**Universal Questions**

**To Ask Yourself When Planning Anything**

* What are you going to do?
* Why are you going to do it?
* How are you going to do it?
* How will you know that you’ve been successful?
* Do you need any additional money?
* Do you need help from anyone else?

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**What are you going to do?**

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| **Objective** | Written so that it is Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Results-driven, and Time-limited (SMART) |
| **Objective Title** | The “nutshell” version of the objective – short and descriptive |

**Why are you going to do it?**

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| **Objective Purpose** | What kind of objective is it? What purpose does it serve? |
| **Institutional Goals** | Which goal(s) or part of the strategic plan does the objective support or advance? |
| **Objective Types** | There may be a number of underlying reasons for this objective… which reasons best fit? |
| **Planning Priorities** | Does this objective support an institutional priority? |
| **Associated Standards** | Does this objective correct an issue of partial or non-compliance with accreditation standards? Does it provide evidence of compliance with a standard? |
| **Associated Outcomes** | Is this objective intended to address a gap in performance for an assessment outcome? |
| **SWOT Analysis** | This objective may flow from an analysis of your internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats. If so, document these findings in the SWOT Analysis framework. |

**How are you going to do it?**

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| **Tasks** | List the many things that must be accomplished to achieve the overall objective. These might be steps to follow in an action plan or more finely-defined outcomes that add up to the overall outcome. |
| **Due Date** | Do you have target dates for achieving these tasks that will keep you on track? |

**How will you know that you’ve been successful?**

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| **Intended Results** | List the results you want to achieve both from the objective overall, and from specific tasks or strategies. |
| **Assessment Measures** | Describe the measurement tools that you will use and/or methodologies you will employ to gather data. This might also include existing data sources. |

**Do you need any additional money?**

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| **Enhanced Budget** | You can ask for new money for each task to be considered during the spring budget development period. |

**Do you need help from anyone else?**

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| **Units Impacted** | Identify any other planning units that must provide you with resources for you to be successful in achieving your objective. That may mean that someone from that office will spend time working on something that you submit to them, assisting you in developing or installing something, or providing you with a product; or another department may need to purchase something on your behalf. |