TC Notes

Practical leadership & technical guidance from **Toronto Centre**

Action Planning Guide

OCTOBER 2015

TORONTOCENTRE

Global Leadership in Financial Supervision

Contents

Overview[1]

Strong regulatory and supervisory agencies contribute to financial stability and greater access to financial services. But building such agencies – with the capacity to cope with constantly-changing financial markets and emerging threats – is not a simple task. Solid technical skills are necessary, but such skills alone are insufficient to get the job done. Management and leadership skills are also essential for driving the changes needed to cope with the challenges faced by the agencies.

Action planning is a valuable leadership skill, which facilitates continuous improvement in regulatory and supervisory agencies. It is a key component of many Toronto Centre programs.

Planning

Planning involves considering in advance the steps that can be taken to achieve a goal, along with their timing and the resources needed to carry them out.

We all plan, although many of our plans are informal or even intuitive. For example, planning tomorrow's shopping trip might involve preparing a shopping list, estimating the total cost of the items you intend to buy, deciding which shops you will visit, considering the best time of day to do your shopping, and determining the route and methods of transportation to use for your trip. If tomorrow's shopping is a routine trip to purchase groceries, the formal portion of your planning might be limited to preparing a shopping list – with the other steps being intuitively obvious to you based on past experience.

Planning improves the chances of achieving your goal. It also makes your activities more efficient (you won't have to go to the same shop twice if you have prepared a shopping list beforehand) and less risky (you can time your trip to avoid rush-hour traffic).

For these same reasons, organizations – including supervisory agencies and financial institutions – commonly use planning. Plans vary considerably in nature, scope, and time horizon. They might include, for example, a five-year strategic plan for the entire organization, the annual operating plan for a department, and an action plan for a project that will be completed by a team of people from several departments over a period of, say, four months. Plans that involve many people, numerous or complex steps, or long time horizons are often documented and implemented in a formal manner. Formalization helps to ensure common understanding of a plan and to create accountability for its successful implementation.

The Toronto Centre Approach

Toronto Centre leadership programs are designed to strengthen financial sector regulation and supervision by equipping leaders with the skills they need to achieve continuous improvement. Action planning is a valuable leadership skill, which will help you to deal effectively with specific problems faced by your agency. Toronto Centre's comprehensive action planning methodology is an integral component of most Toronto Centre programs.

This Action Planning Guide describes that approach, which includes three main stages: assess the problem, develop a solution, and implement the plan. This Guide concentrates in particular on the first two stages. A complementary note in Toronto Centre's Supervisory Guidance Series focuses on the third stage.[2]

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[1] This note was prepared by Michael Hafeman on behalf of Toronto Centre.
[2] Please see "Implementing an Action Plan."

Action Planning Methodology

The action planning methodology includes three main stages:

1. Assess the Problem
2. Develop a Solution
3. Implement the Plan.

We recommend following this sequence. Experience has shown that jumping to a solution before properly understanding the problem is not a good idea. Neither is trying to achieve the solution without having a well-thought-out action plan.

The methodology breaks each main stage down into a number of steps. However, it should not be applied mechanically. For example, not all steps are applicable to every situation and some may be applied differently depending on the circumstances. In practice, you may need to revisit a step even after moving on to the next stage. So although the methodology is not a recipe book, it provides a framework that will help you to make effective action plans to solve your most pressing problems.

1.   Assess the Problem

The starting point for action planning is to understand the problem that is pushing you to action. The problem may be a serious crisis that calls for an immediate response or it may simply be a source of discomfort at a point in time. For example, problems dealt with by participants in prior Toronto Centre programs have included:

- A supervised entity is experiencing significant difficulties
- The governance practices of supervised entities are weak
- Financial statements are not reliable or timely
- It is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of senior management of the supervised entities
- Supervisory methods focus on compliance rather than risks
- There is a lack of coordination between departments or groups, such as the risk assessment and inspection teams
- Supervisory activities are organized inefficiently
- There are insufficient training and development opportunities for staff
- The agency does not meet the requirements for entering into a multilateral memorandum of understanding.

