

DEVELOPING AGENCY GOALS, STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES

The focus of agency's goals, strategies and objectives should be future-looking and they should communicate agency's long-term strategic priorities, approaches and actions to be implemented for the upcoming fiscal year (FY 2016-17). The agencies are required to apply the following set of common definitions and the **S.M.A.R.T.** framework (Figure 1) to form their goals, strategies and objectives. The **S.M.A.R.T.** framework calls for the creation of goals and objectives that are **specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound** in nature.

GOAL:

- A broad expression of a central, strategic priority for an agency; a statement of what the agency hopes to achieve – typically in the long-term – that is qualitative in nature.
- At the highest level, each agency's goals should logically and naturally derive from the agency's mission statement.
- Ideally **3-5 high-level goals** are recommended.

STRATEGY:

- A concise statement of a high-level approach an agency is taking in pursuit of a goal.
- A descriptive, complex action compromised of multiple action steps.
- Starts with action verbs such as develop, design, establish, enhance, implement etc.
- Includes details such as budget, staffing, IT plan, marketing campaign etc.
- Ideally **2-4 strategies** are recommended per goal.

OBJECTIVE:

- A specific, measurable and achievable description of an effort that the agency is actively implementing over a defined period of time as part of a broader strategy to meet a certain goal.
- Ideally **3-5 objectives** are recommended per strategy.

FIGURE 1. S.M.A.R.T FRAMEWORK

SPECIFIC:

- Who is to be involved? What is to be accomplished? Where is it to be done? When is it to be done?
- A specific goal/objective is distinct and defines as much of the goal/objective as possible and contains no ambiguous language.
- It will state exactly what the agency intends to accomplish.

MEASURABLE:

- From X and To Y, How much/many? How will you know when it is accomplished?
- Includes base-line data and a target toward which progress can be measured.

ATTAINABLE:

- Should be a realistic possibility that a goal/objective can be accomplished.
- Does NOT mean or imply that goals/objectives should be easy. On the contrary, a goal/objectives should be challenging.
- A goal that can no longer be achieved should be altered or abandoned.

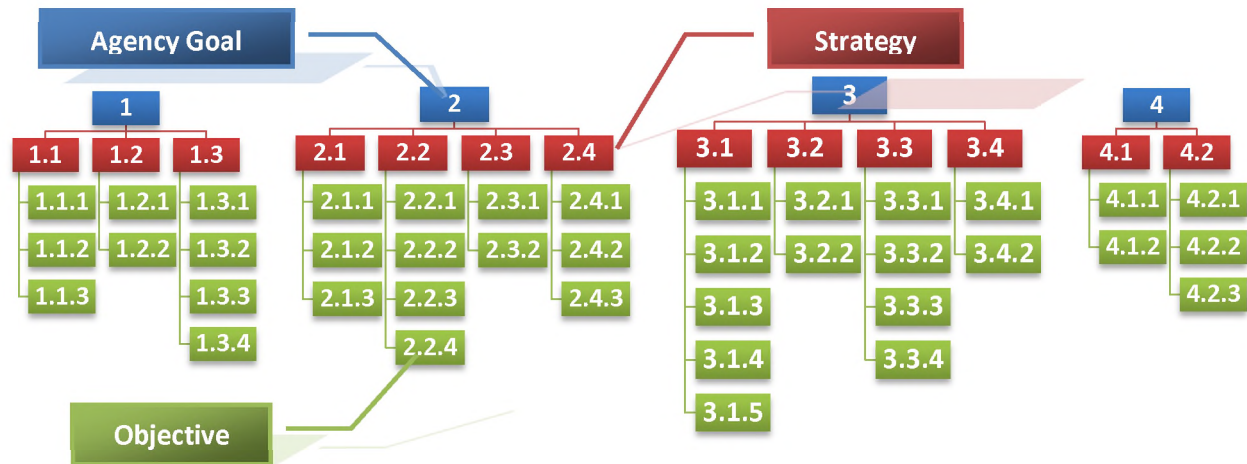
RELEVANT:

- Goals/objectives should be appropriate to and consistent with the mission and vision of the agency.
- Each goal/objective should be one that moves the agency toward the achievement of its vision.
- All short-term goals must be relevant and consistent with the longer-term and broader goals of the agency.

