logic model. Ask people to commit to attending at least two or three meetings of at least two hours and to reviewing drafts between meetings. This can be a lengthy process, and it is important not to rush.

Step 2 – Determine the Scope of Your Logic Model

Together with your team, decide whether you are creating one logic model for your whole program or one for each major program goal. Based on this decision, talk about the level of detail you want to include.

Step 3 – Identify Your Components

As we stated in the text, a logic model shows the steps you need to take to make your program goals happen. It is your picture of how things will change and how you will achieve your intended outcomes. Most logic models contain five or six main components:

- Goals
- Objectives or action steps
- Inputs
- Activities
- Outputs (optional)
- Outcomes

Together with your planning team, use the table below to develop a list of things to include under each component. Don't worry about order and format right now. Just make a list under each column.

Goals	Objectives or Action Steps	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
You developed your goals using **Tool 37**, so you shouldn't need to create new ones. Fill in the goals from **Tool 37** here.	Take these from your goal-setting process. Fill in the steps you noted in **Tool 37**.	These are what you need to carry out the action steps, including staff, supplies, and space. Don't forget to put your program theory here; that is your most important input.	These are the actual activities staff members will do with young people.	These are the direct results of a program—usually the size or scope of services.	This is where your SMART outcomes from **Tool 38** should go. You may want to break these up into two columns—one for long-term outcomes (sometimes called impacts) and one for short-term or intermediate outcomes.
Example: *To provide a variety of arts classes after school*	*Partner with local arts organizations to facilitate on-site arts classes*	• *Local arts partners* • *Staff* • *Art supplies, messy space, and performance space*	• *Self-portraits* • *Dance* • *African drumming* • *Final showcase*	• *150 middle school youth served annually*	*Participants are able to talk about a variety of art media.* *Participants demonstrate improved skill in their chosen medium.*

Step 4 – Develop a Presentation

For simplicity, you can use the grid above to show the progression of your program from goals to outcomes. At a minimum, you will want to take your lists from the above grid and put them in some kind of logical order so that it is clear how one component flows into another. Most logic models, however, have some kind of graphic representation of this progression that uses some combination of shapes and arrows. This can be as simple as putting arrows between the columns above or as complicated as creating a flowchart with different levels and types of boxes and arrows. Together with your team, determine whether you want to turn the grid and lists above into a graphic that shows the relationship of one item to another and how you want to do that.

A couple of key tips to keep in mind:

- Remember your audience. Make sure that you aren't using abbreviations or jargon and that others can understand what you have written.
- Keep it simple. A page crowded with boxes and words will overwhelm people. Do your best to simplify your language and create multiple logic models if you simply can't cut back.
- Use uniform shapes, line thicknesses, and fonts to avoid visual clutter.

Step 5 – Gather Feedback

Share the draft logic model with staff, partners, community members, and families. Make sure that what you have created is clear and that it depicts what you want to depict about your program. Make adjustments based on feedback.

Step 6 – Revisit and Revise Often

A logic model is not intended to be created once and never used or revised. It should be a living document—one you update and revise regularly with your team as you make changes, adapt program elements, or tweak your program goals and intended outcomes. We suggest revisiting the logic model quarterly (or at least twice a year) to see whether it still makes sense.