

(11) MY ACTION PLAN (MAP) PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

Creating the client's action plan (called *My Action Plan* or *MAP*) is like putting all the pieces of a puzzle on a table and starting to look at where they all fit together. You take everything you've learned about your client - from the Intake, Quick Quiz, Quick Questionnaire, and Quick Review - to identify areas for learning and action that will help your client move toward their financial goals.

Pre-MAP Preparation

Before you sit down with your client to create a MAP, use the **MAP Preparation Form** and the steps below to start sketching out ideas for an action plan:

1. General Review

This information can help you identify questions to raise during a MAP session or other financial topics to introduce.

	Possible implications
Age	Should client be planning for retirement?
Marital Status	Do you want to encourage the spouse to participate in creating the MAP?
Education	Might impact which educational materials are given
Dependents	Taking control of finances involves the whole family, so you may want to talk to your client about ways to do that. Also, if saving for children's education was not mentioned, is it a goal?
Employment details	Are there ways to increase earnings? Given current income/employment, can the client meet their financial goals?
Support Services	Are there other potential resources available (such as low-cost phone, etc.)? Does your organization offer any support?
Credit report review	Review credit report to identify red flag or action items such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More than 4 credit cards; Multiple credit cards with no balances (keeping cards that are not in use) ○ High credit balances - reaching or exceeding limits ○ Delinquent payments; Collections

2. Quick Quiz Review

Correct the Quick Quiz and identify where learning opportunities overlap with the client's goals. To identify publications and websites, see the **Resource List**.

Topic	Question #	Learning Opportunities
Credit	1-10	If client missed more than one question, recommend credit-related resources.
Car obligations Loan Car Insurance	11 27-28	If client missed more than one question, recommend car-related resources.
Credit reports	12-18	If client missed more than one question, recommend credit report & credit scores resources.
Spending plan	19-22	We always try to recommend that a client complete a spending plan module.
Financial services	23-26	If client missed more than one question, recommend financial services resources.
Financial planning	29-30	If client missed more than one question, recommend financial planning resources.

3. Intake review

Review notes from the intake interview to identify learning opportunities and ways to tie financial topics to their goals. For example, a person with no credit history who EVER wants to buy a house, a car, start a business, etc. would benefit from learning about building credit. A person who is not using a checking account successfully would probably benefit from a training module on checking accounts.

4. Quick Questionnaire Review

Questions	Possible implications
Q1 - 2 Lifestyle Changes	Are there any events that could have a significant impact on the client meeting his/her goals?
Q3 - 7 Employment Situation	Are there any events that could have a significant impact on the client meeting his/her goals? Does your agency have any resources that could help the client expand income opportunities?
Q8 - Debt	Does client have debt issues? Was debt reduction one of the goals identified at Intake? If applicable, add this to the list of goals on the Quick Review and discuss with client at MAP meeting.
Q9 - 11 Financial Protection	Did the client include saving for an emergency fund as a goal during the intake? If not, discuss adding a goal of "saving \$XX for emergencies".

Questions	Possible implications
	How prepared is the client and/or his/her family for handling medical emergencies, death, etc.?
Q12 - 13 Resource Access	Will the client be able to access resources on the Internet or do they prefer printed materials? What resources are available that best support the client's learning style?

5. Review Goals and Identify Action Steps and Resources

Review the client's goals using the Quick Review. Using everything gathered above, consider what action steps a client might take to meet their goals, including:

- What your client needs to *learn* (for example, learn about credit reporting by reading publications, visiting websites, or going to workshops. You can use the **Resource List** to identify publications and websites).
- What the client needs to *decide* (for example, where can the client cut expenses so they can reach their goal of putting more money toward paying off debt?)
- What *actions* the client needs to do (such as researching the true cost of an item they want to purchase).

You can use the **MAP Preparation Form** as your cheat sheet. Here is an example of preparing for one goal.

Goal	Considerations	Possible action steps; resource/learning materials
Buy a new bed	During intake, client said they've never used credit before. Talk about possibility of building a credit history for use in buying bed.	Explore places to purchase bed, compare prices and options for buying a bed (i.e. save, purchase on credit). Identify how much you will need to save for a bed. Read "How to Build a Credit History". Read "How to Develop a Spending Plan". Track expenses for 1 month and do a Spending Plan. Identify how much you can save each month toward a bed. Build savings for a bed into your Spending Plan.

MAP Development Meetings

There is no one formula for a successful MAP meeting, as it is a process of following your client's lead and putting together a plan that works for them. Completing the full MAP/action plan may occur over a number of meetings. As you meet, it is important to try to tie

everything into why it is significant and how it might impact your client's ability to reach their goals.

Before the meeting, transfer your client's goals into the client MAP form (there will be a separate page for each one). Do not put in steps or resources yet - you will fill them in when you meet with your client, and they may change depending on how the meeting goes. Bring resource materials with you, if possible, to give to your client.

Here is a sample flow of a MAP meeting.

Steps	Key ideas to cover
Provide an overview of MAP meeting and process	Give overall picture of what's going to happen during the MAP meeting(s) and what the "final product" will be (i.e. end up with an action plan). Reiterate that the whole process is geared toward them and what they want to do.
Go over participant agreement	Your program may or may not choose to have clients sign a separate agreement that outlines the terms and conditions of the mentoring program. See sample in the Appendix.
Review Quick Quiz	The Quick Quiz is used as a teaching tool to introduce financial topics. It takes approximately 1 hour to review. Cover only those questions that the client missed or where there are opportunities for more conversation.
Review Quick Questionnaire	Begin to talk about anticipated life changes that may affect their goals. Your client may identify additional goals based on Questionnaire responses (such as debt reduction or saving for emergencies). This is also an opportunity to discuss the types of materials most appropriate for their learning style (i.e. internet based, classroom, etc).
Go over Quick Review	Review all goals identified to date so the client has a chance to refresh their memory and add any they've missed.
Complete MAP form for each goal	Introduce the client MAP form. Depending on how much time there is in the session, start filling out the MAP form with the client (using the MAP preparation form as your guide). List a few resources and steps for each goal. Ask the client if they want to establish a goal deadline. Help them brainstorm any barriers that could get in their way. Identify next action steps including any costs.
Introduce follow-up options	Once the MAP has been developed for each goal, introduce follow-up options. This may include scheduling a follow-up

Steps	Key ideas to cover
	<p>meeting at that time or letting the client contact you when they want additional assistance.</p> <p>In addition, you may want to build in regular check-ins to contact clients (such as 1 month after the final MAP meeting; with additional check-ins every 3 months). Check-ins provide an opportunity to find out how a person is progressing, what changes they might have made, and (informally) what effect the program has had on them. It is also an opportunity remind clients you are there if they want to meet or have questions.</p>