Sometimes, you might be pushed into action by circumstances that present a challenge but that you might not consider a "problem." For example, your department has the possibility of obtaining an extra budget allocation to improve supervision, as long as you can propose a productive way to spend the money before the end of the fiscal year. Even in such circumstances, it will help you in applying the action planning methodology if you can think of the situation in terms of a problem that you need to solve.

Describe the Problem

Begin by writing down a brief description of the problem. At this point, the description need not be precise, but an informed non-expert should be able to understand the nature of the problem facing your agency. (If you have not already done so in preparation for the program, identify a problem that is relevant both to your agency and to you personally.) You can then move on to assess the problem.

Consider the problem in its broad context, so all relevant factors can be identified and analyzed. You might need to gather information to support your assessment. Although you can never understand a problem too well, time and resource constraints will often force you to make decisions based on incomplete information. Accept this and be prepared to revisit your plan as more information becomes available.

Identify Causes

Rarely does a problem develop in isolation or have a single cause. Look to the past and consider what factors might have caused or contributed to your problem. Some relevant factors might be macro in nature, such as social, political, or economic developments. Others might be micro, such as the governance structure, financial condition, and market position of a supervised entity.

Ideally, your action plan should deal with the problem, not just attack its symptoms (although attacking the symptoms might be an urgent step in dealing with an emerging problem). So once you have identified possible causes of the problem, it is useful to ask yourself "why" those factors exist. You should keep doing so until you are satisfied that you have identified the root causes of the problem.

For example, perhaps your problem is weak liquidity management by supervised entities. You have identified the lack of involvement of directors in the oversight of risk management as a contributing factor. Why might this be the case? Do they lack understanding of the liquidity risks in the business and how they might be managed? Are they unassertive in challenging senior management? Do they not appreciate their need to play a role in the governance of risk management? Are they unable to obtain the information they need to provide effective oversight? The actions required could differ considerably, depending on the answers to such questions.

Understand Effects

Most problems will already be adversely affecting someone. However, for some problems the adverse effects might only be realized in the future. In either case, it is important to identify who is affected by the problem, how they are affected, and how they perceive the problem.

The persons, groups, organizations, or systems that affect or can be affected by your problem – or your action plan to deal with the problem – are stakeholders in the problem. Your problem might have a wide range of stakeholders or very few. In identifying stakeholders, it is useful to think outward, upward, and inward (the acronym "OUI," which means "yes" in French, might help you remember this). Examples of the various categories of stakeholders include the following:

- **Outward:** Consumers; supervised entities and their owners, directors, and managers; trade associations; other supervisory agencies; the media
- **Upward:** Senior managers and the board of your agency; the legislative bodies in your jurisdiction; the government ministry responsible for the financial sector
- **Inward:** Your staff and peers.

You should consider how the interests of each identified type of stakeholder are affected by the problem. Are they currently being affected, or do they face potential future adverse consequences? Is the problem affecting stakeholders financially or interfering with their business or personal activities? Are the effects mild or severe? Might they benefit if the problem is solved? Do they perceive the problem to be significant and in need of urgent attention – or have they not yet even recognized that it exists?

Understanding the effects will help you to identify a preferred outcome for your action plan—an outcome that will minimize the adverse effects on stakeholders. It will also give you leverage when you try to

implement the action plan. You will be better able to explain your positions to others and gain their support if you understand their needs.

Consider Priorities

Assess your problem prospectively. Think about whether it is better to tackle the problem immediately or simply monitor it. You should carefully consider priorities, not just procrastinate or exercise forbearance! What are the related priorities of your agency?

Consider the risks if you do not address the problem. Is the problem likely to become worse, perhaps even insoluble? Consider the benefits that will be realized if you do find and implement a solution. This understanding will be helpful later when you need to persuade key stakeholders to support your action plan.

