



Pyramid Alignment Tool and Performance Standards and Measures Worksheet

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There is always a moment in the pyramid of our lives when the apex is reached'. - Ninon de L'Enclos¹ and we have achieved our strategic goals.” – Dan Ward².

Dan Ward and John Moran³

Introduction: Once the agency’s strategic plan is completed and communicated to the organization the leadership needs to ensure operational leaders are aligned in their efforts to achieve the strategic goals and not working at cross purposes. It is one thing to develop strategic goals and objectives, but they have no real impact on your organization unless the implementation activities are in sync to produce the desired outcomes. Strategic alignment bridges the gap between strategy formulation and execution by ensuring that all division/departments/programs of the organization are working towards a common set of objectives.

As an organizational leader how can I ensure there is operational alignment around the strategic objectives? The Pyramid Alignment Tool is a visual technique to show if alignment exists on any given strategic objective as shown in figure 1. A strategically aligned agency has the following benefits that helps it:

- make data informed decisions that lead to better business results
- articulate agency wide understanding of the goals we are trying to achieve
- effectively use resources and improve customer satisfaction
- develop a foundation for transformational change

¹ https://www.azquotes.com/quotes/topics/pyramids.html#google_vignette (accessed 5/18/2024)

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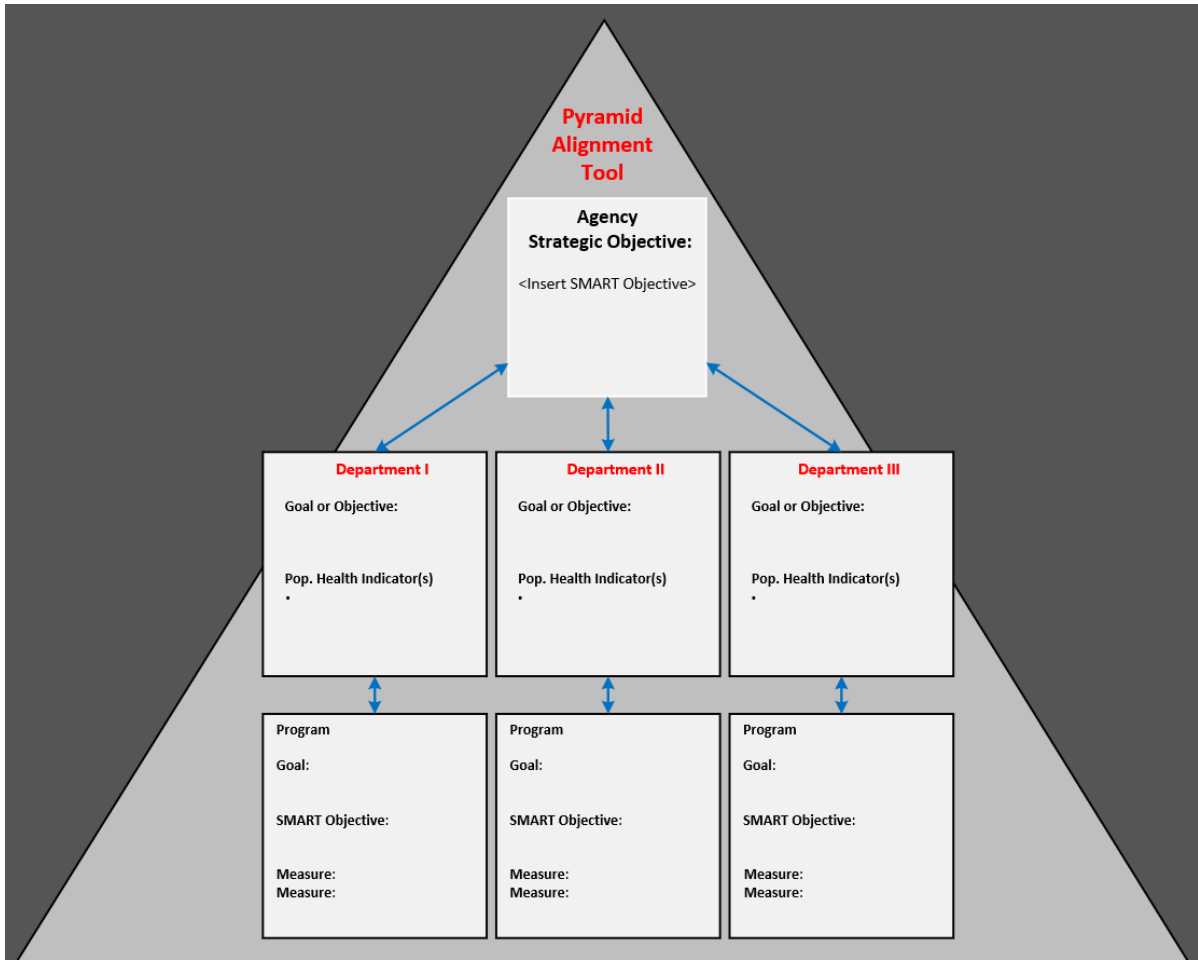


Figure 1

The important thing that the Pyramid Alignment Tool does is it shows alignment as you move down the Pyramid, level by level. As you come up the Pyramid, it shows the contribution each operational unit is making to the overall strategic objective at the top of the Pyramid as shown in Figure 2.

