

American Academy of Sanitarians

Strategic Plan 2006
(DRAFT)

Prestigious Recognition for Environmental Health Professionals

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Introduction

Background

In 1998 the current Chairman, Colonel Anthony Aiken, asked Diplomate Dr. David McSwane to initiate strategic planning on behalf of the American Academy of Sanitarians (AAS). Dr. McSwane developed a survey instrument that would assess members' perceptions about the strengths and weaknesses of the Academy and opportunities and threats that it is or is likely to experience. Members also were asked what they considered to be the academy's top priorities for programs, activities, and services during the next five years. A copy of the survey instrument is provided in attachment A. The information provided by survey respondents was quite perceptive, however, the level of response to the survey was quite low (6 people). In an effort to obtain additional information, a copy of the survey was sent directly to the members of the Executive Board. The level of response from the Board was good. A summary of all responses to each item in the survey is provided in attachment B.

The information from the survey was consolidated into six key issues. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were identified for each issue, and strategic actions were drafted. A copy of the strategic actions is presented in attachment C.

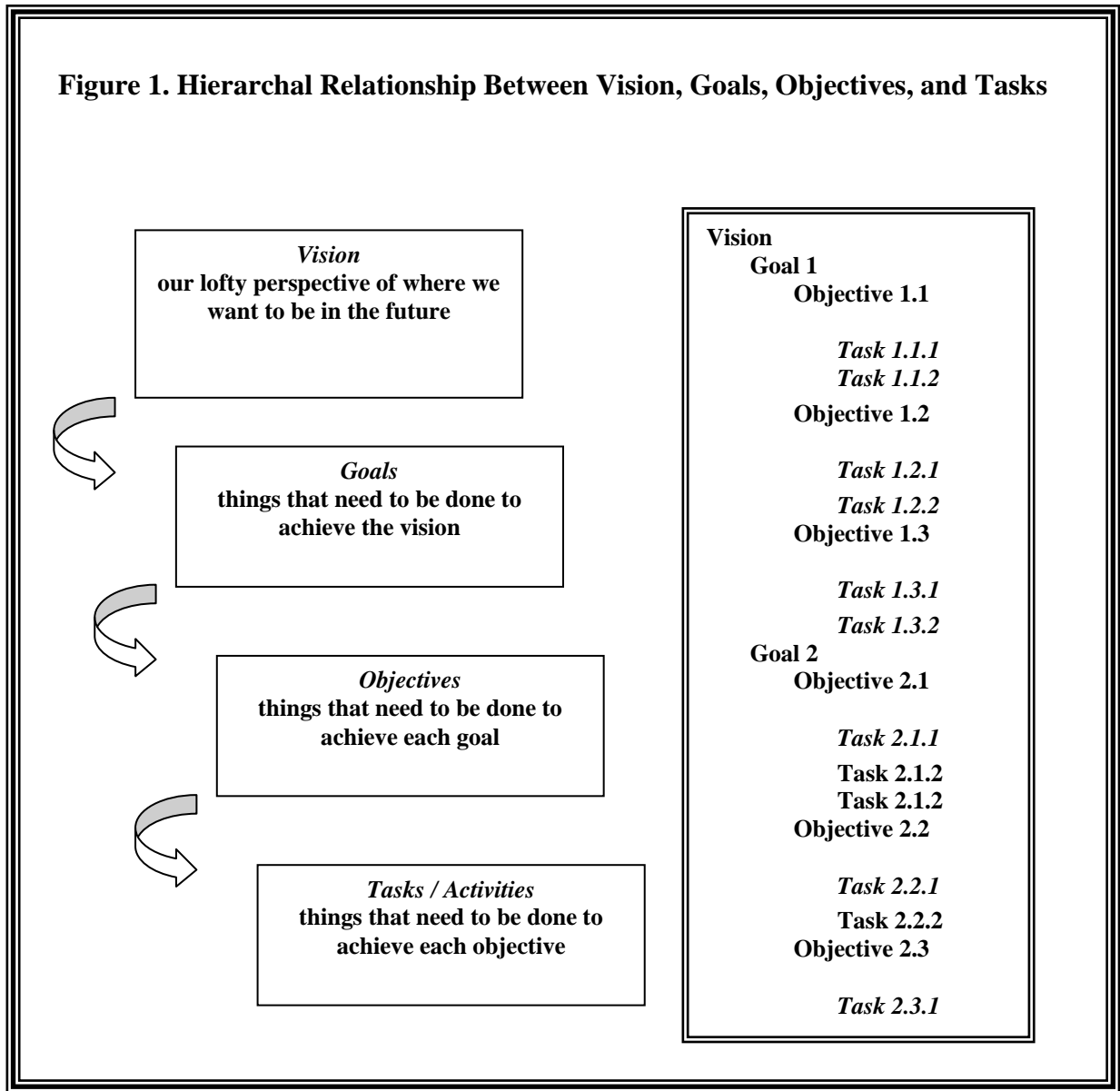
This strategic plan is based upon the survey responses and the Academy's Constitution and By-Laws. The strategy identifies a vision that considers and reflects upon organizational values, potentials, and opportunities. Goals and objectives are presented as steps that need to be achieved in order to achieve the vision. Individual tasks are detailed actions that are necessary to attain an objective. Figure 1 demonstrates the relationship between goals, objectives, and tasks.

