

Recommendations on Creating an Action Plan

An action plan should directly address the issues that were identified during the climate assessment. Some of the action plan's steps can include recommendations provided by the organization's members, since they possess a unique vantage to identify better ways of doing business.

Action plans need to concretely identify all steps leadership hopes to take, and clearly classify the specific goal for each. It is important to identify the specific metrics that will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of each intervention step. For example, if the climate assessment shows the organization rarely submits end-of tour award nominations in a timely manner, the action plan could direct a responsible party to calculate the number of days between award submission and each member's projected rotation date during the previous 12 months, then conduct the same analysis for subsequent nominations submitted each fiscal quarter, to determine whether submissions are made in a more timely manner.

Prioritize the action plan's individual steps by estimating the impact each of the validated issues has on the organization's climate and ability to meet its mission. Still, some relatively minor issues may involve easily-implemented steps to remedy them. Immediately pursuing some of these "low-hanging fruit" actions can rapidly resolve some relatively minor issues in short order, while demonstrating leaders' commitment to rapidly leverage findings from the climate assessment to improve the organization's climate.

During the early stages of developing an action plan, many prospective actions may be considered. In the end, a far more limited number of steps will be included in the plan. Provide a list of all potential actions that were initially identified from the climate assessment. These can be divided into three categories, name those that are:

- Not possible (e.g., by virtue of legal prohibition, financial limitations, mission requirements, etc.)
- Possible, and that leadership elects to pursue, and
- Possible, but will not be pursued by leadership at the present time

Leaders should actively publicize the action plan to the organization's members; let them know exactly what steps will be taken in an effort to improve climate. Moreover, leaders should keep the organization's members informed—on a regular and frequent basis—about progress that's been made completing the steps outlined in the action plan.

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To accomplish this, leaders can create a tracking document (example below) that illustrates action plan progress in real time, showing the status of each item (e.g., “Not Started”, “Ongoing”, “Complete”). Update the tracking document regularly, and make it available to the organization’s members.

ABC Command Climate Assessment Action Plan							
Today's date:		17-Aug-2017					
Action Step Number	Description of Issue/Concern/Problem	Steps / Actions to Address Issue	Responsible party(s)	Anticipated Completion (Day/Month or "Ongoing")	Days Untill Anticipated Completion	Status (Not Started, Ongoing, Complete, Delayed)	Time till Due
1	Lack of timely end-of-tour award submissions	Create calendar to track anticipated rotation dates; establish >90 day deadline	Department heads	Ongoing	Continuous	CONTINUOUS	N/A
2	Lack of vehicle for submitting suggestions	Create e-mail address for suggestions; place suggestion box in lunch room; check each weekly	Chief of Staff	28-Aug-17	11	ongoing	< 2 WEEKS
3	IT support inadequate; all efforts to improve contractor service quality have failed	Investigate option to terminate contract with current provider & find new provider	Chief of Staff	31-Oct-17	75	not started	>1 MONTH
4	Low number of social events during work hours	Schedule 1 social event per fiscal quarter; establish rotating hosting schedule among department heads	Department heads	25-Aug-17	8	complete	
5	Lack of off-site training opportunities	Earmark FY2018 command funds for offsite training; create list of requests for training	Chief of Staff	15-Apr-18	241	ongoing	>1 MONTH
6	All-Hands meetings held infrequently	Establish All-Hands meeting schedule for FY18; minimum one per fiscal quarter	Commander	28-Sep-17	42	ongoing	>1 MONTH
7	Lack of cross-training among departments' administrative personnel; absences aren't well-covered	Establish cross-training sessions among all admin personnel	Chief of Staff	15-Oct-17	59	ongoing	>1 MONTH

Ultimately, leaders can leverage the tracking document to demonstrate to the organization’s members that they are willing to listen—and are pursuing concrete steps to improve climate.