






Communicating Health Goals and Objectives

“There is no acting or doing of any kind, till it be recognized that there is a thing to be done; the thing once recognized, doing in a thousand shapes becomes possible.”

—Thomas Carlyle

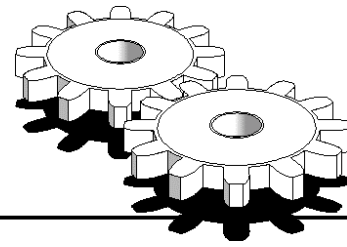
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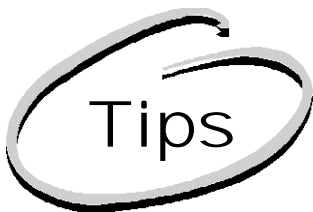
Developing a vision of healthy people in healthy communities, and establishing goals and objectives to meet that vision, can be nothing more than an academic exercise if the vision, goals, and objectives are not effectively communicated to and “owned by” the community. Identifying the target audiences, crafting clear messages, and effectively communicating these messages to the target audiences will increase the likelihood of the state plan being accepted and used by state and community partners. Enlisting key advocates, or “champions,” early in the process is another important ingredient for success. (See “Building the Foundation: Leadership and Structure” and “Identifying and Engaging Community Partners.”) Just as private sector companies conduct market research long before they try to produce or sell a product, state and community Healthy People initiatives should begin planning their marketing efforts in the earliest stages of development.

Action Checklist: Communicating Health Goals and Objectives

(See page 113 for a complete planning and development checklist.)



- Establish marketing and communication goals and objectives
- Prepare state plan for publication and dissemination
- Conduct target audience research
- Develop companion documents that target specific audiences or focus areas
- Develop publication/dissemination plan
- Manage document review process
- Design state-specific identity and logo
- Publish and release state plan
- Develop and implement marketing and communication plan
- Evaluate marketing plan



Clear messages begin with clear thinking

- ▶ Identify priority audiences—intended users of the plan
- ▶ Clearly define what you want people to do with the plan
- ▶ Identify the most important ideas to convey

Create a marketing plan

- ▶ Involve your public information officer or marketing director
- ▶ Consider asking or hiring an outside group to gather your marketing information and help you develop a marketing plan
- ▶ Write down your strategy—even if it's just one page
- ▶ Talk through the marketing steps at a steering committee meeting or assign to a new committee

Learn how to target your message

- ▶ Learn about the objectives important to individuals who are familiar and unfamiliar with Healthy People, the role of public health, and government planning efforts
- ▶ Learn about the objectives important to individuals with both favorable and unfavorable opinions about past planning efforts
- ▶ Look for the intersection of what you want to say and what people want to hear
- ▶ Recruit marketing partners to find the best “selling points” for different audiences

A picture is worth a thousand words

- ▶ State Healthy People logos and letterhead build recognition, generate excitement, and create a unique identity
- ▶ Make your logos and marketing materials available to partners

Don't leave your objectives hanging. Surround them with the information and inspiration your audiences need to act.

- ▶ Stories of real people that illustrate the issue
- ▶ Trend data
- ▶ Specific strategy and policy ideas
- ▶ Examples of state and local programs that work
- ▶ Contact persons
- ▶ Committed partners in the public and private sectors

One size rarely fits all

- ▶ Communicate your plan and messages in formats your different audiences prefer (e.g., print, web, conferences)
- ▶ Consider the “bang for the buck” in producing two or three targeted versions of the plan, compared to one plan for everyone
- ▶ Targeted executive summaries or “companion documents” can highlight or expand upon objectives and strategies for audiences such as policy makers, business leaders, or schools
- ▶ Get partners to distribute your plan to their members, highlighting in a cover letter the areas in which their members have a role

Process in Action: Examples from the Field

Below are examples of how the nation and states utilized communication to achieve sustained action, published plans, and marketed the initiative.

From the National Initiative

Sustained Action through Communication

Internet

All Healthy People materials published since 1995 are placed on the Healthy People web site: <http://www.health.gov/healthypeople/Publications/hppublist.htm>. Prior to the January 2000 release of the final Healthy People 2010 document, the web site will be redesigned. It will continue to be maintained throughout the implementation phase. In 1997 HHS launched the Healthy People 2010 web site: <http://www.health.gov/hpcomments/>. This web site is the complete repository of all public comments received during two Healthy People 2010 public comment periods in 1997 and 1998.

