

Guide to Creating Your Action Plan

Defining your Purpose

- What do you want your group to achieve?
- What activities/events have you especially enjoyed or would consider successful? Is there a theme to those, such as service-oriented, learning, or political?
- What challenges does your community face to advance principles of humanism?
- Your purpose statement should help people unfamiliar with you understand what to expect by participating.
- Examples of purpose statements
 - Community focused
 - We will create and embrace a welcoming and safe place for any humanist or person interested in humanism.
 - We are committed to volunteerism and acts of service to improve the safety and well-being of the people and places in our community.
 - Action oriented
 - We will fight back against religion being required in public schools.
 - We will engage our elected officials in advancing humanist principles and policies.
 - Growth and learning
 - We seek to learn more about humanism and its role in our society.
 - We want to explore how to be anti-racist and an ally to marginalized groups.

Setting Goals

- Set Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound (SMART) Goals
- **Specific:** General goals are hard to act on or know if you have succeeded. Be as specific as possible with numbers, dates, and description.
- **Measurable:** how will you know if you succeeded? After you've completed your action steps, will you be able to say "Yes, we did x, y, or z.?" Or will you be able to see where you fell short and how you could improve next time.
- **Achievable:** Be realistic. If you are just getting going, start small to ensure you can achieve your goal. Do you have members with time and interest in taking lead roles? How can you partner with other organizations or support existing events? Depending on the expertise and experience in your group, you can always go bigger if you are eager to set ambitious goals! At the same time, don't be afraid to go smaller and identify an achievable goal to give yourself a 'win' and build from there.
- **Relevant:** How will this help achieve your purpose? Is it advancing your vision? Is it aligned with your values?
- **Time-Bound.** Your goals should have end dates. Do [X] by [Date].

Action Plan

What do you need to do?

Who will do it?

By when?

Follow-up

- For each goal, create an action plan with a series of steps with deadlines and assignments to specific people. Hold each other accountable. Set times to check-in on progress either by email, phone, or in-person. Set expectations for communicating to the full group, especially if the action plan will take several months to complete.
- Work backwards. Create a timeline and steps by starting at the end and working backwards so you can be realistic about the time needed to complete the tasks
- Be sure to include follow-up in your plan—take photos, share back with the group how it went, thank everyone involved, promote through social media or other channels, do a debrief to examine what went well, what could have been improved, and if you want to do this again.

SAMPLE ACTION PLAN

Small Town, USA AHA Chapter/Affiliate

February 2025

Our purpose is to advance humanism, an ethical and life-affirming philosophy free of belief in any gods and other supernatural forces. We will do this through 1) a commitment to volunteerism and acts of service to improve the safety and well-being of the people and places in our community and 2) learning and growing our understanding of and actions to embrace anti-racism principles.

Goals:

1. Over the next six months, at least 10 chapter members will participate in two community service projects.
2. We will host discussion groups to help us better understand how to embrace anti-racist principles and actions.

Action Plan

1. Community Service projects
 - a. Identify 4 potential community service projects AHA members could attend and reach out to the organization hosting them to learn more and offer support from AHA
WHO: Jane
DEADLINE: March 1st
 - b. At March 10th meeting, Jane will bring options to the group for consideration and to decide which to commit to and how (attend, co-sponsor, take responsibility for specific tasks needed for the event, etc)
 - c. Following the meeting, additional action steps and assignments will be developed
2. Anti-racism learning for 2025
 - a. Identify books, videos, articles, and other resources (AHA speaker bureau, local groups) to share with the group for discussion topics.
WHO: Mike
DEADLINE: March 15

- b. Schedule at least 3 opportunities: discussion group, speaker, and/or local event/presentation to attend. Research and come with discussion questions or guide
WHO: Mike
DEADLINE: no later than April 30th
- c. Bring back what you learned to the full group to discuss what you might do differently and how to continue learning/acting.
- d. Identify additional action steps based on what we have learned