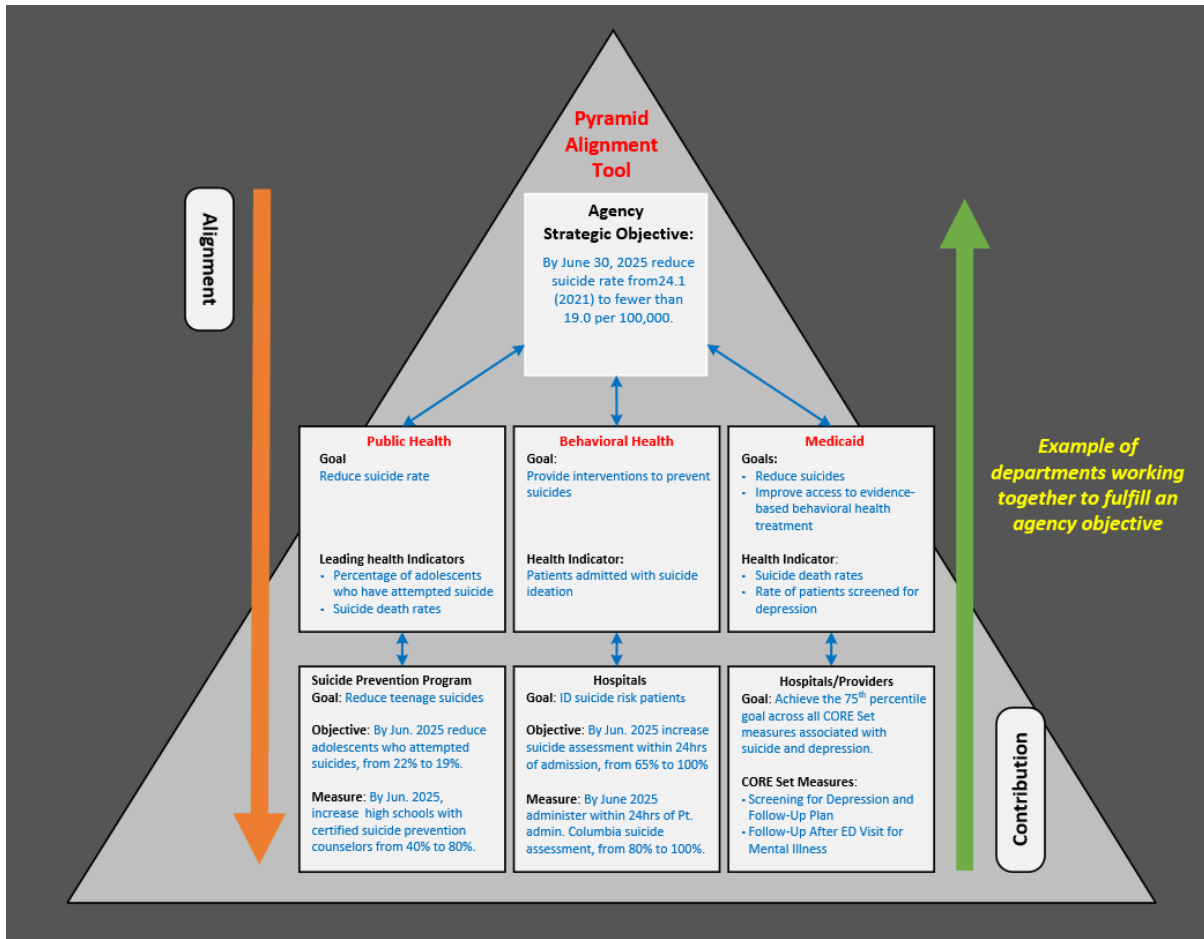


Figure 2

If your agency is wanting to apply a *Health in All Policies* approach across all the government agencies that contribute to a particular health goal, the Pyramid Alignment Tool can be a very effective visual to illustrate stakeholder collaboration, as well as how their work aligns with yours as shown in Figure 3.

