

Board of Social Work



Strategic Planning



July 2007
(Version 2)

Facilitated and documented by
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INTRODUCTION

The Board of Social Work conducted a strategic planning exercise July 20, 2007, developed and facilitated by Susan Senko, management consultant. The event began with a listing of ground rules, a review of the Board's mission, a review of the organization assessment completed in November 2006, and a short overview of Carver's Governance Model.

The governance model was followed by a discussion about the board's vision and barriers to achieving that vision. Board members devised strategies to overcome those barriers, and created implementation briefs to plan activities to achieve the board's goals.

Most of the planning process involved the discussion and organization of comments made by board members. The comments as a whole formed the basis for consensus-building. Titles of vision elements, obstacles, and strategies indicate the consensus reached by the group.

GROUND RULES¹

1. Be impeccable with your word
2. Don't take anything personally
3. Don't make assumptions
4. Always do your best
5. Cell phone etiquette

MISSION

The Board of Social Work **exists** to:

- Protect the public
- Regulate social work

Our **customers** are the recipients of social work services

We **provide**:

- A forum to express grievances; legal recourse
- Set minimum standards
- Oversight, accountability
- Information and resources about social workers and social work
- Guidance to the legislature
- Educate the public about the board
- A system, legitimatizing social work and pay

Who else does similar work?

- Counties
- Associations
- The State – DHS
- Tribal services
- The legislature

¹ The first four ground rules are from The Four Agreements by Don Miguel Ruiz

VISION (1 – 4 years)

A vision states the outcomes an organization hopes to gain in a set amount of time. It is the picture of its preferred future. The Board of Social Work's vision encompasses one to four years. As a first step, the group answered the questions, *What is your practical vision for the Board in the next one to four years? What would you like to see in place in 2011?*

The group organized the responses to the questions into major themes. The major themes' titles were created by the group and represent the group consensus (in bold print).

- A. We are the recognized leader in public information and outreach**
 - We educate the public about client rights
 - Expand outreach to all communities
 - Provide support for high quality supervision
 - Enhance supervision for social workers
 - Survey to identify needs and issues
 - Defendable definition of social worker
 - Educational website
 - Greater online services

- B. We are what other boards want to be**
 - Measure board effectiveness
 - Board education
 - Board becomes more diverse in its thinking
 - Board develops strategy for recruitment
 - Board members influence appointment process
 - Avoid/limit fee increase
 - Remain separate social work board collaborating and leading with other boards and ASWB

- C. All social workers are licensed**
 - Eliminate/remove exemptions (3 groups stated the same vision element)
 - All county/state social workers will be licensed

- D. Social workers meet the requirements of a diverse community**
 - Increase number and quality of diverse social workers – work force

- E. Legislation initiated and implemented**
 - Implement clinical standards legislation

- F. Consistent compliance standards**

BARRIERS/OBSTACLES

Obstacles, or barriers, to accomplishing the vision must be named by the entire group in order to get them all out on the table, where they can be systematically addressed. The management consultant generated a list of barriers by asking the group such questions as, *What are the forces that work against the Board's vision? What might get in the way of reaching your vision?*

The barriers were organized into categories, each category being a set of symptoms. The group was asked to identify the major barrier or problem the symptoms reveal. In this way, major barriers to the vision were pinpointed (in bold print).

A. Political realities

- Legislature, counties, tribes
- Legislature – polarized
- Having to rely on the AG for legal counsel
- Current legislation (allowing exemptions)
- Change in board membership mix (new members may not agree)
- Rigidity of executive branch (appointment secretary) regarding board membership
- No state tax money (licensees fees bailed out state)

B. Internal board accountability

- Strategic plan must be reviewed, updated on a regular basis (acted upon)
- How to define regulation clearly to distinguish from advocacy
- Difficult to reach consensus on specifics
- Lack of formula/checklist for precedence, criteria for compliance decisions
- How to define social worker when social workers do so many different things

C. Opposition from other groups

- Can't control other institutions
- Opposition by: unions, associations, lobbyists
- Opposition from county staff, leadership and unions
- AFSCME, MAPE and their advocates
- Opposition from other groups

D. Under-informed public equals little support for social work

- Apathetic public
- Lack of experts in public outreach
- Lack of appreciation for value of helping professions
- Misconception of board's duties

E. Institutional racism

- Language
- Institutional racism
- Lack of engagement with licensed social workers from communities of color
- Social work means different things in different cultures

F. Students lack financial resources and compensation

- Access limitations: money for students (both for education and salaries); for clients with limited resources
- Lack of social work students – financial burden

STRATEGIES

Once the group had identified its vision and the obstacles to accomplishing that vision, it was ready to create strategies to remove those obstacles. The facilitator asked such questions as, *How could this obstacle be eliminated or neutralized? What does the Board need to do to achieve and maintain its vision?*

The group brainstormed realistic ideas that directly or indirectly would eliminate, deal with, or resolve the obstacles and move the group toward its vision. Those ideas with similar intent were grouped in strategies seen as essential.