Accomplishments

Some of the recommendations originally identified by Academy members already have been implemented. These include:

- Developing of a Wagner awards ceremony and reception at the annual National Environmental Health Association conference;
- Developing of an American Academy of Sanitarians website (www.sanitarians.org); and
- Establishing a Diplomate Laureate membership category.

Figure 1. Hierarchical Relationship Between Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Tasks





Strategy

Vision

The American Academy of Sanitarians will be the premier national organization to elevate the standards, improve the practice, advance the professional proficiency, and promote the highest levels of ethical conduct among professional sanitarians in every field of environmental health.

Goals, Objectives, and Selected Tasks

The goals and objectives identified below are based upon the responses from the 2003 survey results. Some of the responses are identified as tasks. The tasks delineated are limited; however, it is expected that the committees that evaluate and implement the strategic plan will expand and further develop the necessary tasks required to accomplish each objective.

Goal 1. Increase the opportunities for interaction among Academy members.

Objective 1.1. Share research and scholarly activities.

Task 1.1.1. Revise the format of the annual meeting to promote the exchange of research and scholarly information.

Task 1.1.2. Develop an educational session at the annual meeting for presentation and poster sessions by Academy members.

Task 1.1.3. Begin a scholarly journal sponsored by the Academy.

Task 1.1.4. Develop position papers about environmental health issues.

Objective 1.2. Develop new ways to communicate with members who cannot attend the annual meeting.

Task 1.2.1. Improve the Academy Newsletter by increasing its publication frequency and expanding its content.

Goal 2. Increase visibility of the Academy.

(Make a concerted effort to publicize Academy to sanitarians and other environmental health professionals.)

Objective 2.1. Showcase the Academy and the work of its members at the National Environmental Health Association's (NEHA) Annual Educational Conference and Exhibition and other professional meetings.

Task 2.1.1. Make activities at the annual NEHA meeting and other meetings more visible.

Task 2.1.2. Share research/scholarly activities of members through NEHA's *Journal of Environmental Health* and other professional journals and publications.

Objective 2.2. Invite NEHA and students to the educational session sponsored by the Academy

Objective 2.3. Conduct and publish a demographic study of current members to determine where they are employed and what position they hold.

Objective 2.4. Form partnerships with other related environmental and public health organizations and associations.

Objective 2.5. Increase the Academy's visibility through advertising.

Task 2.4.1. Make sure prospective members and others know about the Academy and its mission.

Task 2.4.2. Promote the Academy's involvement in scholarships and activities that enhance the sanitarian and environmental health profession.

