



Transcript - Selecting Strategies

Now that you've chosen your SMART goal, you're ready to select one or more strategies in support of that goal. If you haven't decided on a goal yet, we encourage you to go back and review that video and focus on deciding what it is you want to accomplish first. Then, you can choose your strategies for how you will accomplish that goal.

Although we urge you to only select one goal for now, you may need to employ multiple, complementary strategies to achieve that goal. We do suggest you limit yourself to no more than four strategies to implement at a given time. Too many strategies can make the work seem overwhelming or spread your efforts too thin, and thus decrease your chances of success.

There are a number of considerations to keep in mind when choosing your strategies.

- Are there best practices that should be followed for achieving your particular goal? Whenever possible, select programs, trainings, events, activities, services, and policies that have evidence of effectiveness.
- Is the strategy you have chosen appropriate for accomplishing your stated goal? Even if best practices for your particular goal do not exist, is it logical that your selected strategies would lead to your desired outcomes?
- Are your selected strategies feasible to implement in the manner needed to have the desired effect? If you only give a half-hearted effort to an intervention, it may fail completely.
- Are your selected strategies acceptable to your targeted group(s)? Does it fit their identified needs and preferences? Strategies are only as effective as participants are receptive to them. One of the best ways to identify strategies that are acceptable to your target audience is to involve representatives from your target audience in the process of developing your strategies. And once you begin implementing a strategy, if you notice that something isn't working, don't hesitate to go back to your target audience to figure out what needs to be tweaked to be more effective.
- A fifth consideration is, which strategies will reach the largest number of your target population? With limited resources, you want to get the most "bang for your buck" by choosing strategies that will reach the most individuals in a meaningful way.



- Next, do you have adequate resources to implement your preferred strategies? What costs (in time, money, personnel, and other tangible resources) are associated with your selected strategies? Do the potential benefits of your strategy justify the costs?
- Finally, what is needed to sustain the effect of your chosen strategies? It is common for campuses to decide on an intervention, such as developing a new policy, but not consider how to sustain its impact over the long-term. If new staff are not made aware of or trained in the policy, it will quickly become obsolete or be applied inappropriately.

This may seem like a lot to consider just to take action on your campus towards suicide prevention. However, taking the time to choose meaningful goals and appropriate, well thought-out strategies will make the work easier to actually do and greatly increase your chances of success.

Please refer to the “Selecting Strategies” handout for examples of strategies connected with specific goals. This is not an exhaustive list; the strategies you could use are infinite. However, the handout is designed to get your creative juices flowing. You will need to select strategies that are tailored to the unique needs of your campus community.