TIME-BOUND:

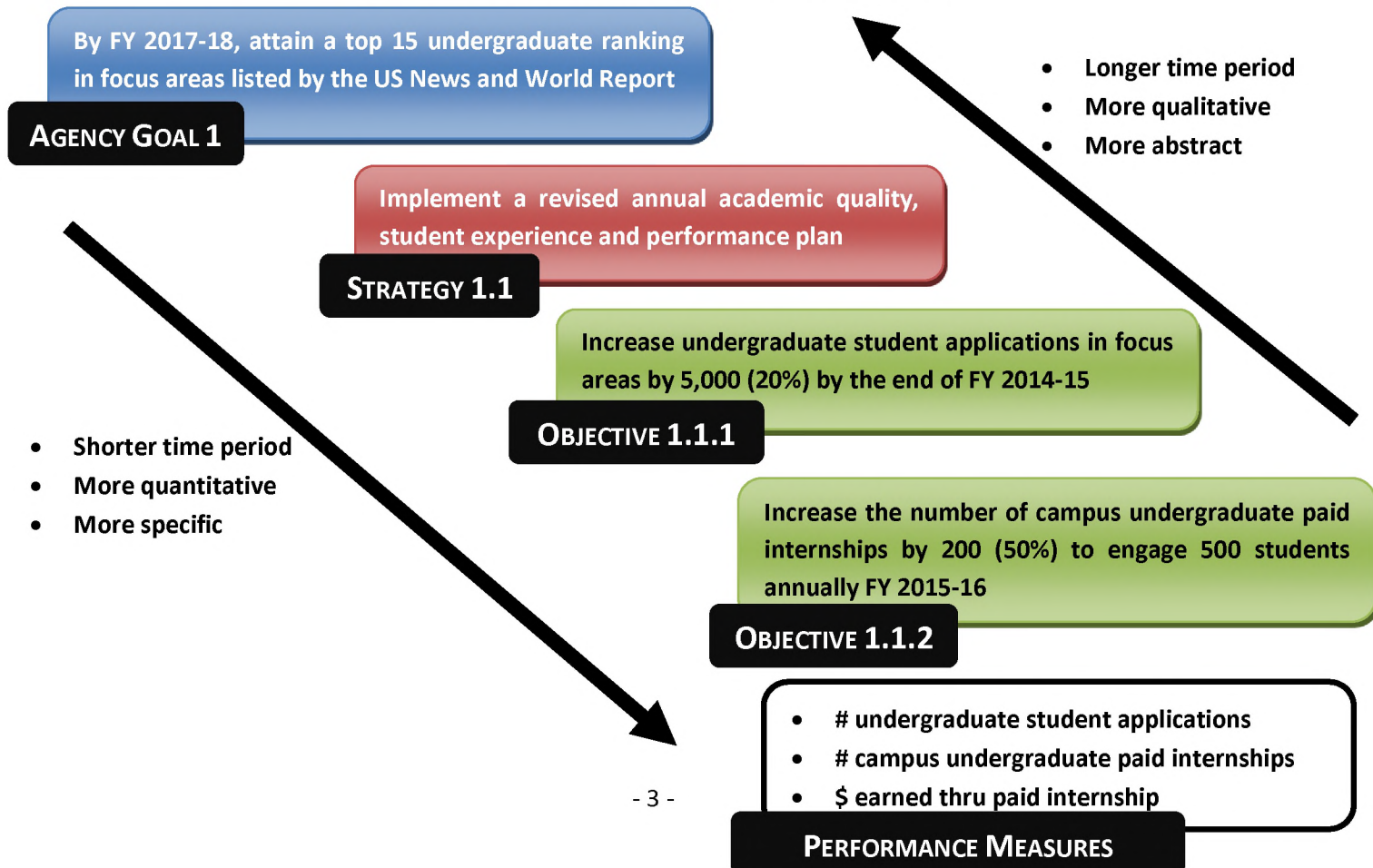
- Finally a goal/objective must be bound by time. That is, it must have a starting and ending point.
- Includes time-bound baseline and target (X as of date to Y by date).

