



Gap Analysis is a means of identifying blocks to achieving a desired goal. When a group needs to understand the gap between where they are currently and where they want to end up. Gap analysis lets you explore the missing steps and it forces a realistic look at the present. It is a planning tool that creates alignment between group members as to what steps need to be taken to eliminate the gap between where they are currently (present state) and where they ideally would like to be (desired future state).

How does Gap Analysis Work?

Benefits

- Highly participative
- To create a clear, shared statement of the desired future
- Allows people to openly share their ideas
- Creates energy
- Gets people aligned
- Identifies a group goal
- Elaborates a shared vision

Step 1 Identify the desired future state. Use visioning or any other approach that yields a picture of where the group wants to be in a given timeline. The description of the future must be detailed. Post the information on the right-hand side of a large work space on a wall.

Step 2 Identify the present state. How are things now? Describe the same components featured in the future state, only do so in real, present terms. Again be very detailed. Post the ideas generated on the left-hand side of the wall work space.

Step 3 Focus on the gaps. Ask members to work with a partner to discuss:

- What are the gaps?
- What are the barriers?
- What's missing?

Step 4 Share ideas as a group and post these on a wall between the present and the future.

Step 5 Once there is a consensus on the gaps, divide the large group into subgroups and give each group one or more gap items to problem solve.

Step 6 Reassemble the whole group to hear recommendations and action plans.

Step 7 Ratify the plans by getting acceptance from all other members; then create a mechanism to follow up.

Designed to
be Shared



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Major Source: *Bens, Ingrid (2000). Facilitating with Ease! A Step-by-Step Guidebook.* John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

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Available at www.meas-extension.org/tip-sheets