Consortium Exchange

ODPHP publishes a quarterly newsletter for Consortium members to share news about prevention activities related to achieving the nation's health objectives.
<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople/Implementation/Consortium/Newsletter/default.htm>.

Consortium members spreading the word

Consortium members share news of Healthy People activities via their organizational newsletters, web sites, and list servers. For example, COSSMHO, the National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations, used its newsletter to announce to its constituency the invitation to submit conference abstracts for the launch of Healthy People 2010, at the "*Partnerships for Health in the New Millennium*." The 1998 Annual Report of the Asian and Pacific Islander American Health Forum highlighted their role in hosting the first Healthy People progress review held outside of Washington, D.C.

Progress review reports

The national initiative has produced two-page summaries to communicate progress on either a Healthy People focus area or crosscutting population objectives. These reports document data objectives, barriers, and successes in meeting the year 2000 objectives.
<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople/Publications/hppublist.htm>

Midcourse Review and 1995 Revisions

This report communicated the progress made toward the year 2000 objectives at the mid-point of the decade. The report was a call to action, renewing the Healthy People effort. It assessed the challenges that remained and confirmed that the occasion for achieving a healthier America was at hand. The chapter on Consortium Action describes the efforts of both national and state organizations to achieve health improvement.

Publication Plans

Healthy People 2010 Objectives: Draft for Public Comment

This draft includes a background section on the Healthy People initiative, a description of the two overarching goals and an overview of the proposed objectives for Healthy People 2010. The draft also lists e-mail addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers for all the individuals involved in the national development process. The final document will be released in January 2000 in Washington, DC. The draft for public comment is available on the Internet: <http://www.health.gov/hpcomments/2010Draft/object.htm>.

Healthy People 2010

Healthy People 2010 will be a three-volume set. Volume 1 is directed toward policy makers and will be short (approximately 50 pages). Volume 2 will contain the objectives and supporting text with scientific references. Volume 3 will contain information on tracking the objectives with operational definitions and data source information, so that states and localities can replicate the measures.

Companion documents

Several HHS agencies are planning to produce companion documents to Healthy People 2010 in partnership with private organizations. These companion documents will focus on specific populations or settings and will be released over the decade.

Marketing

Professional assistance

HHS has evaluated the *Healthy People* audiences with the assistance of communication professionals. Outreach to new constituencies continues with the Healthy People Consortium and is continuing to expand. In addition, the development of the Healthy People initiative has maintained a highly visible presence at all national and many local meetings throughout the past few years.

Surgeon General's Launch of Healthy People 2010 Conference, January 24 - 28, 2000

The Partnership for Health in the New Millennium is a joint conference sponsored by the Healthy People Consortium and the Partnerships for Networked Consumer Health Information, celebrating the launch of Healthy People objectives for 2010. For more information, visit the following web site: <http://www.health.gov/partnerships>.

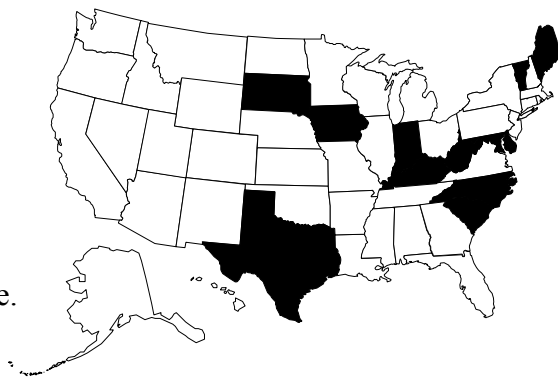
Healthy People logo competition

The Department of Health and Human Services has initiated a public competition for a new Healthy People logo to use for the next set of Healthy People objectives. The goal of the graphical representation is to show progress, growth, and success.

From State Initiatives

Sustained Action through Communication

Delaware organized its publication, *Healthy Delaware 2000*, to offer a plan of action for many people and agencies throughout the state. The plan's chapters include Opportunities, Health Problems and Objectives (containing background information on each health problem with measurable objectives) and Strategies.



