



CCAU AUDiT Exercise: Action Items

We have developed several exercises for effective use of the Academic Unit Diagnostic Tool (AUDiT). Please see the AUDiT manual for more context (ethicscenter.csl.illinois.edu/academic-leadership/ccc/audit).

This exercise, “Action Items”, is a follow-up activity to the Functional/Dysfunctional Unit Characteristics exercise. It starts with the lists developed in that exercise, so it’s a necessary precursor. The Action Items exercise can be helpful for developing group actions and strategies. It also gets people up and moving, and provides visual feedback that can be helpful in other contexts.

1. Using the lists of what unit members think makes a vibrant and functional unit, ask all present to mark on flip charts or white board a ranking of 1, 2, 3 on what they think are the most important areas needing action in their unit.
2. When all have had a turn marking their priorities, circle the ones that have the most votes. Give the group a chance to consider the visual results.
3. Initiate a discussion of actions and strategies the unit can take to move towards the vibrancy that its members desire.
4. If the environment is conducive, it can be effective at this point to ask each person present to make a personal commitment to one action he or she will start (or stop!), to contribute to the goals set out. Asking each both to write that down and to share it out loud with the group can be a powerful turning point. Set timelines and “accountability buddies” where each person commits to a regular check-in (periodicity specified) with a partner, who can be asked and accept (or not) out loud in front of the entire group. This process can reinforce the on-going nature of the changes to be made.
5. Groups may need assistance with what to do, what scripts to use, and what pacts to make with each other, particularly where backsliding or actions that derail the group process occur. The CCAU Consortium has resources and advice for such situations.