Your readiness to deal with the problem will also affect the priority you give it. Your agency or team may be part of the problem, and it will certainly play a big role in the solution. Look inward, analyzing your resources, expertise, people, systems, and legal framework. Does your agency have the powers, procedures and people to deal with the problem? Can the potential barriers be overcome?

State the Problem Precisely

You started by briefly describing the problem. Now that you have thoroughly considered various aspects of the problem, you are in a position to state the problem precisely. Think about how you can convey the essence of the problem to someone else in one or two sentences. Make sure that you are stating the problem, not describing your proposed solution! That comes in the next main stage.

2.   Develop a Solution

Now that you understand the problem, you can develop an action plan to deal with it. We suggest you first establish a goal, consider alternative ways to reach the goal, and only then prepare a step-by-step plan. Each problem requires an appropriate response; if none is apparent, the purpose of your action plan might be to identify one!

Establish a Goal

When establishing a goal, it can be useful to visualize the situation that will exist when your problem has been solved. For example, how will your agency be operating? What will the supervised entities be doing? What additional information will be available to consumers? This picture of the desired future state is your preferred outcome.

As inspiring as your preferred outcome might be, the chances of reaching it can be greatly increased by translating it into a clearly-defined goal. Your goal statement should meet several criteria, summarized by the acronym SMART. Although the initials are sometimes given different meanings, the Toronto Centre action planning methodology uses the following:

- **Specific:** The goal should be clear and unambiguous
- **Measurable:** There should be concrete criteria for knowing when the goal has been accomplished
- **Actionable:** It should be possible to take specific actions to reach the goal
- **Realistic:** The goal should be within reach, although it might require stretching performance
- **Time-bound:** The goal should include a target date.

For example, the following goal statement is not SMART: "improve communication between the on-site and off-site inspection departments." Although it is actionable and seems realistic, it is not specific, measurable, or time-bound. A SMART version of this goal might look something like the following: "Strengthen communication between the on-site and off-site inspection departments to include joint input to the risk-assessment reports for each supervised entity by the end of the next calendar year." Consider for yourself how this goal statement meets each of the SMART criteria.

If you are having difficulty establishing a SMART goal, perhaps the problem you have identified is too broad in scope for you to solve with the resources available to you, at least within the timeframe you had envisioned. If this is the case, narrow your focus and deal with an aspect of the problem that you can realistically solve within the constraints you face.

Consider Alternatives

There are often different ways to achieve a particular goal. For example, to strengthen governance of supervised entities, you might amend legislation, issue guidance, enforce legislation more strictly, change inspection processes, increase the number of inspections – or some combination of these approaches. You might implement the changes entirely with internal resources, retain a consultant to assist with some things, or set up a joint working group with industry representatives.

Think in broad terms about the alternatives available to you for reaching your goal. The most obvious alternative might be the best, but this is not always the case. From the range of alternatives you identify, select the one that you consider most promising. If you cannot decide between two or more alternatives, you might work through the next two steps for each alternative and then decide. In fact, at some agencies, the board or senior management would require more than one alternative for dealing with a significant problem to be presented for their consideration.

Outline the Plan

List a few big steps that you think will need to be done to implement your preferred alternative, but leave the details for later. Determine the appropriate sequencing of these steps, in other words, what comes first, second, and so forth.

For each of the steps, identify potential barriers and enablers. What obstacles might you encounter in carrying out the step? Who or what might help you to do so? Barriers and enablers can be people, organizations, laws, operational rules, events, and so forth.

Assess Key Stakeholders

When considering the effects of your problem (step 1-c), you identified stakeholders – those who affected or were affected by the problem. Although all of these stakeholders are important, perhaps only some of them are in a position to hinder or help your plan for dealing with the problem. Stakeholders with the power to hinder or help your plan are called key stakeholders.

Identify the key stakeholders in respect of your plan. As you do so, consider both your list of stakeholders and the barriers and enablers. Note that the importance of a stakeholder might vary depending on the alternative you intend to implement.

