



*Assessing and Redesigning a Behavioral Health Authority*

**Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Behavioral Health**

January - December 2017

**Situation**

The Office of Behavioral Health contained six work units with approximately 70 FTEs that fund, license, support, and monitor various contracted mental health and substance use services and programs in Colorado. The Affordable Care Act Medicaid expansion and the Governor’s plan to strengthen Colorado’s Mental Health system were just a few of the changes that impacted the population the Office served. In 2015, a new Office Director started and wanted an analysis of the organization to reset structures to meet future needs better.

**Approach**

GPS used a three-phase transparent approach that included change management and communications plans that involved extensive employee feedback, which was critical to accepting the process and final recommendations.



In Phase I, GPS conducted a comprehensive assessment of the organizational structure, operations, and resource allocation to arrive at recommendations that guided OBH toward a future in which:

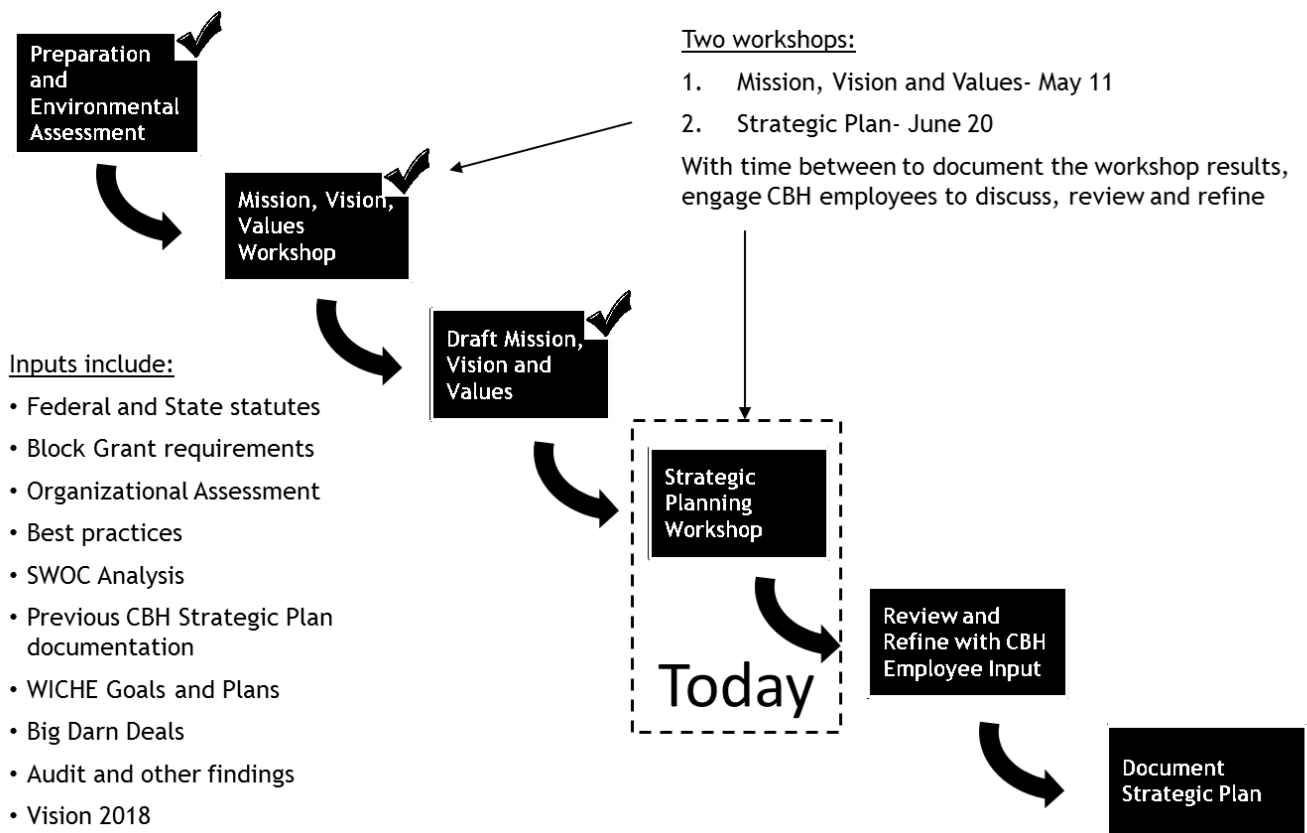
- Processes are centered around the value they provide for customers rather than historical conventions
- Resources are aligned in a way that meets the changing policy environment and customer needs
- People function in positions that make the most of their skills. Workloads are distributed in a manner that is equitable to staff and beneficial to customers
- GPS’s comprehensive assessment was informed by an all-staff survey followed by more than 60 individual interviews, identification of benchmarks/best practices, workload analysis, and findings to identify strengths, weaknesses, and gaps used to distill a series of recommendations and related road map.



The initial draft recommendations were socialized through workshops with the entire staff to gather additional feedback and increase buy-in. GPS also worked with managers and senior leaders to ensure logical sequencing for implementing the recommendations and to develop related work plans.

In Phase II, GPS worked with managers and leaders to develop a strategic plan anchored by a refreshed vision, mission, and values. GPS believes creating a compelling organizational mission, vision, and values is a team sport. We solicited inputs broadly and took these into a leadership workshop to develop fresh, applicable language collaboratively. We held a second workshop to create the strategic framework, specifying the measurable objectives and initiatives to achieve meaningful transformation.

# CBH Strategic Planning Process



GPS worked with managers and staff to implement multi-stage recommendations through quick-win sessions and workshops. This allowed OBH to realign resources into a new organizational structure supporting the new vision, mission, values, and strategic plan. In addition, GPS provides leadership training to managers to help them instill an agile culture focused on continuous quality improvement.



Phase III began in February 2017, and GPS supports implementing the new plans and organizational structure. GPS worked with staff to streamline several processes, such as the provider application process, improving the site visit, contract compliance monitoring, and invoicing processes, to name a few. We created a master schedule with start and due dates to improve time management and work planning. We also created an operational dashboard with key metrics to allow Directors an at-a-glance understanding of progress. We provided leadership training to more than 10 managers to enhance their abilities and skills around holding others accountable, using appropriate leadership styles, prioritizing work, and using essential process improvement tools and techniques to solve problems successfully.

### *Results*

- At the end of phase one, GPS wrote a report with 19 recommendations summarized into 4 themes and implementation sequences/timelines.
- During phase two, GPS facilitated several process improvements to improve three complex processes using Lean management principles and methods to:
  - reduce waste,
  - focus on value-added activities,
  - balance workloads and
  - improve operational efficiencies.
- During phase three, GPS trained 14 managers on Lean management principles to sustain a culture of improvement that can more readily adapt to future changes and developed a learning and development matrix for all staff, including tips on designing engaging courses that utilize adult learning theory.