FIGURE 2. HIERARCHY OF GOALS, STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES



After defining their goals, agencies should take a “top-down” approach to selecting their strategies, objectives and ultimately their performance measures (Figure 2). Below is an example from a higher education institution that shows how an agency goal can point to a strategy and how a specific objective can follow from that strategy. This objective, in turn, serves as the basis for two of the agency’s performance measures (Figure 3).

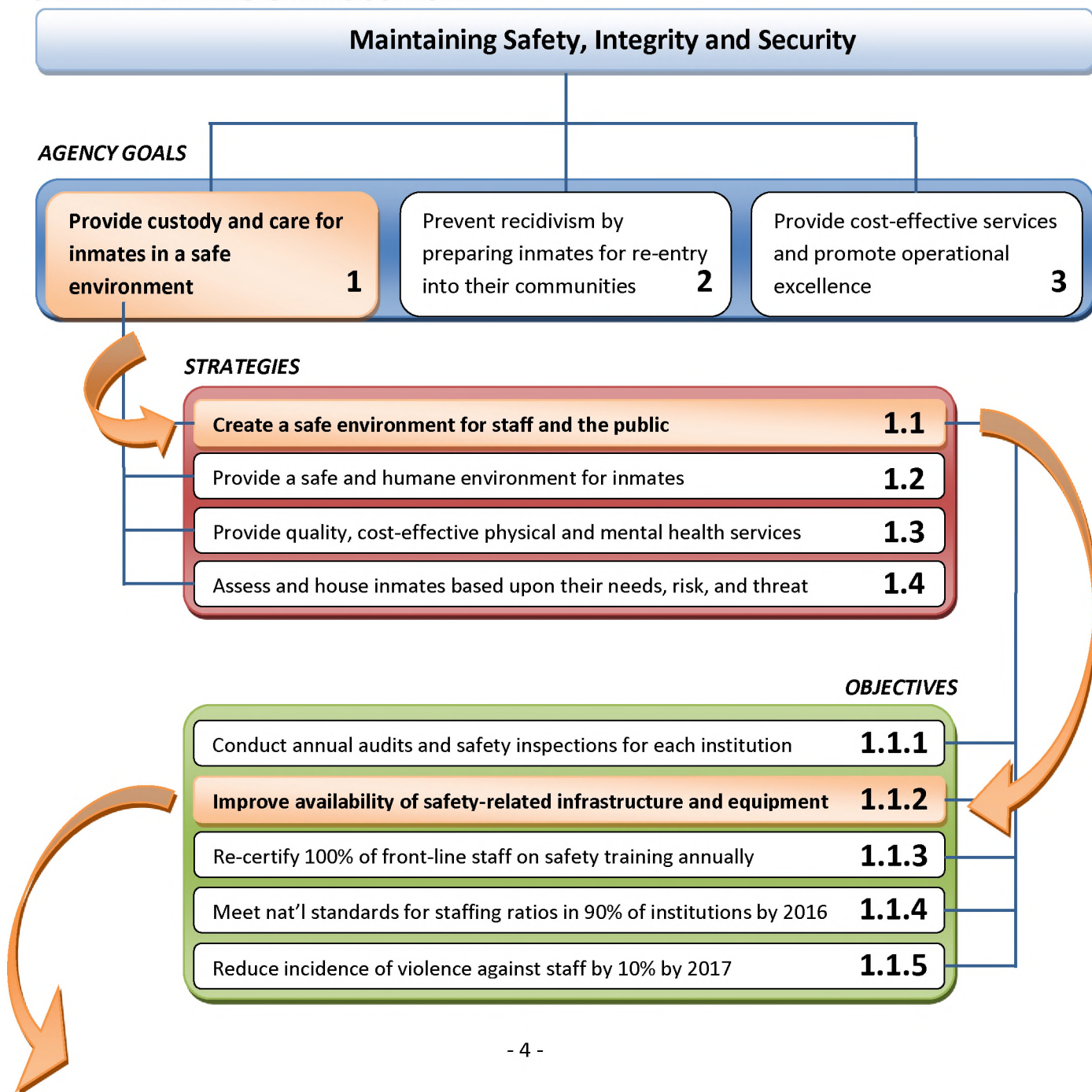
FIGURE 3. RELATIONSHIP OF GOAL, STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVE



