Starter Kit
1c: Creating a Vision for Your Policy Team[1]

Navigating the Roadmap
Activity 1: Build a genuine, collaborative policy team.

Introduction
Clarity of outcome is critical to the success of any team. A fundamental starting place for a system of evidence-based decision making is agreement among key policymakers regarding their overarching purpose—or vision—for the justice system. It will likely take time and hard work to develop a vision for your team, and that vision may change over time. Nonetheless, it will be your vision that

- inspires your team to come to meetings when the press of other business grows strong;
- guides your policy team's course of action; and
- helps secure the support for change from your colleagues and community.

Definition of a "Vision"
A vision is a statement that paints a picture of the future that you hope to create (i.e., a statement of your preferred future). It captures your hopes of what will result from your team's efforts. It represents a future for which your policy team is willing to take responsibility for attempting to achieve.

Purpose
To facilitate a dialogue among team members that will result in a statement reflecting the vision for the justice system in your community

Participants
All policy team members should be involved in the development of your vision statement.

Instructions
1. Consider the following questions:
   a. If the criminal justice system in our jurisdiction were working ideally, what would be its characteristics?
   b. What results would it achieve?
   c. What values would guide how these goals are achieved?

   Team members should take a few minutes to jot down their ideas about each of these questions. When they are finished, go around the room and record each person's first

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[1] Language adapted from Center for Sex Offender Management (CSOM), 2007.

response on a flip chart. Go around the room again and note each person's second response. Continue this process until all ideas are recorded for all three questions.

2. Review the ideas generated. Discuss each one and ensure that its meaning is clear. Eliminate duplications. To answer each question, develop a statement or set of statements that reflects the consensus of the team.
3. If multiple statements are produced, prioritize these by asking each member to rank order the statements, then tally the "votes" for each statement. Select the portions of the prioritized statements that resonate with team members.
4. From these, craft a single vision statement that reflects all of the agreed-upon ideas and comments.
5. This process may take some time; you may not be able to complete this work in one session or even as a full team. Often it is useful to form a subcommittee to craft a proposed vision statement based on the concepts/statements developed by the full team.

Tips

- Remember that your vision statement should be energizing and inspiring and, when completed, describe your hopes for the future.
- Avoid getting hung up on your current situation, limitations, or tasks needed to reach your vision. The vision statement is about where you want to go and why.
- Make the creation of your vision statement an integral part of your early work together.
- Resist the urge to "just get it done."
- Keep it simple. Your vision statement should be easy to explain and easily understood by non-team members. Avoid jargon.
- Keep it short. The details belong in your mission statement and goals.
- Work on your vision statement until it truly represents the hopes of everyone on the team. It should be a powerful and compelling statement.
- Use the vision statement as a touchstone for your ongoing efforts. Once it is completed, display your statement during each meeting.
- Revisit your vision statement from time to time, and change it as your work together evolves.

Example: Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, Vision and Mission

Our community vision is for greater accountability
in the criminal justice system
and better stewardship
of criminal justice resources.

By applying what the evidence tells us about what actually works in protecting the community and holding offenders accountable, Milwaukee County's criminal justice system will make the smartest possible use of its limited resources, continuously improving its performance against quantifiable goals and reinvesting the savings in programs that reduce crime in the first place.

When it comes to crime and punishment, we recognize that certain practices and traditions hold an intuitive appeal, but we are determined to judge everything we do in light of what solid research and objective evidence demonstrate to be potent and cost-effective. We also recognize that our efforts will be fruitless unless they are collaborative; the partners in this process pledge not merely their cooperation, but stand for the success of each other in achieving these ambitions.

Additional Resources/Readings

Center for Effective Public Policy (CEPP). (2005). A clear and elevating goal (vision). Retrieved from http://www.collaborativejustice.org/how/goal.htm

———. (2005). Collaboration: A training curriculum to enhance the effectiveness of criminal justice teams. Retrieved from www.collaborativejustice.org/docs/2005 Collaboration Curriculum.pdf

———. (2006). Getting it right: Collaborative problem solving for criminal justice. Retrieved from http://nicic.org/Downloads/PDF/Library/019834.pdf

Center for Sex Offender Management (CSOM). (2007). Enhancing the management of adult and juvenile sex offenders: A handbook for policymakers and practitioners. Retrieved from http://www.csom.org/pubs/CSOM_handbook.pdf