Goal 3. Increase Academy membership.

Objective 3.1. Create a membership committee.

Task 3.1.1. Identify a member of the Board of Directors to lead the committee.

Task 3.1.2. Identify and recruit members to serve on the membership committee.

Task 3.1.3. Periodically review membership eligibility criteria to insure that it remains high to attract top-level professionals.

Objective 3.2. Recruit 20 new members per year for the next 5 years.

Task 3.2.1. Recruit top professionals from all sectors of Environmental Health.

Recruit members from the government, private sector, and academia.

Task 3.2.2. Recruit young, energetic members.

Task 3.2.3. Contact state and local sanitarian and other environmental professional groups, including National Environmental Health Association affiliates, to recruit new members.

Task 3.2.4. Contact the National Conference of Local Environmental Health Administrators and similar groups to recruit new members.

Task 3.2.5. Broaden the base membership to include other professionals who are concerned with environmental health issues.

Goal 4. Improve the financial stability of the Academy.

Objective 4.1. Develop a 5-year budget plan and projection.

Objective 4.2. Develop and maintain a system of checks and balances to assure that money spent will produce worthwhile outcomes.

Objective 4.3. Solicit corporate support

Task 4.3.1. Develop sustained support for the Academy's general operations.

Task 4.3.2. Develop sustained support for the Academy for student scholarships.

Objective 4.4. Publish the annual budget to Academy members so that they can see how the annual budget that is allocated, know what projects are being

supported, and the financial expenditure for each operating expense and project supported by the organization.

Objective 4.5. Develop a process to inform members when dues increases are being considered and the issues associated with the proposed increase.

Goal 5. Convene Academy Board of Directors meetings to improve business effectiveness.

Objective 5.1. Maintain a Board of Directors with membership that reflects all segments of environmental health (federal, state, local government, academia, uniformed services, private business, industry).

Objective 5.2. Increase the frequency of Board of Directors meetings to at least two per year.

Task 5.2.1. Continue to convene a Board of Directors meeting during the National Environmental Health Association's (NEHA) Annual Educational Conference and Exhibition.

Task 5.2.2. Consider convening an additional Board of Directors meeting in conjunction with another conference or activity.

Objective 5.3. Use technology to compensate for the wide spread location of Board of Directors members.

Task 5.3.1. Develop a conference call capability.

Task 5.3.2. Capitalize on the use of e-mail communications.

Objective 5.4. Report proceedings of Board of Directors meetings in the Academy Newsletter.


Goal 6. Improve the ability for Academy members who do not attend the National Environmental Health Association's (NEHA) Annual Educational Conference and Exhibition to participate in the organization's decision-making process.

Objective 6.1. Identify and consider other organizations and meetings (in addition to the National Environmental Health Association) to partner with the Academy (e.g., International Association for Food Protection, Conference for Food Protection, Association of Food and Drug Officials, American Public Health Association, etc.).

Objective 6.2. Involve Academy members on committees to improve and enhance the organization and to implement the strategic plan.

Objective 6.3. Use the Academy Newsletter to inform members about pending Academy actions and considerations and to solicit feedback.

Objective 6.4. Develop and implement a method to take straw polls before Board of Directors votes are taken.



Objective 6.5. Use the Academy's website to keep members informed about organization activities.

Goal 7. Develop outreach programs to improve the sanitarian/environmental health profession.

Objective 7.1. Establish a student mentorship program.

Objective 7.2. Establish a leadership program.

Objective 7.3. Help improve diversity in the sanitarian and environmental health professions.



Recommendations for Implementation

1. A Board of Directors member should be appointed to be responsible for each goal. Each Board of Directors member then should form a committee for each goal by enlisting members from the Academy's general membership.
 - a. Each committee should develop tasks for each objective and establish timelines to complete the tasks and objectives that are consistent with the timeline for completing each goal.
 - b. Each committee, as a minimum, should have quarterly meetings and record their progress with progress reports and/or minutes of their meetings.
 - c. Each committee should periodically report their progress in the Academy Newsletter.
 - d. Each committee should present an update of their progress and activities at Academy business meetings

2. This strategy should be reviewed and updated at least every three years, or more frequently if necessary. The review should be conducted to enhance and/or revise the vision, if necessary, modify existing goals and objectives, and identify new goals and objectives. The update process should be organized to involve include as many Academy members as possible.