In its mid-decade review of *Healthy Kentuckians 2000*, the **Kentucky** Department for Health Services detailed implementation activities conducted by public health agencies, the Kentucky Legislature, voluntary organizations, universities, businesses, citizens, and other active partners. The 1996 publication also communicated to its partners additional action steps to achieve the year 2000 objectives.

To aid implementation of the *Healthy Iowans 2000* plan, **Iowa** state agencies responsible for priority activities are listed in each chapter. When the Iowa Department of Public Health conducted its mid-course review of all Iowa goals and action steps, groups with primary responsibility for implementation were asked to make an assessment of their progress.

The *Healthy Hoosiers 2000 (Indiana)* plan listed private and public agency partners, called Primary Implementers, to help the state achieve each section. To help communities link to key individuals, names and contact information for public and private sector contacts were also listed for each section.

Publication Plans

Design multiple documents or print sections of a single document for distribution to different target audiences.

In **Iowa**, all chapters of the *Healthy Iowans 2000* plan are available as separate publications available from the Department of Public Health. By distributing smaller sections, the Department of Public Health can focus audiences' attention on areas that interest them and can be used for action. While the Department saves resources, they also avoid overwhelming recipients with more information than they require.

Format a single document to appeal to a broad range of audiences, including the general population.

Texas formatted its brief *Healthy Texans 2000* publication to be easily understood by a wide range of audiences. Photographs, charts, and color enhance the publication's appeal. The content of the report was developed from background papers developed by workgroups, which were focused on specific health topic areas.

Maryland and **North Carolina** both produced brochures about the state plans that summarized the pertinent information for a more general audience. The brochures were distributed to audiences at various public health displays and meetings as a more portable version to take home and reference.

Marketing

Many states, including **Maine**, use the Department of Health's web site to inform professionals and the public about health objectives and progress toward achieving them. Users of the Maine web site can access graphs to track Maine's year 2000 objectives and compare the Maine Health Status Indicators to the U.S.

West Virginia developed and released a Healthy West Virginians 2010 logo and motto several months in advance of their planning process.

The **Delaware** Division of Public Health hired a private marketing subcontractor to develop a marketing plan and identity campaign for the state's 2010 objectives and plan.

The **District of Columbia** released its *Healthy People 2010 Objectives: Draft for Public Review and Comment* during National Public Health Week 1999.

The **South Dakota** Department of Health communicates its goals and objectives through periodic publications, news releases, a web page, presentations at health care conferences, and ongoing meetings with partners.

The **Iowa** Department of Public Health is using social marketing principles to help focus outreach. The Department of Public Health is also using its web site to publicize the Healthy Iowans 2010 time line, public comment period, staff contact information,