- A. Create a marketing plan**
 - Marketing – to the public, to educators, to opponents
 - Partner with schools and colleges
 - Develop public outreach
 - Outreach to junior/senior high students
 - Develop marketing plan: surveys, research, provide public outcome information, mechanisms
 - Identify or create incentives for licensure

- B. Create an education plan**
 - Education (political bodies, public, opponents)
 - Expanded outreach: place columns such as “Ask the SW Board” in publications; publication to counties, state, public entities
 - Adjust fees to provide financial incentives for pre-selected education programs
 - Adjust fees if person joins a professional association

- C. Board development**
 - Board development
 - Work plan (tracking)
 - Undo racism
 - This board needs to recognize and talk about privilege and power (and using it)
 - Annual strategic plan review process
 - Reassess board operations

- D. Political Action/Advocacy**
 - Coalition building to propose and support legislative language change
 - Build alliances looking for common ground and objectives
 - Meet with opponents
 - Demand unity (speak in a common voice)
 - Proactive with legislature
 - Build alliances and include perceived opposition in discussion and planning changes
 - Talk and listen to opposing groups

IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

Implementation plans are created to designate time frames, responsible persons, and specific activities necessary to accomplish the strategies that will overcome the obstacles to accomplish the Board's vision.

The following plans identify the strategy, the intent of why this strategy is important, and a brainstormed list of possible action steps, along with who will be responsible for performing each activity and deadlines or other important dates.

These implementation plans are considered a "first draft." They will be edited by both the Board and the staff to determine feasibility of ideas and logical priorities. The plans begin on the next page.

Strategy: A. Create a marketing plan <i>(Scribe: Kate)</i>		
Intent: To promote the board and educate the public and stakeholder groups		
Actions	Who	When
1. Provide education to CSWE programs	Staff	Now
2. Booths and presentations at conferences (state/regional)	Staff/board	Now
3. Information on web	Staff	Now
4. Brochure for consumers -- web and how to distribute? Supervisors? Agencies? Advocacy organizations?	Staff/board	2007/08 in process
5. Public service announcements -- radio, TV -- in cultural communities	Board/staff	2008
6. Survey (both social workers and public consumers) on web, via social workers at their practice setting	Board/staff	2008
7. Public forum	Board/staff	2008
8. Inform social workers of marketing plan (items, where available, how to use)	Staff	2008
9. Partner with associations/ groups to distribute board materials at their conferences	Staff	2007/08
10. Clarify CE requirements and opportunities (for example, FAQs, web, conferences, with renewal cards and new licenses)	Staff	2007
11. Educate legislature (contact key legislators, board members contact their senator/representative?)	Board/ED	2008
12. Promote 20 year anniversary	Board/staff	2007
13. Provide more ethics/boundaries CE opportunity	Board/staff	Board mission?

Strategy: B. Create an education plan (Scribe: Tony)		
Intent: Get information out that is accurate, updated, and consistent from the board		
Actions	Who	When
1. Expand to an interactive website with questions and answers and timely dates	Staff/IT	90 days
2. Establish public forums – for example, tribal communities, regional MSSA conference, and continue college and state gatherings	Board/staff	90 days
3. Explore additional education hours that are required in content areas; for example, cultural competency, diversity, jurisprudence, mandated reporting, boundaries, transference, counter-transference	Legislative board committee	6 months
4. Evaluate opportunity to adjust fees based on having completed educational content category and membership in a social work professional organization (Be cautious, this is a slippery slope!)	Staff/ Legislative committee	6 months
5. Set aside 15 minutes on each board agenda to see what board members want or need education about	ED or board chair	September meeting
6. Consider expert professional presentation on current or pressing issue at board meeting	Board	As needed
7. Online CE with post-test developed or purchased (ASWB)	Advisory committee, outreach/ed committee	Next meeting? Odyssey conference?

Strategy: C. Board Development <i>(Scribe: Casey)</i>		
Intent: Build cohesiveness by re-evaluating board functions, roles and expectations		
Actions	Who	When
1. Invite the new appointment secretary to come to a board meeting and learn about us	ED/chair invitation	November meeting
2. Build in a board recruitment/recommendations process so that the board gets involved in filling vacancies	Board	September
3. Evaluate current meeting and committee structure (process)	Board	November
4. Continue dialogue with other interest groups: NAMI, MACMHA, MN Chapter of Black Social Workers, Network of Mental Health Professionals of Color	ED, specific committees, board	Ongoing
5. Structure vs. flexibility of committee meetings – when they're arranged, phone conferences, evening before board meeting, convenience, structure to increase regular participation, technology, internet web-inars	Board	September
6. Make a decision about extending terms of executive committee two years with automatic vice chair assuming chair role	Board	By January 2008
7. Measure board effectiveness regularly; have performance measures	Board	Every meeting

Strategy: D. Political Action/Advocacy (Scribe: Frank)		
Intent: Because it helps us move forward towards fulfilling our objectives		
Action	Who	When
<p>1. Develop political action plan on all policy issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invite all stakeholders, interested parties, and affected groups at the beginning of process ▪ Include advocacy groups ▪ Support board policies after decision is made 	<p>Committees, Board Same</p> <p>Board/staff</p>	<p>Part of every policy decision At the beginning of process</p> <p>After board makes decision</p>
2. Have day at the Capitol – consider doing so on same day as associations – meet with legislators on same day?	Board	Start of session
3. Invite legislators to meet with Board – address specific topic	Board	During interim
4. Invite Governor’s appointments person to meet with Board	Board	When available
<p>5. Invite politicians to attend 20th anniversary celebration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide one-page info sheet about Board 	Chair	8/2007
6. Invite Senators Ropes and Marty to discuss licensing study	Board	Interim