Think about the problem, your preferred outcome, and your plan for achieving it from the point of view of each key stakeholder. What are their needs, wants, concerns, and interests? The four-box model[3] provides a useful way to plan your communication with key stakeholders, taking into account their needs and concerns. From the perspective of each key stakeholder, consider the following:

- Disadvantages of the current situation that support the need for action (Box 1)
- Advantages of your preferred outcome and your plan for achieving it (Box 2)
- Disadvantages of your preferred outcome or your plan for achieving it, concerns they might create, and how you might overcome the disadvantages and concerns (Box 3)
- Advantages of the current situation that will be retained (Box 4).

It is often impossible to fully satisfy all key stakeholders. You might have to do some persuasion, make tradeoffs, or even dictate some conditions in order to solve the problem. However, if the alternative you have in mind for reaching your goal seems likely to face significant resistance from key stakeholders, consider whether modifications—or even a different alternative—would be appropriate.

Detail the Action Plan

Now that you know what you want to do and who you will have to deal with, if you still think your plan is feasible, you must work out the details.

Break up each main step in your outline into a number of smaller steps. Be detailed enough so that you can make a reasonable estimate of the time and resources that will be needed to complete each step. (During the implementation stage, you might need to go into even more detail and prepare a detailed working plan to guide the day-to-day implementation and measure its progress.) The description of each step should clearly indicate the action that will be taken and, if relevant, the intended result.

Determine the timing of each step. Begin by considering the sequencing of the steps. In some cases, you might not be able to start one step until certain other steps have been completed. In other cases, you might be able to begin a step when the preceding step is partially completed or to carry out two steps in parallel. Then assign target dates at which each step will start and be completed.

Identify who will be responsible for completing each step. Depending on the nature of your plan, responsibility for a step might lie with an individual, a department, or an organization. Responsibility might also be shared. Be as specific as possible about who is responsible. This will help you in communicating the plan to others and provides a basis for accountability.

Estimate the resources that will be needed to complete each step. For many action plans, the main resource needed will be human – the time and expertise of persons within and outside your agency. Consider which people will be involved (for example, by name, position, or department) and how much of their time will be needed. Some action plans will also require financial resources (for example, to pay legal or consulting fees, purchase computer software, or travel) or physical resources (for example, working space or computer hardware).

You should now have a plan that lists the steps that will be carried out ("what"), their timing ("when"), those responsible for each ("who"), and the resources needed ("how much"). Just like your goal, the plan itself should be SMART!

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[3] See, for example, chapter 4 of "Change Leadership: Inform, Involve, Ignite!" by Robert Harris. The four-box model is covered in detail in a session on stakeholder communication and persuasion, which is often included in the Toronto Centre's leadership programs.

Evaluate the Plan

Now that you have completed your plan, step back and take an overall look at it to assess whether it is worth doing. Consider the following:

- Will the plan achieve the preferred outcome within the time specified in your goal? If not, can the goal be changed or will you need to find alternative ways to reach it?
- Are the necessary resources available? If not, can they be obtained within the timeframe of your plan?
- How risky is the plan? What can go wrong—including threats coming from forces outside your control? Which steps pose the greatest implementation risks?

Focus on the key risks. If they are realized, what might you do in response? If the risks are high or the plan is particularly important, it would be appropriate to deal with the risks and responses in a written contingency plan. What is your "plan B"?

3.   Implement the Plan

The implementation process can vary significantly from one action plan to another. You should adapt the implementation approach to suit the characteristics of your plan and the context in which you will be implementing it.

Sell the Plan

Before actually proceeding with implementation, key stakeholders often must be sold on the need for action and the plan you have devised. The four-box persuasion tool can help you formulate your message to the key stakeholders.

You might need to use persuasion or negotiate various aspects of the action plan, and communicate using a range of techniques. You will not always be able to alleviate all stakeholder concerns before proceeding with implementation.