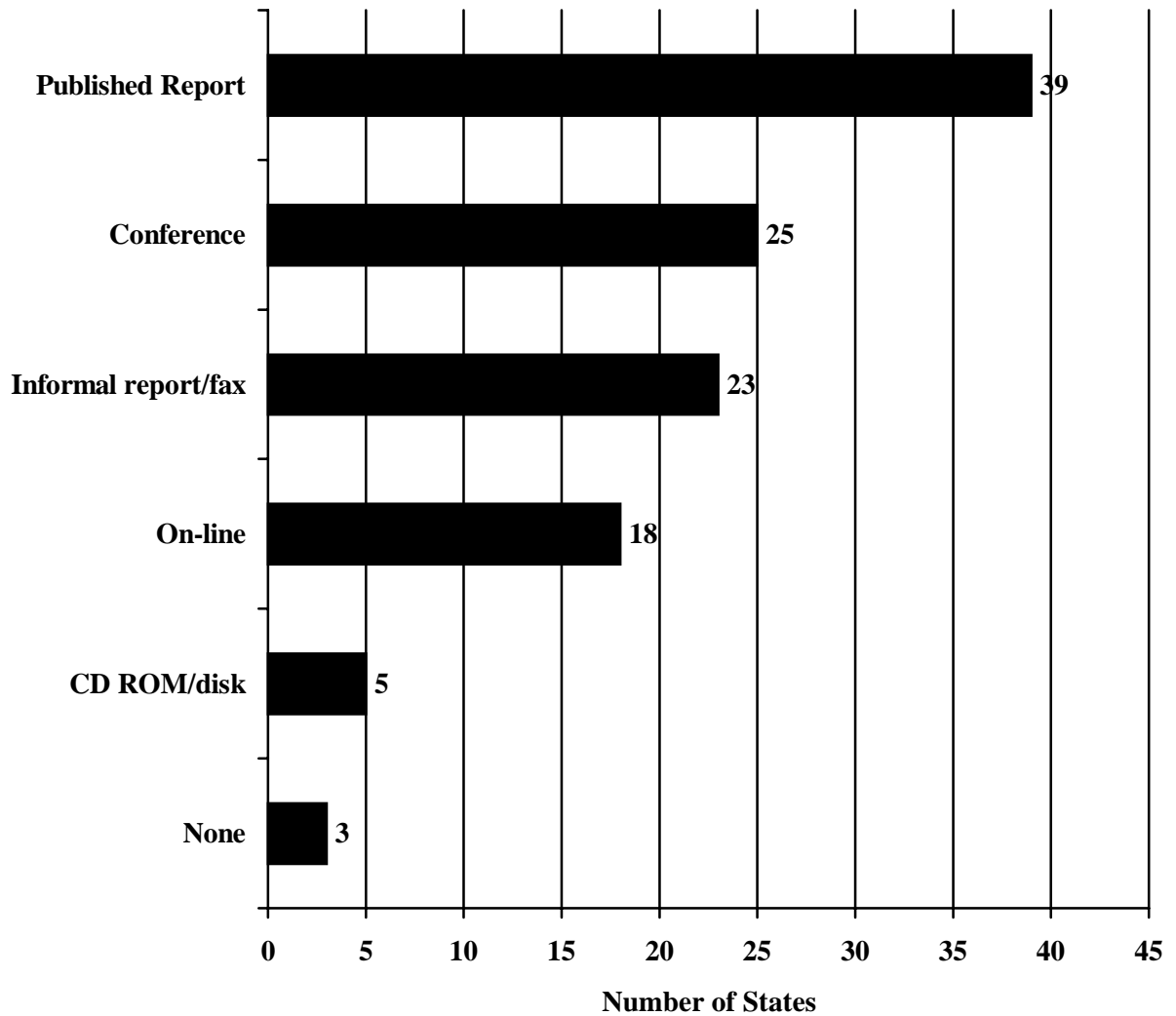
technical assistance opportunities, and summaries of progress toward each area in the state's year 2000 plan.

Two **South Carolina** Healthy People Coalitions used the Healthy People 2000 objectives for worksites as criteria for awards to businesses that were promoting health through their policies and activities. Annually, businesses qualifying for the Healthy People Worksite Awards are recognized at a ceremony and presented with Healthy People plaques. The local coalitions sent out press releases about the businesses and their awards. Newspapers in their areas have also reported these.

Another **South Carolina** coalition developed a partnership with the local NBC affiliate for one year. The television station produced three public service messages on health objectives each quarter and ran them during prime time at no cost to the coalition. They also highlighted the health issues in their newscasts, using the Healthy People logo and name.

Vermont continuously raised awareness of the Healthy Vermonters 2000 plan and its progress through a variety of mechanisms. Any event such as publishing an annual report, achieving a goal, or receiving a grant that was related to an objective was publicized. Vermont also created a logo that was used extensively. The state relied heavily on the media (newspaper, television, radio, etc.) for its promotional efforts. Through this public awareness, citizens came forth to volunteer their help. Vermont also publicized areas that were weaknesses, which recruited even more volunteers. In 1996, Vermont held a second kick-off meeting to re-energize the year 2000 process.

