Aboriginal Allied Health Assistant Project

Using Critical Success Factors
This resource has been developed as part of the Aboriginal Allied Health Assistant Project, a joint initiative between the Disability Service Commission, Office of Aboriginal Health, and the WA Country Health Service.
INTRODUCTION: CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Critical success factors (CSF) have been used significantly to present or identify the key factors that organisations should focus on to be successful. As a definition, CSF refer to "the limited number of areas in which satisfactory results will ensure successful competitive performance for the individual, department, or organisation" (Rockart and Bullen, 1981).

CSF are strongly related to the mission and strategic goals of the proposed project, department or organisation. Whereas the mission and goals focus on the aims and what is to be achieved, CSF focus on the most important areas and get to the very heart of both what is to be achieved and how you will achieve it.

Critical Success Factors are defined as those factors that need to exist or go right for the project to have the greatest chance of success and which are outside the control of the Project Manager. They are those decisions, events and situations that must exist for your project to be successful.

CSF include aspects such as project funding, resourcing, senior management support, business capacity, as well as external events or situations like community support or capacity to adopt the project. The key is that these factors have an impact on the success of the project. CSF need to be managed by the governance committee prior to commencement of the project wherever possible or the project governance committee need to accept that the factors may impact on the implementation of the project at a later date.

1. NEED/PURPOSE

CSF are the areas of your project that are absolutely essential to its' success. By identifying and communicating these CSF, you can help ensure your project is well focused and avoid wasting effort and resources on less important areas. By making CSF explicit, and communicating them with everyone involved, you can help keep the project on track towards common aims and goals.

Identifying CSF is important as it allows project teams to focus their efforts on building their capabilities to meet the CSF's, or even allow the health services or community to decide if they have the need, commitment and capacity necessary to meet the CSF's.

Managing CSF optimizes the chances of success for a project and allow for comparison between one community and another to indicate where the greatest chances of success lay.

While some CSF will impact your ability to deliver services (e.g. funding, resources), others will impact the success of the project's outcome (product or change acceptance). Either way, if they're not managed as risks, CSF can destroy your project's success.

Managing CSF is the accountability of the project governance team.
- It gets them involved.
- It focuses their attention and efforts.
- It gets them working for you, the project team.
The following steps will assist in the identification of CSF within a project:

**Step One:** Establish your project’s mission and strategic goals

**Step Two:** For each strategic goal, ask yourself “what area of project activity is essential to achieve this goal?” The answers to the question are your possible CSF.

**Step Three:** Evaluate the list of possible CSF to find the essential elements for achieving success – these are your Critical Success Factors. As you identify and evaluate CSF, you may uncover some new strategic objectives or more detailed objectives. So you may need to redefine your mission, objectives and CSF again.

**Step Four:** Identify how you will monitor and measure each of the CSF. Sometimes it may be only a simple “Yes” or “No” response.

**Step Five:** Communicate your CSF along with the other important elements of your project’s strategy.

**Step Six:** Keep monitoring and re-evaluating your CSF to ensure you keep moving towards your aims. Indeed, whilst CSF are sometimes less tangible than measurable goals, it is useful to identify as specifically as possible how you can measure or monitor each one.
Types of Critical Success Factors

There are several types of CST, including:

**Health Service:** These factors result from specific health service characteristics. These are the things that the organisation must do to ensure successful implementation.

**Environmental:** These factors result from outside influences on an organisation. Things like the community readiness, community infrastructure, and community capacity.

**Strategic:** These factors result from the specific strategy chosen by the organisation. The way in which the health service has chosen to position or market themselves, cultural appropriateness etc.

**Temporal:** These factors result from the organisation's internal forces. Specific barriers, challenges, directions, and influences will determine these CSFs.

3. INTERPRETING RESULTS

The CSF chosen for the AAHA program comprises of issues identified at regional, health service and community levels (See Appendix A) that may impact the implementation of the project. Similar questions can be derived and used for a variety of projects, programs and initiatives.

Using CSF is part of the risk analysis of the project. The responses do not all have to be answered in the positive, but any negatives responses identify areas that will be a risk when the project is implemented and allows for risk management strategies to be put into place.

Results allow comparison (in this case between communities) and allow management to assess which site has reached a state of readiness and which site has therefore the greatest chance of success. CSF can be used for to assess many situations. CSF can be used to compare between two strategies, or two community venues, or to identify and prioritise community needs.