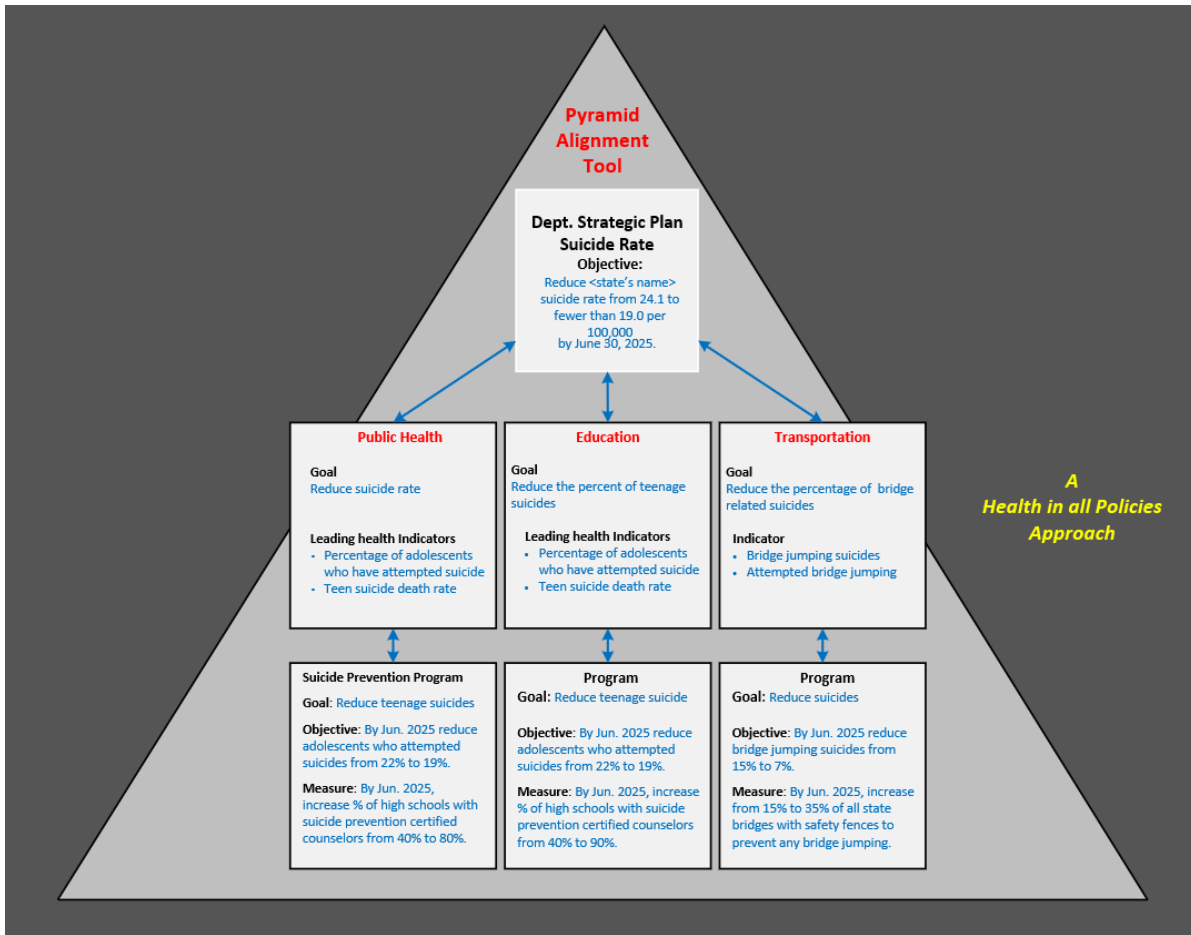


Figure 3

When To Use The Tool: Once the agency’s strategic plan is approved and it is ready for deployment to the organization, appoint a point person or team to engage each division/department/program to start the Pyramid Strategic Alignment process. This point person or team will guide the agency through the process and develop the Pyramid for each strategic objective and report out monthly on the progress being achieved.

The next section describes the Pyramid Alignment process focusing on one strategic objective of an agency. This process will need to be repeated for each strategic objective.

Construction Steps To Start Using The Pyramid Alignment Tool:

Appoint a point person, team, or department to coordinate all the activities and reporting associated with implementing the Pyramid Alignment Tool described in the sections below.