Your action plan should reflect the input of stakeholders and be approved for implementation, which might be evidenced by the adoption of a formal, written charter.

Establish the Governance Structure

Each plan implementation should be subject to a clear governance structure and processes, to help keep it on track and establish accountability for the results. The governance structure should be appropriate to the nature of the action plan.

For a plan that involves only one or a few people, oversight by one of their managers might be sufficient. A structure often used for larger projects involves a project team, which is overseen by senior management. A project leader heads the project team, with responsibility for organizing the work and managing it from day-to-day to ensure that it is successfully carried out.

The project team must have the knowledge and skills needed to carry out the various steps in the action plan, and its members should have adequate time to devote to the implementation, be able to work cooperatively with others, and be committed to the success of the implementation project.

Senior management might need to make some important decisions, and their involvement can ensure that an implementation receives appropriate priority and adequate resources.

For very large projects, a steering committee is sometimes part of the governance structure, sitting between the project team and senior management. The steering committee is responsible for ensuring that the plan implementation is headed in the proper direction and moving at a reasonable speed. It should monitor the progress of the project team, assist the project leader in resolving resource problems and conflicting priorities, take decisions on the direction of the implementation, and provide a connection between the project team and senior management. It might also play an active role in dealing with key external stakeholders.

Create the Working Plan

The approved action plan might be sufficient to guide the implementation, if the plan is simple and limited in scope. However, for a large or complex project, a more detailed working plan is often needed to guide the day-to-day implementation and measure progress. The project leader and team should have primary responsibility for – or at least actively participate in – the development of the working plan.

The working plan should include the project charter, the roles of the various members of the project team, and the detailed action steps to be performed. For each step, it should identify the individuals responsible, the timeline for starting and finishing the work, and the other resources needed. It should include a detailed budget of the human, physical, and financial resources needed for implementation, and identify the decision points.

The working plan should evolve to reflect the reality of what has been accomplished and any changes in the outlook on the steps that lie ahead. Any changes to the working plan that would have a material effect on the achievement of the goal should be agreed to by the steering committee and, if appropriate, senior management.

Manage the Project Team

For a project that is being implemented entirely within a particular department, the department manager might serve as project leader. However, for projects that cross department lines – and sometimes even those confined to one department – the project leader might not be the person to which each of the team members ordinarily reports.

The role of the project leader is similar to that of a department manager, but differs in some important respects. To be successful, the project leader needs to be an active communicator and an effective negotiator.

If an individual is not performing as required, the project leader will need to determine the reasons for the problem in order to deal with it appropriately, for example, by providing technical or operational guidance, discussing remedial measures with the person's department manager, or seeking a replacement.

The project leader must promote teamwork, both through interaction with individual team members and by providing opportunities for the team to communicate actively with the leader and one another.

Team meetings can facilitate the sharing of information by team members on the progress of their respective plan implementation activities and the discussion of issues of general interest that have arisen during the implementation. They should be held frequently enough to contribute to good communication and keeping the implementation on track, but not so frequently as to add little value. Special problem-solving meetings could be held as the need arises.

Provide Accountability

The project leader must manage the project team effectively to hold its members accountable for their work. In order for the steering committee and senior management to exercise their governance responsibilities, they need information that is timely and comprehensive, yet concise. It should focus on progress against significant targets and resource budgets, major problems that have arisen, and key issues to be decided upon.

A Simple Example of Action Planning

1. Assess the Problem

Describe the Problem

You are head of the supervision and market surveillance department in your agency. The workload in your group has increased because of increased activity, innovation, and complexity in the financial sector. You do not have sufficient resources—numbers of people, expertise, and technology—to do the work and would like your budget increased. At a recent meeting with the head of your agency, you were told that neither the Minister nor the industry would be receptive to an increase in agency resources. You need to quantify and document information on the workload increase, such as overtime, and its impact such as staff turnover and quality assurance concerns you might have from your review of files.