Timeline

Goal Number	Description	Estimated Completion Date by Calendar Year and Quarter
1	Increase the opportunities for interaction among Academy members	2007, 3 rd Quarter
2	Increase visibility of the Academy	2007, 2 nd Quarter
3	Increase Academy membership	2008, 2 nd Quarter
4	Improve the financial stability of the Academy	2008, 2 nd Quarter
5	Convene Academy Board of Directors meetings to improve business effectiveness	2007, 1 st Quarter
6	Improve the ability for Academy members who do not attend the National Environmental Health Association's (NEHA) Annual Educational Conference and Exhibition to participate in the organization's decision-making process	2008, 1 st Quarter
7	Develop outreach programs to improve the sanitarian and environmental health professions.	2008, 4 th Quarter

Attachment A. Strategic Survey Instrument





IV. Do you believe there is anything that could threaten the Academy's future well-being? Threats are situations that give rise to potentially harmful events and outcomes if action is not taken in the immediate future; they must be actively confronted to prevent trouble.

V. What do you think should be the academy's top priorities for programs, services, activities, etc. during the next five years? Please rank these.

Name of Respondent: _____



Attachment B. Summary of Strategic Planning Survey Input from Academy Members



Strengths of the Academy:

- Professional recognition of the accomplishments for members
- Opportunities for interaction and networking among members
- Forum to influence policy within NEHA and the environmental health profession
- Members have a vast knowledge of environmental health, the sanitarian profession, and historical perspective from all “walks of life”.
- An improved newsletter
- Membership/members
- Professional status
- Standards for membership eligibility
- Credential
- Scholarship awards
- Quality of people selected for the Academy
- Interest in preserving the broad scope of what a sanitarian practices and keeping health as a focus of our practice.
- The variety of professional skills that individual academy members bring to the Academy
- The members are the most elite in the field of environmental health. This allows for networking among one’s peers.
- Being a Diplomat demonstrates that an individual has obtained the highest level of certification available to sanitarians.
- Talent pool among the members of the Academy
- Criteria for induction
- The Academy has a strong “corporate culture” of excellence in environmental health. This attitude is not felt by many in the workplace, so it is important for the Academy to continue to promote excellence.

Weaknesses of the Academy:

- **Limited formal opportunities to pursue interests among members (one overpriced luncheon meeting per year is not conducive to this end)**
- Domination of the academy by the commissioned corps (appears to lead to over-representation of its interests, “good buddy” network, etc.)
- Lack of widespread national visibility
- New dues level (this change should have been phased in over 3-4 years)
- Infrequency of meetings
- Lack of professional association activity (other meetings, etc.)
- Lack of opportunity for reporting scholarship and research.
- We have not been a strong advocate for the profession and we need to “proselytize” more in order to bring into the Academy strong sanitarian advocates and professionals.
- We need to publicize ourselves more and recruit new members.
- Public relations have gotten better, but there are still a lot of folks who have no idea who we are.
- Small number of members.
- Only one meeting per year.
- Lack of recognition by sanitarians.
- Because of distance and lack of funding, the Board does not meet more than 1 time per year, which means business is slow in getting done.
- The small number of members who contribute to the overall operation of the Academy means a few do a lot.
- Lack of real support from the membership. (Few members take a turn staffing the exhibit during NEHA meeting, only one person provided comments about the diplomat laureate proposal, etc.)
- Lack of visibility and recognition among profession – most of NEHA does even know the Academy exists and most other professional organizations have never heard of the Academy.
- Members who do not attend the NEHA Educational Conference are not included in decisions affecting them. If a decision affects a Diplomat, they should have some input into the decision-making process.
- The membership is not used very effectively. We have a pool of theoretically the “best” and don’t utilize their expertise. It takes all of us to make the association a viable group to be heard.
- The theory behind the association is excellent, however, the association does a poor job utilizing all of its members and keeping them informed of association activities.
- The composition of the leadership of the Board is out of balance in terms of representation of leaders throughout the U.S. in the area of environmental health service delivery.
- We are not attracting young, energetic members. We are seen as a “good old boys club”- which is a real but inaccurate and unfair perception. This is changing to some degree with the recent promotional activities such as the Wagner Reception