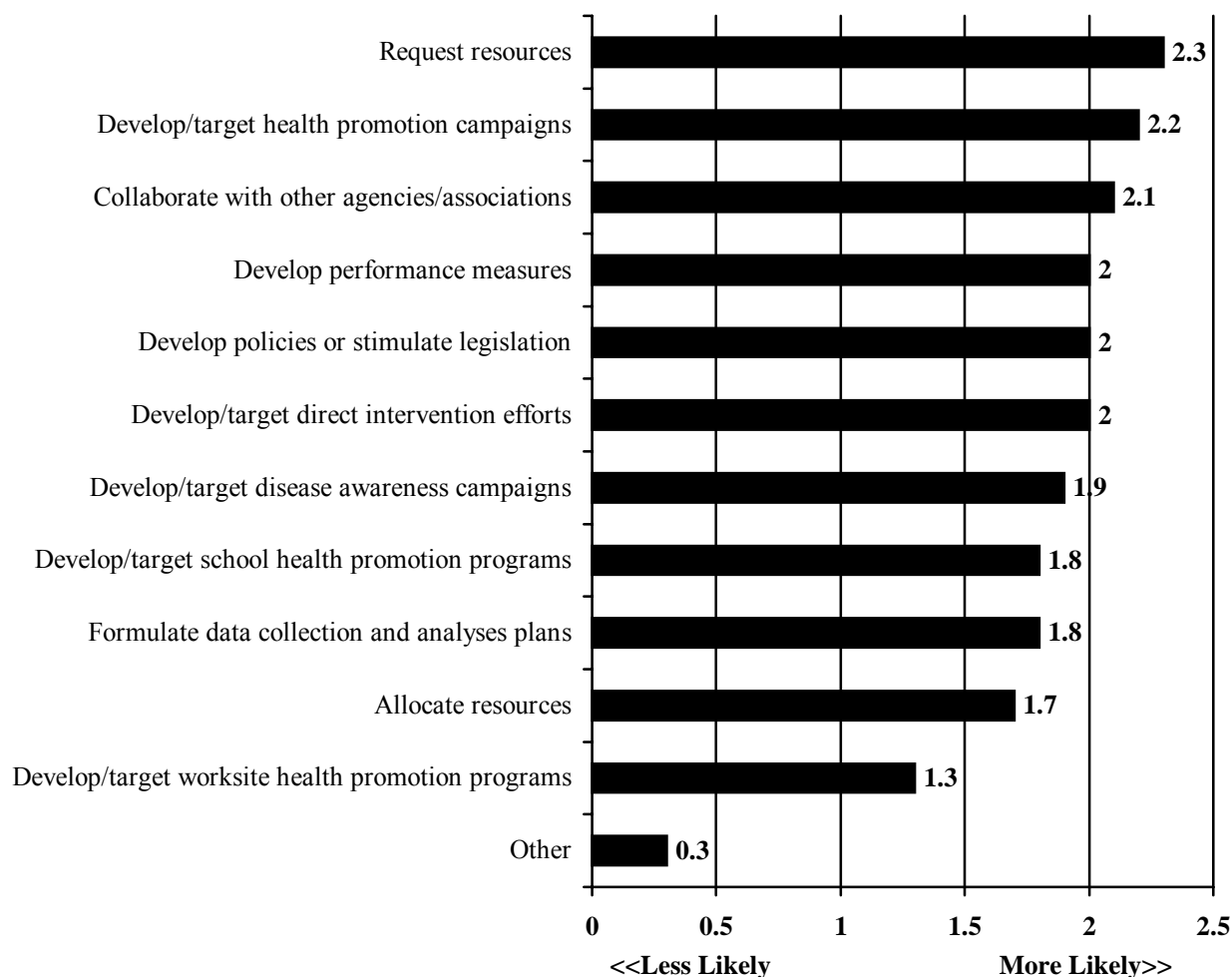
Number of States that Cited Methods for Disseminating Information About Year 2000 Objectives by Dissemination Method (N=44)



Note: States may have been counted more than once since some provided information by more than one method.

Source: Public Health Foundation. *Measuring Health Objectives and Indicators: 1997 State and Local Capacity Survey*. March 1998.

State Likelihood of Using Year 2000 Objectives by Purpose (N=45)



Note: The following conversion of frequency from words to numbers allowed for weighted averaging
Not at all=0, Infrequently=1, Somewhat=2, and Frequently=3.

Source: Public Health Foundation. *Measuring Health Objectives and Indicators: 1997 State and Local Capacity Survey*. March 1998.

Simple "Market Research" Strategies



Learning the needs, desires, and preferences of the target audiences does not need to be time consuming. Whether this learning takes place at the water cooler or from a marketing consultant, the point is to know your audience. Below are some of the many ways to learn from and about the people and organizations considered partners in state plan development, as well as those who will use and implement the plan.