Identify Causes

The financial sector is growing rapidly and introducing new products and services constantly. Neither the Minister nor the industry would likely be receptive to an increase in agency resources, because of an emphasis on minimizing the regulatory burden on industry. The root cause is inadequate planning in the agency, specifically, consideration of how the industry is changing and the impact this is having on your ability to execute effectively your surveillance mandate.

Understand Effects

Staff have been working under stress, which has led to increased turnover, growing stress, and declining morale. You are concerned your staff will suffer "burn-out", and that your agency is at risk if something important is missed. Your agency head understands your position, but believes that the Minister might see further agency expansion as inconsistent with other objectives, such as fiscal restraint and the promotion of competition, and the industry might see it as leading to a further increase in regulatory burden.

Consider Priorities

There are risks to staff in your group, your agency (due to potential reputational risk), consumers of financial products and services, and the industry. You are just coping; so you are not yet in a crisis, but could be if action is not taken in the next year. You are concerned about the safety and soundness of financial institutions and consumer protection issues if your resource concerns are not addressed. If nothing is done, you will likely reach a crisis point where you are in a constant state of crisis management because of the inability to maintain sufficient surveillance coverage and to identify and deal with problems—proactively or otherwise—on a timely basis.

State the Problem Precisely

In view of the increased activity, innovation, and complexity in the industry, the number of supervisory and monitoring staff are insufficient to enable the agency to meet its objectives.

2. Develop a Solution

Establish a Goal

Increase the number of staff of the supervision and market surveillance department by 20 percent within the next 6 months.

Consider Alternatives

You have identified the following alternatives:

- Do nothing and hope your agency head, the industry and the Minister eventually recognize the risk to the stability of the system and take action
- Go to your agency head, set out your concerns, and leave it in his/her hands to deal with the concerns
- Go to your agency head and other department heads, set out your concerns, and request that staff be transferred from other departments to make up the shortfall in yours
- Go to your agency head and other department heads, set out your concerns, request a budget increase for your department, and offer to work with your agency head to persuade the Minister and industry of the need.

Your preferred alternative is the last one. It puts you in a position of considerable influence, and allows you to gain the support of, or address the possible objections from, other department heads, who will not want to give up staff, may not believe you need additional resources, and could create obstacles or even block your efforts.

Outline the Plan

Your plan includes the following main steps:

- Perform a thorough SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) in order to have the information needed to make your case
- Persuade your agency head of the need for a budget increase, using data and examples
- Meet individually with other department heads to make your case and gain their support
- Prepare presentation material for meetings with the Minister and industry representatives, and review with your agency head
- Together with your agency head, meet with the Minister and industry representatives to make your case.

Assess Key Stakeholders

Key stakeholders are your agency head, other department heads, the Minister, and the industry.
You perform a comprehensive stakeholder analysis using the Toronto Centre framework. For example, from the point of view of the agency head:

- The current situation puts the agency at risk of missing important problems, putting consumers at risk and endangering the reputation of the agency. Staff are becoming burnt-out and might leave if the situation is not dealt with, which would make things even worse (box 1).
- Increasing the resources would enable the agency to do a better job of supervision. The workload on existing staff would lessen, reducing the risk of burn-out (box 2).
- Adding staff would increase the agency's budget, but the additional staff would enable the agency to more quickly gain comfort with new products and services and to be more responsive. The

agency would not impede the introduction of sound innovations, to the benefit of consumers and industry (box 3).

- The basic supervisory methodology and agency structure would be retained, and there would be no new regulations with which industry would need to comply (box 4).

