



Focus Sheet | Frequently Asked Questions

EH&S Strategy Plan, November 2012

Q: Who created the strategy plan?

A: The EH&S management team led the planning process which included a departmental retreat to discuss survey data, gain new ideas, and allow all staff to help identify major goals. EH&S leadership partnered with the Organizational Effectiveness Initiative consultants to develop and implement a strategy planning approach. This work was conducted in phases including: a) collecting and analyzing data; b) determining strategic priorities and implementation timelines; and c) building the infrastructure in EH&S for ongoing improvement and sustained success. The EH&S management team also used data and information from the following areas to assess its future focus: EH&S Review information, Research Roadmap process mapping and data collection, and EH&S client and employee surveys.

After careful assessment of strategic priorities, goals and activities, the management team prioritized work for the next three years.

Q: Why is the plan only for 3 years? Aren't most strategy plans for longer?

A: Given the immediacy of the EH&S Review recommendations, EH&S chose to develop a three-year strategy plan and begin implementation in November 2012. These days, strategy plans vary in length and are tied to specific outcomes in a specified time period. As the dynamic nature of the University continues to increase and the economic climate continues to change, EH&S determined a three-year plan would be more nimble in effectively addressing the University's need for EH&S' services.

Q: What's expected to change in EH&S as a result of the new mission, vision, values and strategic priorities?

A: The UW community will recognize the changes as EH&S moves from a more reactive organization into a proactive service provider that partners with clients to create the best outcomes. EH&S will prioritize and make decisions based on risk mitigation, data, client needs, and employee engagement. EH&S will have a sustainable financial model that is aligned with strategic goals. EH&S will operate from clear priorities, streamlined processes, defined baseline services, and improved communication through education and outreach.

Q: How will we know that EH&S is successfully engaged in its strategy plan?

A: EH&S is in the process of developing new tools that will show its progress toward strategic goals. For instance, a dashboard may include the following measures of success: decrease in the percentage of non-compliance findings; increase in the rate of completion for workplace hazard analysis; increase in the use of appropriate workplace personal protective equipment, practices and procedures; improved measures of on-the-job injuries, near misses, accidents, and completed reporting; increase to 100% annual evaluations for all EH&S employees; Customer Surveys indicate increased satisfaction, awareness of roles, responsibilities, and compliance expectations; decrease in the number of non-linked databases; increase in the percent of actual costs captured in EH&S service rates; and increase in the number of staff involved in process improvement.

Q: How can clients continue to provide feedback to EH&S?

A: EH&S provides multiple communication channels (website, email, person to person) for clients to provide feedback and will continue to offer those channels as well as build others. EH&S will repeat its customer satisfaction survey in 18 months to ensure that we are on the right track. We encourage clients to speak directly with their service providers in EH&S and let us know their thoughts and new ideas for EH&S to be more effective in providing support to our diverse communities.

Focus Sheet | Frequently Asked Questions *continued*

Q: How is the implementation of the strategy plan going to get done in addition to all of the work for which EH&S is currently responsible?

A: On an individual level, EH&S management will work with staff to review work plans and identify activities we can discontinue or defer until a later date. We will help staff triage and prioritize work, requests for service, and to schedule ahead as much as possible based on priority. This will be communicated to clients with a service oriented approach. Requests for service that are outside of the EH&S scope can no longer be supported. This will be communicated by managers and staff to University clients. One example of a recent change is the discontinuation of scheduling Seattle Fire Department inspections and witnessing acceptance tests for fire and life safety systems which was being done on behalf of the Capital Projects Office.

EH&S will look for new ways to reduce duplication, streamline processes, and improve our collective and individual productivity, especially for activities that require significant resources. EH&S will build teams for key projects that will implement aspects of the strategy plan while incorporating other work into the day-to-day operations.

Q: Please explain the major outcomes of the strategy plan: Proactive vs. Reactive, Sustainable Financial Model, Risk Mitigation, and data-driven decision making.

A: Proactive vs. reactive: EH&S will always respond to events and crises but given changes in practices and resources we need to become more proactive in our work. We will explore and deploy best practices and find new ways to help our clients get their work done in a safe and compliant manner. We will continue to develop positive relationships and increase communication with our clients so that we can anticipate issues and respond to them before they become problems or issues.

Sustainable Financial Model: EH&S' environment has changed substantially in the past few years. Our University has expanded significantly causing EH&S to respond to greater numbers of clients while our funding has been reduced. This continued growth of our community is key to UW's success and EH&S will build a financial model that allows for the department to successfully support UW's efforts. Additionally, higher education and environmental health and safety continue to respond to unfunded mandates from state and national levels. A sustainable financial model will provide systems and tools for assuring funding for these mandates and defined base-line services.

Risk mitigation and data driven decision making by EH&S staff and leadership to address priorities and align service provision: EH&S can no longer afford to resource all that is asked for by its diverse communities. Future decisions for EH&S resources will be determined by a method and model that assesses the risk of the situation and requires careful analysis of the data for recommending action or providing service to address potential solutions.

Q: What if I have additional questions regarding the EH&S Strategy Plan?

A: You may directly contact one of the members of the EH&S Management Team if you have additional questions, concerns, or suggestions. We encourage client interaction regarding questions, requests for service, and also new ideas for EH&S to be more efficient in providing support for the UW community. If you are unsure of who to contact at EH&S, send an e-mail to ehsdept@uw.edu or call (206) 543-7262.

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