Results can only be analysed in the light of the questions asked.
4. BARRIERS

Barriers may include:

- Choosing too many critical factors for success
- Choosing the wrong critical success factors
- Inability to answer or influence critical success factors

**Tip: How Many CSF?**

*Whilst there is no hard and fast rule, it’s useful to limit the number of CSF to absolute essentials. This helps you maintain the impact of your CSF, and so give good direction and prioritisation to other elements of your project strategy.*

5. REFERENCES


*Determine The Critical Success Factors (CSF) for your company* [http://www.rapidbi.com/created/criticalsuccessfactors.html](http://www.rapidbi.com/created/criticalsuccessfactors.html)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Success Factor</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>If ‘No’ - What is Required?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Service Infrastructure</td>
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<td>Does your health service have supportive policy to sustain funding and the AAHA program?</td>
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<td>Are there supportive stakeholder relationships within your health service?</td>
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<td>Does your health service have a sufficient number and range of AHPs to meet community requirements and recommended levels of service?</td>
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<td>Does your health service have culturally safe strategies for recruitment and retention of Aboriginal people?</td>
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<td>Is there adequate integration within the health service and coordination with external agencies by the AHP staff to support the AAHA Program?</td>
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<td>Does the health service have mechanisms for engaging the community in the overseeing of the allied health services/AAHA Program?</td>
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<td>Has the health service developed a clearly defined line management structure together with roles and responsibilities statements that are accountable to the governing body?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Infrastructure</td>
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<td>Has the need for allied health services been identified for the selected community?</td>
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<td>Have you been able to establish community commitment to allied health services and an AAHA model?</td>
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<td>Have you identified the presence of a community champion for allied health services and the AAHA Program?</td>
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<td>Does the community have the capacity to support allied health services and the AAHA Program?</td>
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<td>Is there adequate physical and technological infrastructure in the region and community to support allied health services and the AAHA Program?</td>
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<td>Critical Success Factor</td>
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<td><strong>Funding</strong></td>
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<td>Is the funding identified for the AAHA sustainable over the long term?</td>
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<td>Is the funding flexible to ensure the ability to respond to local needs?</td>
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<td><strong>WACHS Regions commitments:</strong></td>
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<td>Commitment to supporting continuity of service</td>
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<td>Employment of community based Aboriginal AHAs</td>
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<td>Timely employment of AH therapy staff</td>
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<td>Commitment to Cultural Awareness Training for AH Professionals</td>
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<td>Commitment to regular service provision and support to the community by AH Professionals</td>
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<td>Commitment to ongoing Aboriginal AHA Training</td>
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<td>Infrastructure and management support for coordination of the program.</td>
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Project Steering Group

**Erin Bond**
Manager Allied Health
WA County Health Service (Goldfields)

**Carlo Calogero**
State Manager
National Disability Service WA

**Sharleen Chilvers**
Disability Services Commission
A/Manager Country Resource & Consultancy Team

**Bert Dorgelo**
Operations Manager Fitzroy Crossing Health District
WA County Health Service (Kimberley)

**Susanne Gough**
WA County Health Service (Area Office)
Senior Project Officer

**Dr Kerrie Doyle**
Senior Lecturer, Mental Health
Combined Universities Centre for Rural Health

**Francine Eades**
Manager (Population Health, Research & Clinical Support Unit)
Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia

**Cheryl Malatynski**
WA County Health Service (South West)
Aboriginal Allied Health Assistant

**Cindy Morrison May**
Office of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders
Senior Project Officer

**Suzanne Spitz (Chair)**
WA Country Health Service (Area Office)

**Andrew Waters**
WA Country Health Service (Pilbara)
Director Population Health

Manager Allied Health
WA Country Health Service (Goldfields)

Lecturer, Allied Health
Office of Aboriginal Health
Senior Portfolio Officer

Commonwealth Dept of Health & Ageing
Senior Project Officer

Aboriginal Allied Health Assistant
Healthy Lifestyle Officer

Aboriginal Senior Policy Officer

Aboriginal Reference Group

**Shirley Anne McCasker**
WA County Health Service (Kimberley)

**Lynne Mitchell**
WA County Health Service (Midwest Murchison)

**Jim Morrison**
Disability Service Commission

**Kendra Bell**
WA Country Health Service (Area Office)

**Others**

**Nicole Beattie**
Senior Project Officer
WA Country Health Service (Area Office)

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WA Country Health Service
For enquiries regarding this package please contact:

WA Country Health Service

www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au

wachsalliedhealth@health.wa.gov.au

Ph: 08 9223 8500