Opportunities the Academy should capitalize on:

- Develop a scholarly journal (e.g. Journal of the American Academy of Sanitarians)
- Eliminate the luncheon and develop an educational session at the annual meeting for member presentations and posters and an informal get together following the session.
- Increase academy visibility through advertising, position papers, etc.
- Broaden the base of membership to other environmental professionals concerned with environmental health and protection issues.
- Expanded newsletter (or other vehicle) with more professional focus
- Opportunity to showcase research/scholarly work.
- Write articles on sanitarian activities for journals and newspapers/magazines especially those directed at high school and college students.
- Sponsor some visible event which is concert with our goals and objectives.
- Contact state sanitarian groups to entice them to encourage worthy applicants to apply for membership in the Academy. (Award to the state with the most new members)
- We should showcase the Academy at annual NEHA and affiliate meetings.
- We need to have more frequent articles in the Journal of Environmental Health pertaining to the Academy.
- Web Pages
- Scholarship
- Utilize the expertise of all of its members.
- Continue promotional activities. The reception, the web page, the booth, etc.
- Mentoring of new, young sanitarians both one-on-one as well as through the scholarships we offer.

Threats to the Academy's future well-being:

- The 200+ % increase in dues, without prior input from the membership and discussion of potential benefits, is unfortunate. The primary benefit the typical member sees in the newsletter. Other organizations offer more for \$50 per year.
- Sudden dues increase (we will lose members as well as discourage new members)
- The AAS is a well-kept secret.
- Complacency
- Industrial hygiene is trying to become licensed I.H. and take over by legislation activities of sanitarians.
- Lack of active members who will lead the Academy into the next millennium.
- Financial stability. Although the Academy has some capital, some of the more aggressive expenditures for scholarships, etc. may more rapidly deplete the capital than anticipated. A five-year budget plan and projection needs to be accomplished.
- Apathy – Lack of an additional pool willing workers to implement programs as membership changes.
- Lack of effective communication and coordination of efforts – the Board needs to have a conference call a couple times a year to keep up to date on committee activities, etc.
- Too close an association with NEHA. With travel budgets what they are, many highly qualified individuals cannot attend Academy meetings because NEHA meets is not considered a priority travel.
- Power is passed between a select few individuals, thus showing the appearance of a “Good Ole Boy Club”.
- Dues increase without any input or say in the affairs of the Academy. All Academy members should have input into the projects the academy sponsors and the amount of money dedicated to these activities and projects.
- The perception that the academy is a “good old boys” club for the officers of the USPHS.
- If we don't start bringing in new members we will have to close our doors due to lack of management.
- If members of the Academy have a “don't care” attitude about the organization, it will “die” or at least falter very badly.

Top Priorities for the Next Five Years:

- Change the format of the annual meeting from a luncheon to an educational session and get together.
- Begin development of a scholarly journal sponsored by the Academy.
- Broaden Membership beyond environmental sanitarians (consider a name change to the American Academy of Environmental Health)
- Increase visibility of the Academy among environmental health professionals and other health professions.
- Seek input from the membership on important issues at the annual meeting.
- Increase in visibility and Public Relations of AAS
- Membership drive/expansion. (Focus on recruiting new members from the private sector and state and local environmental agencies)
- Enhancement of Scholarship Fund/Awards.
- Expand research and scholarly endeavors of our members.
- Dues lowering with a gentle phase-in.
- Increase scholarship awareness.
- Work with NEHA Past-Presidents to secure corporate sponsors for scholarship fund.
- Set goal to obtain at least 15 new members per year for three years enlisting the help of state environmental health associations.
- Help state where assaults on sanitarian duties by Industrial Hygienists and other similar groups are taking place.
- Recruit new members. Contact groups like the National Conference of Local EH Administrators and similar state and local associations of environmental health directors/administrators to obtain names of worthy, prospective applicants for membership.
- Obtain wide exposure of the Academy.
- Visibility
- Increased membership – clarification of membership criteria
- Implement Diplomat Laureate program
- Financial Stability (A five-year budget plan and projection needs to be accomplished)
- Endowment fund for scholarships.
- Include entire membership in decision-making process and not just those that attend the NEHA meeting.
- Get more people involved as officers and board members. Achieve and equitable distribution of the membership of these groups between academia, Uniformed Services, and state and local environmental health service delivery organizations.
- Conduct a demographic study of the current membership to determine the employment orientation of current members.
- Increase visibility
- Increase membership
- Involve students (invite them to our luncheon)
- Bring in more corporate sponsors.
- Form links with affiliates.
- More involvement in international environmental activities and issues.
- Get involved in Oceanography. The ocean is the last frontier and is an important source of food, water, minerals, and waste disposal.

- Publicize the academy (recruit new members; continue to build resources by tapping into the corporate world).
- Mentoring young sanitarians (continue to build on scholarships)
- Utilize management information systems to communicate with members.

Attachment C. Strategic Actions Based On Survey Input from Academy Members



ONE

		Strategic Actions
Strengths	<p>Issue: Limited Opportunity for interaction among members and to share research and scholarly activities.</p>	Build on strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The Academy has some of the most highly respected members of the profession. * Academy members conduct high quality applied and theoretical research in public health. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Keep membership eligibility criteria high to attract top-notch professionals. * Recruit top professionals from all sectors of Environmental. Health.
Weaknesses		Overcome Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The annual meeting does not provide an opportunity for interaction except with the people at your table. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Alter the format of the annual meeting to promote the exchange of research and scholarly information.
Opportunities		Exploit Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Develop an educational session at the annual meeting for presentation and poster sessions by the members. * Have an informal get together where people can mix and exchange ideas. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Showcase the Academy and the work of its members at NEHA. * Invite NEHA and student members to the educational session sponsored by A.A.S.
Threats	Block Threats	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * People who do not attend the annual meetings feel detached from the organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Develop new ways to communicate with members who cannot attend the annual meeting. * Begin a scholarly journal sponsored by the AAS. 	

TWO

		Strategic Actions
Strengths	<p>Issue: Need to Increase the Visibility of A.A.S.</p>	Build on strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *The Academy has a strong commitment to excellence. * The Academy is comprised of dedicated professionals who can effectively help shape Environmental Health programs and services of the future 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * More aggressively develop position papers about environmental issues. * Share research/scholarly activities of members through NEHA Journal, etc.
Weaknesses		Overcome Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Lack of visibility of A.A.S. among sanitarians. * Lack of visibility of A.A.S. among other professionals. * Academy is too closely linked with NEHA 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Make concerted effort to publicize A.A.S. to sanitarians and other environmental health professionals. * Mentor new, young sanitarians * Form links with IAMFIS and other associations.
Opportunities		Exploit Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increase visibility through advertising, position papers, the reception, booth at NEHA, etc. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Create an A.A.S. website * Promote the A.A.S. involvement in scholarships, etc. * Make Activities at annual meeting more visible
Threats	Block Threats	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The A.A.S. is a largely unknown commodity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Make sure prospective members and others know what A.A.S. is and its mission. 	

