

Tips for an Effective Process*

- A key factor to success is having visible support from the state health official and local health officials. The active participation of these leaders in the process will emphasize the importance of the effort.
- Identify a facilitator and recorder before the process begins. Consider having two recorders – one to track responses and a second to track ideas, comments and solutions.
- Be clear about the purpose of the process with participants.
- Orient all participants about the Essential Services.
- Recruit all system partners that are appropriate to assess the public health system. If the entire system is well-represented, then responses will better reflect current activities. Work closely to ensure their full involvement in the assessment process.
- Ensure a comfortable environment and provide food and beverages, if possible.
- At the beginning, review the methods and process with participants. Allow the group to make suggestions regarding the best way for moving through the instrument efficiently.
- State how long the process will take... and stick to that commitment!
- Be aware that speed can pick up as participants become familiar with the instrument and the process for responding. The group may want to start with an Essential Service or indicator that they view as “easy” or more straightforward.
- Keep the process moving along and do not allow the discussion to get overly bogged down.
- Track ideas, comments, and potential solutions so that these ideas can be revisited later.
- Think about creative ways to reduce paper-shuffling. For example, the instrument can be projected from a laptop to an overhead screen so that all participants can follow the questions easily.