UNIT 2: SETTING A PROGRAM VISION

In this unit you will learn about:

- **The Importance of Setting Goals.** Why you should set goals and objectives for your local program.

- **What Are Program Goals and Objectives**. The difference between goals and objectives.

- **The Goal Setting Process.** How to develop goals that are appropriate for your local program.

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UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit looks at program goals and how they are developed.

At the conclusion of this unit, you will be able to use strategic planning to define the mission and goals for a local CERT program:

- Explain why a CERT program must have clearly defined goals and objectives.

- Establish draft goals and objectives for a CERT program.

This unit will look at:

- The importance of setting goals

- What a goal is

- The goal setting process

THE IMPORTANCE OF SETTING GOALS

An effective CERT program will look very different from one community to another. Therefore, this course will not provide a specific model for operating a program.

Even though this course will not provide a model, in order to choose an operating structure, every CERT program must have a clear vision of what that CERT program will be.

The way that we describe our program vision is by creating a goal for the program. We have to have that goal as a starting point so we can later determine whether we have made any progress.

ACTIVITY: BRAINSTORM PROGRAM GOALS

Purpose: This activity generates a list of possible program goals.

Instructions: Respond to the question asked.

WHAT ARE PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES?

Every program needs a goal and objectives.

- The program goal is a clear and succinct statement about the program's purpose for existence. Sometimes it is called a mission statement.

  - It will describe **what** you will provide **to whom** and **in what geographic area.**

  - Example: "The Anywhere CERT Program will assume management of disaster relief operations in the neighborhoods of CERT members until professional responders arrive."

  - Example: "To do the greatest good for the most people in the least amount of time" (CERT Program)

- Specific goals (sometimes called objectives) describe intended future results – specific things that you will accomplish.

  - Example: To provide two *CERT Basic Training* courses a year.

Specific goals must meet several criteria. They must be:

- Specific: It is clear and well-defined.

- Measurable: There is a way to gauge progress toward achieving that goal.

- Achievable: The resources available to accomplish the objective.

- Realistic: The goal can be accomplished within reasonable parameters.

- Timely: The objective includes a due date or a time when it will be accomplished.

If the goals don't meet those criteria, they are not effective goals.

ACTIVITY: IDENTIFY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Purpose: This activity allows you to practice distinguishing between program goals and program objectives.

Instructions: Respond to the question asked.

WHAT ARE PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES? (CONTINUED)

ACTIVITY: EVALUATE OBJECTIVES

Purpose: This activity allows you to identify effective objectives.

Instructions:

1. Work individually to complete the worksheet *Examples of Program Objectives* on the next page.

2. For each objective, answer Yes or No to the questions by checking the appropriate box.

   a. Is the objective specific?

   b. Is the objective measurable?

   c. Is the objective achievable?

   d. Is the objective relevant?

   e. Is the objective time bound?

3. Be prepared to discuss your responses.

Examples of Program Objectives

Instructions:

For each objective, answer Yes or No to the questions by checking the appropriate box.

1. To have enough instructors available so that whenever a group of 15 or more people is interested in having a CERT class, we can provide it for them

	Yes	**No**
Is the objective specific?		
Is the objective measurable?		
Is the objective achievable?		
Is the objective relevant?		
Is the objective time bound?		

2. To improve community preparedness by training community volunteers to provide emergency care until first responders arrive

	Yes	**No**
Is the objective specific?		
Is the objective measurable?		
Is the objective achievable?		
Is the objective relevant?		
Is the objective time bound?		

3. To see Teen CERT in every high school in our county

	Yes	No
Is the objective specific?		
Is the objective measurable?		
Is the objective achievable?		
Is the objective relevant?		
Is the objective time bound?		

4. To support a community's public safety efforts (e.g., installing smoke alarms or staffing first aid booths at community events) by providing CERT members whenever requested

	Yes	No
Is the objective specific?		
Is the objective measurable?		
Is the objective achievable?		
Is the objective relevant?		
Is the objective time bound?		

