

## Outline of Key Steps to Creating a CAM Campaign

What follows is a highly simplified outline of the College Access Marketing (CAM) *Create a Campaign* online guide. Once you've read through the whole guide and checked out the other resources at [www.collegeaccessmarketing.org](http://www.collegeaccessmarketing.org), use this outline as an overview and checklist for creating your own CAM campaign.

- 1) **Preliminary Research and Goal Setting.** Define the problem addressed, the target audience, the behavior change you are trying to influence, and the measurable outcomes the behavior change should create.
  - a) Use existing research or conduct new research to define the focus of your campaign:  
What problem are you trying to solve?
    - i) Why is college access important to your state, community, or organization?
    - ii) What are the main obstacles to improving college access in your state or community?
    - iii) What problem is your campaign going to focus on?
  - b) Define your purpose
    - i) What is your campaign's purpose? What difference will it make?
  - c) Set the Context
    - i) What internal strengths and weaknesses do the organizations involved in your campaign bring?
    - ii) What are the external opportunities and threats?
    - iii) What does past experience tell you about this problem and how to solve it?
- 2) **Engagement of Key Stakeholders.** Identify key organizations who need to be involved; make the case to potential partners and funders to get their buy-in and support.
  - a) Finding funding and partners
    - i) Assess costs and benefits of partnerships and grants
    - ii) Make a good case for investing in your campaign
  - b) Making the case: find shared goals and understand their interests
- 3) **Audience Research.** Learn everything you can about your audience – how they view the problem, the barriers they face, what arguments appeal to them, and what message channels they use.
  - a) Who is affected by the problem you are trying to solve, and how can you group them?
  - b) Which groups will be primary and secondary target audiences?
  - c) Use research to answer core questions about your target audience, such as:
    - i) Who are they?
    - ii) What are they doing (or not doing) now?
    - iii) What do they know about getting into college and the step your campaign is focused on?
    - iv) What are their values and attitudes?
    - v) What barriers do they perceive to doing what you want them to do?

- 4) **Strategic and Tactical Planning.** Plan the strategies, tactics, and messages for your campaign, then test your messages and ideas with the audience. Make sure an evaluation plan is built into your campaign plan.
  - a) Set objectives: What do you want your audience to do?
    - i) Identify primary objectives (behaviors)
    - ii) Identify secondary objectives (knowledge and beliefs)
  - b) Set measurable goals
  - c) Build a strong marketing plan
    - i) Strategy: maximize benefits, minimize barriers
    - ii) Tactics: use tactics that fit your target audience, objective, and budget
    - iii) Message: more than just a slogan
      - (1) Use research and creativity
      - (2) Test your message
  - d) Budget: what you've got and what you'd like to have
    - i) Create a budget with tactics in mind
    - ii) Cover all the bases, from planning to evaluation
  
- 5) **Implementation.** Implement your plan: get the program off the ground
  - a) Hiring outside firms: be selective
  
- 6) **Monitoring and Reporting.** Monitor your progress, make changes as needed, and keep all stakeholders in the loop as the campaign rolls out. Document and report what you learned with the field.
  - a) Use data to assess your progress:
    - i) Baselines
    - ii) Tracking
    - iii) Effectiveness and outcomes
  - b) Plan to make adjustments
    - i) Set a schedule for evaluating your progress
    - ii) Keep track of how your plan and goals evolve
  - c) Leave a legacy: document, evaluate, and share your efforts with the field
    - i) Share information throughout the process, not just at the end
    - ii) Don't just hype the good news: help others learn from your experience. Share your materials with [www.collegeaccessmarketing.org](http://www.collegeaccessmarketing.org)