Detail the Action Plan

	Action Step	Start	Complete	Responsibility	Resources
1.	Detail the components of the SWOT analysis, where the information will come from, the resources required to do the work, how the information will be presented, and who will do this work.	Feb. 1	Feb.8	You	2 person-days
2.	Perform the SWOT analysis and document the results.	Feb. 15	Mar. 1	Your department	10 person-days
3.	Determine the type and detail of information that needs to be provided to each key stakeholder in order to persuade them of the need to increase your budget.	Mar. 1	Mar. 8	You	1 person-day
4.	Prepare for and meet with the agency head to present the results of the SWOT analysis and your budget request.	Mar. 8	Mar. 15	You	2 person-days
5.	Obtain support of the agency head.	Mar. 15	Mar. 22	Agency head	
6.	Meet with other department heads to obtain their support.	Mar. 22	Mar. 29	You	2 person-days
7.	Arrange meetings with Minister and industry representatives.	Apr. 1	Apr. 8	Agency head	1 person-day
8.	Prepare presentation materials and review with the agency head.	Apr. 1	Apr. 15	You, agency head	2 person-days
9.	Meet with the Minister and industry representatives, present your case, and deal with any concerns.	Apr. 22	Apr. 29	You, agency head	2 person-days
10.	Recruit additional staff.	May 1	July 31	You, human resources department	20 person-days; $2,000 advertising costs

Evaluate the Plan

You took an overall look at your plan and decided that it is worth doing. You are convinced of the need to proceed immediately and the resources to carry out the first nine steps of the plan are available—if they are successful, the resources needed for the final step and the funding of additional staff will be forthcoming. The biggest risks are not getting the support of your agency head, or encountering intense opposition from the industry. If these risks cannot be overcome, or if it takes longer than expected to obtain an increased budget, you will need to find ways to manage your group under difficult conditions. You will also need to ensure that you keep your agency head fully informed of the challenges you are dealing with.

3.   Implement the Plan

Sell the Plan

You submit the plan to your agency head and subsequently make a presentation of it to him. He does not immediately approve the plan, but asks that you present it to the agency's executive team. You do so, and receive approval to proceed. You ask that a member of the executive team be the executive sponsor and the head of human resources offers to do so. You send an email to other department heads to tell them about the project and that you will brief them shortly.

Establish the Governance Structure

You act as project leader for this project. You ask each of your three unit heads to nominate a staff member to work on the project. From among the nominees, you select one to work full time on the project to assemble, analyze and present the required information. The individual is selected for her strong communication and conceptual skills.

You agree that you, the unit heads, and the analyst will form the project team. You document roles and responsibilities and communicate these to all members of the project team and the head of human resources.

The project is small and straightforward, so no steering committee is required. You will handle stakeholder relations at your level and above, although the head of human resources has indicated a willingness to assist if difficulties arise.

Create the Working Plan

The action plan is sufficiently detailed to serve as the working plan for this project.

Manage the Project Team

You agree to hold weekly project team meetings. You require that all team members bring brief progress reports pertaining to their responsibilities to the meetings for review and action as required.

You arrange for a private office for the project analyst so she can have a private and quiet work environment.

Provide Accountability

You ensure that project team meetings are focused on results and that issues are identified and courses of action agreed to where necessary. You meet bi-weekly with the head of human resources to discuss progress and key issues.

Action Plan Summary Worksheet[4]

Precise Statement of the Problem:

Statement of the Goal: (SMART)

Action Plan:

	Action Step	Start	Complete	Responsibility	Resources[5]
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					

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[4] Use this worksheet to document and update your action plan.
[5] Human resources (for example, person-days), financial resources, and other key resources (for example, special computer software) needed to carry out each action step.

Analysis of Key Stakeholders Worksheet[6]

Key Stakeholder: _____

1. Disadvantages of the current situation that support the need for action

2. Advantages of your preferred outcome and your plan for achieving it

3. Disadvantages of your preferred outcome or your plan for achieving it, concerns they might create, and how you might overcome the disadvantages and concerns

4. Advantages of the current situation that will be retained

5. The communication or persuasion approach that you will use with this key stakeholder

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[6] Use this form to record and refine your analysis of the advantages and disadvantages from the perspective of each key stakeholder, using the four-box model. Use the results to develop a communication or persuasion approach for each key stakeholder.