5. To locate a cadre of experts that will assist in providing *CERT Basic Training* to all 170,000 county residents and to do annual refresher training

	Yes	**No**
Is the objective specific?		
Is the objective measurable?		
Is the objective achievable?		
Is the objective relevant?		
Is the objective time bound?		

6. To assist and support the work of the Office of Emergency Management

	Yes	**No**
Is the objective specific?		
Is the objective measurable?		
Is the objective achievable?		
Is the objective relevant?		
Is the objective time bound?		

7. To host an outdoor search and rescue class and then to form a search and rescue team

	Yes	No
Is the objective specific?		
Is the objective measurable?		
Is the objective achievable?		
Is the objective relevant?		
Is the objective time bound?		

THE GOAL SETTING PROCESS

Now you understand what a goal is and what a goal must include to be effective. The next thing to talk about is how to set program goals.

THE FIVE STEPS IN THE GOAL SETTING PROCESS

Here are the five steps in the goal setting process:

1. Identify community needs and sponsor needs

2. Develop draft goal and objectives

3. Test the goal and objectives with sponsors and stakeholders

4. Periodically evaluate:

    a. Progress toward achieving objectives

    b. Appropriateness of objectives

5. Develop new goal and objectives as needed

This is an iterative process. Periodically the CERT program must re-assess its goal/objectives to ensure that they are kept in alignment with the needs of the community. That means going back to Step 1 and repeating the goal setting process. The objectives should be reviewed regularly and updated as needed.

STEP #1: IDENTIFY COMMUNITY NEEDS AND POTENTIAL SPONSOR NEEDS

All program goal and objectives are local.

▪ They must be developed by the local program as this is the entity that will be implementing the goals.

▪ They must respond to the needs of the community.

THE GOAL SETTING PROCESS (CONTINUED)

Here are some of the things you want to find out about your community's needs:

- What hazards are possible in the community?

- What is the emergency management system (EMS) in the community and who are the players?

- Have there been other community-based public safety efforts? How successful were they?

- Have some homeowners and businesses implemented preparedness measures?

- What support is there for CERT?

Here is a partial list of people you want to talk to:

- Fire department

- Law enforcement agency

- Emergency manager

- Neighborhood associations

- Community leaders

- Transportation department

- Local college or university

- Businesses who have prepared for emergencies, either voluntarily or because they are required by law

There is an overlap between setting your program's vision and promoting your program (Unit 3). They really have to be done together.

- You can't promote your program without having a program vision.

- You can't set the vision for your program without getting input from other people.

- And people can't give you input without knowing about the program.

THE GOAL SETTING PROCESS (CONTINUED)

Therefore, when you talk with people to assess your community's needs, you should also be prepared to educate them about the CERT Program:

- What its purpose is

- How it has been used around the country

- How it can be an asset to their department, agency, or organization

- How it can be an asset to your community

STEP #2: DEVELOP DRAFT GOAL/OBJECTIVES

Once they have assessed the community's needs, the program organizers will have gotten some direction for developing draft goal/objectives.

The number of specific goals to be developed will be determined by the program. However, new programs should make sure that the startup phase is manageable. Start small!

STEP #3: TEST GOAL AND OBJECTIVES WITH SPONSORS AND STAKEHOLDERS

The program organizers should return to the representatives they talked with earlier and get feedback on the program goal and objectives. This process accomplishes two things:

- If a goal has missed the mark, the representatives will provide that feedback.

- It encourages buy-in. People who feel some ownership of the program will be stronger program supporters.

THE GOAL SETTING PROCESS (CONTINUED)

ACTIVITY: DRAFT PROGRAM PLAN: DEVELOP PROGRAM GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

Purpose: New Program Managers will draft a program goal and 1-2 objectives for their program. They will list people that they want to ask to review the draft goal and objectives.

Established Program Managers will review their current program goal and objectives to see if these are achievable and appropriate and how they might be revised. They will list others who should review the updated goal and objectives.