Telephone Strategies	Face-to-Face Strategies	Electronic Strategies
Brief, informal calls to partners	Conduct face-to-face interviews with key partners	Email or post requests for ideas
Structured conference calls with groups or individuals	Hold structured discussions at scheduled association, staff, or community group meetings	Research known audience perspectives, exposure to similar initiatives, and communication preferences
Telephone surveys	Convene focus groups	Put draft materials or surveys on the web for feedback

Sample "Market Research" Questions

Carefully designed questions will help focus learning on the most important areas. The right questions will depend upon the audience, project goals, level of input desired and the stage in the 2010 planning process. For example, if the steering committee and work groups were already formed, planners would focus questions on how to develop and implement the plan rather than how to engage key partners and the community in the planning process.

<p>Planning Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does your organization participate in planning processes? • What kinds of organizations have approached you to be a part of an advisory committee? How do you choose which ones you will join? • If you were inviting others (members of the target audience) to attend a work group meeting for this project, what would you say to get them to come? What would you avoid saying? • What was your impression of the state's year 2000 planning process? What worthwhile came out of it? • Tell me about a good experience that you have had working with public health. 	<p>Design and production</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes a plan useful? What kinds of plans are not useful? • If you need detailed information about a topic, do you prefer to have it included at the back of a publication, in a separate publication, or on a web site? • Which of these formats is easy to use (present two or more visual formats)? • What do you think the people who wrote this page want you to do?
<p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where do you get ideas for your work or community activities? • What kinds of published recommendations and plans have you seen from other state agencies? • What impression do you have of government planning efforts? • When you receive plans from other agencies, what do you do? • If you were in charge of marketing the state's health plan to others (members of the target audience), what would you do? • What do you read? • How do you like to get information about emerging objectives in public health? 	<p>Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes a healthy community? • How do you contribute to your community's health? In what areas would you like to do more? • Have you ever used another agency's plan or objectives in your own work? What was the most important factor in your decision? • How important are goals and plans to your daily work? What would be an incentive to tie your program activities to the state health objectives? • What would it take for you to commit to help achieve a state health objective? • If your supervisor asked you about how you used the states' year 2000 objectives, what would you say?

How to Develop a Marketing Plan



A marketing plan clarifies how a state can share the 2010 vision with others, promote the published plan, and “make things happen.” To develop marketing goals and objectives, planners must determine priority audiences, desired results, key messages, strategies and tactics, and marketing partners.

1. Priority audiences

Whose opinions or actions are most important to the success of the 2010 process and the implementation of objectives? Identify potential target audiences and choose two to three of most importance.

Sample Target Audiences for 2010 Marketing Plans:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> policymakers, including elected officials | <input type="checkbox"/> state voluntary organizations with local affiliates |
| <input type="checkbox"/> private sector health organizations, including managed care organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> public health leaders and program managers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> private sector employers | <input type="checkbox"/> front-line public health staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> medical societies and other health professional associations | <input type="checkbox"/> grass roots groups with the capacity to address health objectives |
| <input type="checkbox"/> school and education leaders | <input type="checkbox"/> potential community advocates for priorities |

2. Desired Results

What do you want each target audience to do or believe? Be specific! The final 2010 plan and marketing materials should, explicitly or subtly, be designed to achieve the desired outcome.

As examples, you might want the target audience to...

(do)

- ... use the state's 2010 objectives to develop policies to improve public health infrastructure
- ... use objectives and recommendations in the 2010 plan to evaluate proposed legislation relevant to focus areas
- ... incorporate components of the plan into agency strategic plans
- ... commit resources and staff to develop new data sources

(believe)

- ... be eager to work toward achieving objectives in their communities
- ... support the planning and evaluation role of public health
- ... believe the plan boosts accountability
- ... feel personal responsibility to be healthier for a healthy state
- ... think the 2010 priorities are fair
- ... believe that state and local resources should be tied to objectives

3. Key Messages

For each audience, what are the main messages to communicate? Perhaps your main message is that this is a “people’s plan,” a governor’s plan, a call to action, or a measure of the current path to success. Whatever your message, be sure to identify key words and phrases that support it. If your market research has identified that your target population responds favorably to “milestones,” “action plans,” and “steps to success”—but turns off when they hear “objectives” or “benchmarks”—include the preferred words in your key messages. Remember to be consistent with vocabulary. Key messages should be reinforced in all communications about the plan, including slogans, conference presentations, press releases, and executive summaries.