THREE

		Strategic Actions
Strengths	Issue: Increase Membership	Build on strengths
* The A.A.S is a select group of elite environmental health professionals * Academy members bring a variety of professional skills to the organization		* Keep eligibility criteria high. * Recruit members from the government, private sector, and academia.
Weaknesses		Overcome Weaknesses
* The small number of members in the Academy mean a people have to do a lot. * Membership seems to be heavily weighted toward federal government and academia.		* Recruit 20 new members per year for the next 5 years. * Create a membership committee. * Get more members of the Academy involved in its many activities.
Opportunities		Exploit Opportunities
* Contact state and local sanitarian groups and other environmental professionals to recruit new members. * Broaden the base membership to include other professionals who are concerned with environmental health issues.		* Contact the National Conference of Local Environmental Health Administrators and similar groups to recruit new members * Implement Diplomate Laurate program.
Threats		Block Threats
* Without new members, the viability of the organization will be threatened. * Complacency of current members.	* Form more links with NEHA affiliates * Form more links with other environmental organizations. (i.e., IAMFES, AFDO, etc.) * Conduct a demographic study of current members to determine where they are employed and what position they held. * Recruit young, energetic members.	

FOUR

		Strategic Actions
Strengths	Issue: Financial Stability of the Organization.	Build on strengths
* History of financial security * Support a wide variety of projects.		* Keep a system of checks and balances to assure that money spent will produce worthwhile outcome.
Weaknesses		Overcome Weaknesses
* Some of the more aggressive expenditures (i.e., scholarships and Crumbine Award) rapidly deplete capital. * Dues increase without prior input from members		* Develop a 5-year budget plan and projection.
Opportunities		Exploit Opportunities
* Expanded membership will allow the A.A.S. to sponsor more programs without a dues increase. * Seek corporate sponsorship for scholarships, etc.		* Recruit 20 new members/year * Solicit corporate sponsorship for A.A.S.
Threats		Block Threats
* The large due increases, without input from membership, caused concern for several members. * Members who don't attend the annual meeting don't believe they get \$50 worth of services.		* Keep members informed when a dues increase is being considered * Academy members should see the annual budget that is proposed so they will know what projects (and how much) are being supported.

FIVE

		Strategic Actions
Strengths	<p>Issue: Infrequency of Board meetings makes it difficult to conduct business effectively.</p>	Build on strengths
* Board is comprised of members who are geographically distributed throughout the U.S.		* Maintain an Executive Board with membership that reflects all segments of environmental health (federal, state, local government, academia, uniformed services)
Weaknesses		Overcome Weaknesses
* Distance and lack of money necessitates only one Board meeting per year.		* Use technology to compensate for the wide spread location of Board members.
Opportunities		Exploit Opportunities
* Hold a midyear board meeting in conjunction with another conference.		* Hold a mid-year meeting or conference call to conduct business of the Academy. (This meeting can be canceled if business does not warrant.)
Threats	Block Threats	
* Problems can arise if the Board does not conduct the business of the Academy in a timely manner.	* Meet frequently enough to conduct Academy business in a timely fashion.	

SIX

		Strategic Actions
Strengths	<p>Issue: Academy members who do not attend the NEHA meeting are excluded from participating in the organization's decision-making process.</p>	Build on strengths
* NEHA provides a good opportunity for the Academy to assemble.		* Consider other meetings (including NEHA) to link Academy meetings with (IAMFES, CFP, AFDO, etc.)
Weaknesses		Overcome Weaknesses
* Many A.A.S. members are not able to attend the annual meeting.		* Keep members involved in the Academy by: * Giving them assignments * Using the Newsletter as a source of information * Taking straw polls before Board votes are taken.
Opportunities		Exploit Opportunities
* Keeping people involved in the Academy will make them feel they are part of the organization and give them satisfaction with membership.		* Take advantage of the many talents and skills of many members by getting them involved in Academy programs and activities.
Threats	Block Threats	
* Members who do not feel like they are a part of the Academy choose to drop their membership.	* Find new ways to get members active in the Academy. * Use management information systems (website) to keep members informed about activities of the Academy	