Instructions:

1. Go to the Draft Program Plan in Unit 1.

2. Individually complete the first section, *Program Goals and Objectives*.

STEP #4: PERIODICALLY EVALUATE PROGRESS

A CERT program does not set an objective once, put it in a drawer, and forget about it. Program objectives reflect and define the program. Therefore, they must be periodically evaluated to find out:

▪ Is the program making progress toward the objective?

▪ Is the objective still appropriate for the program?

Reviewing a program's objectives is often part of the process known as "strategic planning." Strategic planning determines:

▪ Where an organization is going over the next year

▪ How the organization is going to get there

▪ How the organization will know if it got there

THE GOAL SETTING PROCESS (CONTINUED)

Strategic planning is not very complicated, but it is also not a skill that most Program Managers have. However, there are lots of resources available:

- There is a great deal of information online.

- This course will offer a few tools for strategic planning.

- Program Managers should also consider finding a strategic planner to assist the CERT program. Some sources might be:

  - A community college

  - A local volunteer clearinghouse

  - Someone who works for one of the sponsors

Here are two tools that a CERT program could use for strategic planning:

1. Questions to Get You Started (next page)

   a. This series of questions developed by the National CERT Program will help a CERT program determine its community's strengths and challenges and its implementation strategy.

2. SWOT Analysis

   a. SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

   b. SWOT Analysis is a strategic planning method used to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats involved in a project.

   c. In SWOT Analysis you specify an opportunity and identify the internal and external factors that are helpful or harmful to making the opportunity a reality.

Questions to Get You Started

Take a few minutes to review the questions below. Answering these questions will help you determine your community's strengths and challenges and your strategy for implementing the CERT program.

Category	Questions
Baseline of Community Awareness	• How would you assess the community's awareness of risk? • Have there been community-based public safety efforts? • Have some homeowners and businesses implemented preparedness measures?
Industry and Business	• What businesses have a history of actively preparing for emergencies? • What businesses are required by law to maintain response plans? • What are the most influential employers in your community? • Which businesses have a corporate culture that encourages volunteerism? • What are the prominent business organizations or associations in your community?
Media	• Which of the television, radio, or print media in your community are more community-service oriented? • Are there journalists or reporters who have prepared stories on natural hazards, emergency preparedness, or emergency response exercises? • Which local media outlets have the greatest potential to be effective partners? • Can you encourage the favorite local weather forecaster to be an active participant?
Health Care Providers	• Which health care providers are most active in promoting public safety? • Can you encourage medical professionals to participate actively to promote preparedness?

Category	Questions
Community Leaders	• Which community leaders might champion this initiative? • Which community organizations are typically active in community initiatives or events? • Can you get explicit support from local public officials?
Educational Institutions	• Have any educational institutions participated in any type of natural hazard preparedness or response activities? • Are there any existing initiatives at area colleges and universities that would make a natural partner with CERT (e.g., programs in emergency planning or public education)? • Does the local school district require its students to perform community service?

SWOT Analysis Template

Opportunity that you are evaluating: _____

	Helpful	Harmful
Internal	**Strengths** Positive internal factors within your control. Things you could build on.	**Weaknesses** Negative internal factors within your control. Things you should restrict or improve.
External	**Opportunities** Positive external factors outside your control. Things you could build on.	**Threats** Negative external factors outside your control. Things you should try to minimize.

THE GOAL SETTING PROCESS (CONTINUED)

STEP #5: DEVELOP NEW GOAL AND OBJECTIVES AS NEEDED

The final step in the goal setting process is to develop new goal/objectives as needed. The CERT program will change over time as the community's needs change. The program must update its goals to reflect those changes.

Follow the goal setting process even though it may be tempting to skimp on it.

- Assess the community's needs and the sponsor's needs.
- Test draft goal and objectives with the sponsors and stakeholders.
- Periodically evaluate progress.

UNIT SUMMARY

You should understand by now that a CERT program is not developed in isolation. If the program is going to be successful, it has to prove that it will be a resource for the community. To be a resource for the community the program must know where it is going and how it is going to get there.

Goals and objectives are the tools we use to lay out the program's future. They are an important aspect of managing existing programs as well beginning new programs. Programs must develop an overall program goal and several specific program goals using the goal setting process.