4. Marketing Strategies and Tactics

How will you reach each audience?

Strategies describe your general marketing approach. For some audiences and purposes, the best strategy may be to blanket the audience with messages about 2010 in a short period of time. For others, your strategy might be to selectively promote 2010 in connection with timely events (e.g., budget hearings) over several years.

Tactics are the methods of communication, such as:

- posters
- television ads
- newspaper articles, editorials
- conference booths
- training and presentations
- letterhead
- bumper stickers
- fax or electronic newsletters
- individual meetings
- brochures
- calendars
- web sites

Assess the communication environment of the target audience. The way to reach policy makers may be through their staff or targeted newsletters, whereas the way to reach public health program managers may be through an annual conference or posters at work.

List marketing strategies with a budget in mind. However, a longer menu of marketing options can help identify marketing opportunities and resources in the future.

5. Marketing Partners

General media, special interest media, advocacy organizations, public relations offices, health education units, graphics departments, private health care organizations, and professional organizations with newsletters or web sites may be excellent partners in promoting year 2010 objectives. Healthy People steering committees may include many potential marketing partners who have experience with campaigns and already have an interest in promoting the 2010 plan.

Exclusive arrangements with a few marketing partners who are committed (e.g., “Channel 12 Cares”) may sometimes be more effective than multiple, less focused partners.

Explore options with marketing professionals and check your agency policies.

Evaluate Your Marketing Plan

Just as a marketing plan can clarify how a state can share the 2010 vision with others, the marketing evaluation plan can identify whether efforts were effective. The following factors can be used throughout the process internally as well as periodically be posed to the target audience throughout the decade.

- Was the planning process effective in preparing the marketing goals and action plan?
- Was there timely follow-through on marketing activities such as information requests?
- Is the marketing strategy a clear representation of the primary vision of the state plan?
- Is the marketing plan sensitive to the community's cultural dynamics?
- Did the development process include input from a diverse group of people?
- Were various media employed effectively to promote the state plan's goals, actions, and accomplishments? Was there media coverage (e.g., newspaper articles)? Did associations and other community partners use the logo, articles, or other marketing materials in their communications?
- How was input from partners used in developing and refining the marketing plan? Through what mechanisms was input collected (e.g., surveys, focus groups, consultants)?
- Has the marketing process assisted progress in meeting the state plan's specific objectives?
- How does the marketing plan mirror the goals and objectives of the overall state's plan?
- Has marketing generated funding or other resources for the initiative?
- Were messages designed to clarify what audiences should do with the state plan or what they should believe? Were marketing messages clear to targeted audiences?
- Did marketing efforts meet state objectives to influence the actions or beliefs of target audiences? (e.g., Did policy makers propose or pass legislation based on or using the state plan?)



Resources for Communicating Health Goals and Objectives

- ★ **American Public Health Association, Model Standards Project. “Media Relations.” Available from American Public Health Association, 800 Eye Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20001-3710. (202) 777-2742. 1993.**

This manual provides local governments with strategies to obtain media coverage for their efforts to develop local health programs that integrate the “Healthy Communities 2000: Model Standards’ Principles.” It considers the interrelated needs of the local health departments for coverage and the local media for news of local interest. The manual provides strategies and tips for working with local media and reviews basic procedures for developing news releases.

- ★ **National Cancer Institute. *Making Health Communication Programs Work: A Planners Guide*. 1992. <http://oc.nci.nih.gov/services/HCPW/HOME.HTM>**

The guide includes information on planning and strategy selection, determining target audiences, writing program plans and developing a timetable, selecting channels and materials, characteristics of mass media channels, developing materials and pre-testing. It also includes sections on implementing a program, establishing process evaluation measures, steps for involving intermediaries in a program, assessing effectiveness, evaluating outcomes, conducting impact studies, and revising the program.

- ★ **Siege M., Doner L. *Marketing Public Health: Strategies to Promote Social Change*. Aspen Publications, Maryland. 1998.**

This book focuses on marketing principles for public health practice, including challenges and opportunities for marketing social change and public health. It also uses case studies and focuses on using marketing principles to design, implement, and evaluate public health interventions.

Please see Appendix A for other resources for communicating health goals and objectives.