1. Start by identifying in the top box of the pyramid one of your agency's strategic objectives. It is best to create a SMART objective⁴ so you will know when you have reached your intended target. This will also help inform downstream departments and programs of what is expected of them in terms of what they need to do and how much they need to contribute to achieve the agency's strategic objective.
2. The next row of boxes in the Pyramid are the departments of the agency (e.g., public health, behavioral health, environmental health, Medicaid, etc.). Here you want to determine all the departments that should be involved in achieving a strategic goal. At this level of the organization, department leadership should identify their goals and population health indicators that align with the agency's strategic objective.
3. The final row of boxes in the bottom of the Pyramid is for describing measurable program activities that align with the agency's strategic objective. This can be achieved in an easy and simple way by using the *Performance Standards and Measures Worksheet* shown in Figure 4. This worksheet can help you identify and correctly write your goal, SMART objectives, and performance measures. Performance measures are program activities that are quantified with targets allowing you to measure your progress. In theory, if you reach your targets, your SMART objective will be met. Figure 5 illustrates a completed Performance Standards and Measures Worksheet. Not only does the worksheet serve well to complete a Pyramid Alignment Tool, but it is also a useful tool to help you quickly and easily develop performance dashboards to monitor and manage your daily work as shown in Figure 6. Dashboards should be used routinely to measure progress of your program activities to gauge if they are on track or if the data informs the need for a QI project to correct and get back on course.

⁴ [Public Health Quality Improvement Encyclopedia, J. Moran, et al, Public Health Foundation, ©2012, pp:121-122](#) (accessed 5/18/2024)

Performance Standards and Measures Worksheet

Program Name: _____

Program Goal: _____

Program SMART Objective: _____

Performance Measure #1 (with target): _____

Performance Measure #2 (with target): _____

NOTE: Performance measures are program activities geared towards reaching a program's SMART objective. Activities are quantified, allowing the program to measure their progress.

Figure 4

Performance Standards and Measures Worksheet

Program Name: Suicide Prevention Program

Program Goal: Reduce teenage suicides

Program SMART Objective: By June 2025, reduce adolescents who attempted suicides from 22% to 19%.

Performance Measure #1 (with target): Percent of high schools with certified suicide prevention counselors. 40% (baseline) to 80% (target).

Performance Measure #2 (with target): Percent of teenagers who feel suicidal receive school counseling. 50% (baseline) to 90% (target).

Figure 5

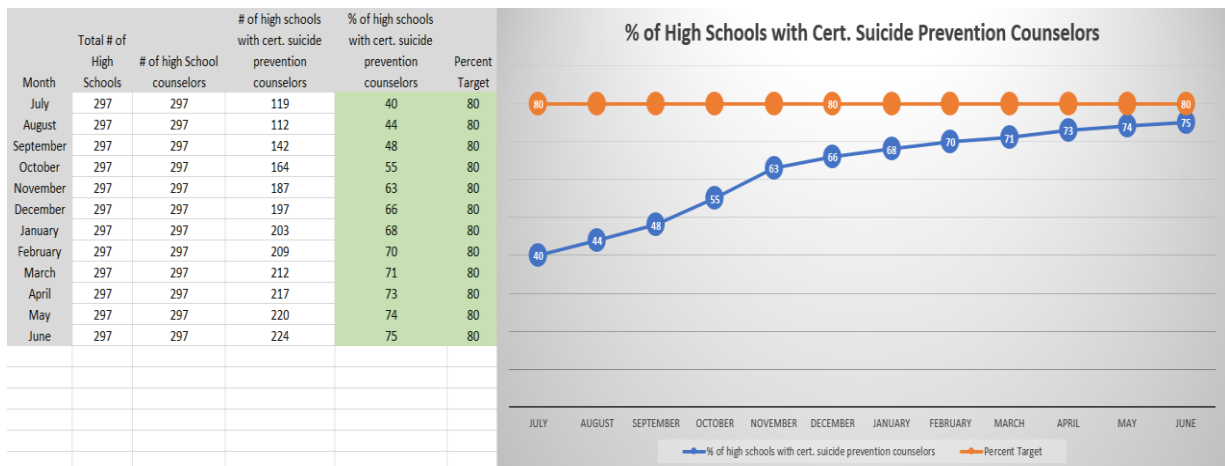


Figure 6

Summary:

“Most leaders would agree that they’d be better off having an average strategy with superb execution than a superb strategy with poor execution⁵.” The Pyramid Alignment Tool and Performance Standard and Measures Worksheets will help achieve the superb execution of an agency’s strategy.

The Pyramid Alignment tool shows visually the collective impacts various agency divisions/departments have on achieving the Health Department’s strategic objectives to improve the health in their communities.

The ability to visualize the strategic goal performance data will ensure that strategic goals are consistently being met in an effective and efficient manner.

⁵ <https://www.azquotes.com/quote/695628> (accessed 5/18/2024).