To give a more detailed example of the progression from goals to strategies and then objectives, Figure 4 drills-down through the full conceptual hierarchy at the Department of Corrections, tracing a path that leads to various measures of the availability of safety-related equipment in state prisons. In this example, the objective does not have a clearly defined period of time for which it applies. In cases such as this one, this upcoming fiscal year may be the implied period, because the anticipated progress is established by projected improvement in one or more performance measures during that timeframe.

FIGURE 4. PROGRESSION FROM AGENCY PRIORITY TO PERFORMANCE MEASURE – DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE



PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	Target Value	Actual Value	Future Target Value
% of Level III institutions with perimeter towers	33%	30%	50%
% of institutions with cell phone interdiction technology installed	20%	23%	40%
% of inmates receiving random urinalysis testing	4.4%	4.7%	6.5%

SELECTING PERFORMANCE MEASURES

A sound performance measure should provide information that is meaningful and useful to decision-makers to better manage agency's daily operations. Agency must concentrate on strategically most important measures of performance. Performance measures must focus on outcomes, efficiencies and outputs, and must provide accurate, consistent information over time. Figure 5 illustrates the types of measures that an agency may use to report its performance.

FIGURE 5. TYPES OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES

OUTCOME MEASURE

Answers: Is anyone better off?

- A quantifiable indicator of the public and customer benefits from an agency's actions.
 - Outcome measures are used to assess an agency's effectiveness in serving its key customers and in achieving its mission, goals, and objectives.
 - They are also used to direct resources to strategies with the greatest effect on the most valued outcomes.
 - Outcomes measure results and should be the **first priority**.
- **Examples:** % of university students graduating in four years, % of establishments inspected annually, % of licensees with no violations.

EFFICIENCY MEASURE

Answers: How well?

- A quantifiable indicator of productivity expressed in unit costs, units of time, or other ratio-based units.
 - Efficiency measures are used to assess the cost-efficiency, productivity, and timeliness of agency operations.
 - Efficiencies are indicators that measure the efficient use of available resources and should be the **second priority**.
- **Examples:** average cost per case, average cost per inspection, average time for complaint resolution.

OUTPUT MEASURE

Answers: How much?

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- A quantifiable indicator of the number of goods or services an agency produces.
 - Output measures are used to assess workload and the agency's efforts to address demands.
 - Outputs measure workload and efforts and should be the **third priority**.
- **Examples:** # of clients served for substance abuse, # of inspections conducted, # of business license applications processed.

INPUT/EXPLANATORY MEASURE

Answers: What did we use?

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- Resources that contribute to the production and delivery of a service. Inputs are "what we use to do the work". They include finances, personnel, equipment and buildings.
 - Measures the factors or requests received that explain performance (Explanatory).
 - These measures should be the **last priority**.
- **Examples:** # case workers recruited, # of inspectors, # of requests for inspection/complaints received.