

Anchor Mission Playbook

New Learnings and Findings
in Anchor Mission Execution

prepared by

Rush University System for Health

with support from

Healthcare Anchor Network



3 Maintaining the Anchor Mission Over Time

3.1

Relevant Topics in Maintaining an Anchor Mission

Beyond ensuring the progression of anchor mission initiatives after the pandemic, Rush experienced new learnings and opportunities that evolved during the execution of its anchor mission strategy. While the original playbook outlined a model for the establishment of anchor mission practices, the topics below illustrate the many implications of anchor mission implementation as institutions execute on their strategies over time.

3.2

Knowledge Management and Sustainability

Following the peak of the pandemic, Rush was impacted by the Great Resignation, which was a period marked by many people voluntarily leaving their jobs. The resulting high turnover across both clinical and non-clinical departments also impacted departments that contribute to annual anchor mission goals and strategies, posing a significant challenge to anchor mission execution. For this reason, establishing knowledge management practices to ensure the sustainability of program operations should be a priority in addition to the day-to-day operations of executing an anchor mission strategy.

Some recommendations of knowledge management practices that have worked for Rush are:



Goal Setting Dashboards and Historical Data Analyses

Knowledge management includes creating standardized goal setting and progress tracking dashboards that are stored over time and continuously updated based on historical results and regular progress updates for leadership. The dashboards should be managed by the anchor mission team with each department contributing data results to allow for regular updates.



Departmental Directory

Anchor mission teams should create a directory containing multiple contacts for each department and specifically noting the positions for all business leads. The directory should be kept up to date in order to track internal turnover and maintain continuity in anchor mission initiatives.



Other materials can include marketing collateral, external messaging, and internal/external collaborations that have been documented.



See [Section 6.5 Establishing an Internal Knowledge Management Framework](#) for more information on creating a framework in support of anchor mission sustainability.

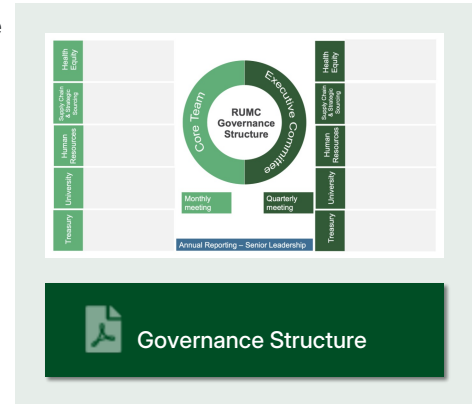
3.3

Departmental Governance Structure and Organizational Reach

A documented [governance structure](#) is essential to establishing a core anchor mission team across initiatives and an executive leadership committee that will provide organizational guidance on the trajectory of anchor mission execution. A departmental governance structure expands on Rush's original anchor mission working group structure to include the contributions of the anchor mission core team and the business unit leads in advancing the anchor mission.

Rush's first foray into anchor mission execution primarily engaged executive departmental leaders in support of anchor mission initiatives. Our departmental governance structure has shifted from that model to more intentionally engage other key roles within those departments: administrative coordinators, supply chain data analysts, HR recruiters, employee benefit analysts, etc. These individuals purchase, manage contracts, engage with prospective job seekers, and help employees with their benefits questions. Individuals tasked with administrative and operational work perform actions that are crucial to advancing anchor mission strategies but are often overlooked in anchor mission governance structures. Engaging these individuals and including them in the anchor mission directory increases your reach across the organization and further embeds the anchor mission as a priority within its operational structure.

Another learning in Rush's governance structure framework was to align complementary initiatives across departments, rather than separating initiatives based on a traditional organizational structure. The Rush Local pillar, for example, engages community health and human resources benefits departments in efforts to connect anchor mission activities to our employees and our West Side communities. Prior to that shift, the pillar was based around employee volunteerism, rather than a larger convening of multiple employee engagement initiatives. Similarly, Rush now houses its capital projects initiatives in the Buy Local section rather than employing a separate pillar for the department. This ensures that contracting with local labor is viewed as a purchasing strategy that supports overall efforts to shift spend locally.



Governance Structure

3.4

Prioritizing Resource Allocation

Maintaining a consistent commitment to anchor mission implementation over time requires resource allocation that is consistent, defined across business departments, and documented. Anchor mission strategies need a variety of resources to thrive. Rush's resource allocation strategy was implemented to retain human resources (e.g., business leads carrying out anchor mission strategies), knowledge resources (e.g., anchor mission data and success measures), and financial resources in order to mitigate the risk posed by turnover in departments that support anchor mission implementation.

Managing Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating project plans, RACI (responsible, accountable, consulted, and informed) charts, and an anchor mission strategic plan has ensured that business leads recognize and understand their role in implementing the anchor mission. • In addition to a traditional RACI chart recommended in the original playbook, the Rush team has found that a 3-year strategic plan with corresponding project plans for each pillar has proven effective in advancing anchor mission initiatives and ensuring accountability.
Managing Knowledge Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rush has employed a Teams platform, a sharepoint for quarterly data collection, an anchor mission organizational guide, and an anchor mission resource guide so that employees can learn more about and execute on their anchor mission goals. The anchor mission team is responsible for creating and updating the resource guide, which includes information on Rush's anchor mission West Side neighborhoods (their demographics, major institutions, and community groups) and historical information about Rush's anchor mission framework.
Managing Financial Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgeting and planning, aligning costs with business departments and other organizationally embedded initiatives, like CHNA (Community Health Needs Assessment) and CHIP (Community Health Improvement Plan), allows Rush to ensure sufficient resources for anchor mission implementation. • Devised on an annual basis and in alignment with strategic planning. • Align resource development with philanthropy department for allocation of grant funding to cover costs beyond programmatic/operational needs. This could involve developing a menu of anchor mission initiatives that philanthropy leads can have at hand when funding opportunities arise.

Over the past five years, the landscape for executing anchor mission strategies has drastically changed. The original **Anchor Mission Playbook** outlined strategies and insights to execute an anchor mission approach when the field was developing. Six years later, Rush University System for Health has derived new insights, implications, and tools to aid in the execution of the anchor mission framework.

In this update to Rush's original Playbook, we outline new learnings, challenges, developments and resources that have helped Rush University System for Health ensure the sustainability of its anchor mission in the current financial climate.

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