Gap analysis is a useful tool in taking you from "I think I know what the problem is" to an idea of potential solutions and outcomes. Gap Analysis a tool that helps to determine your current state and desired state as well as the tasks that are needed to close the identified gap. Used at the beginning of a program, a Gap Analysis will assist you in planning your educational activity.

1st.   Determine what is the **Desired State**, the best practice, or where you want to be. The desired state is the level that the planners would like the learners to achieve due to the educational activity.

2nd.   What your current state? **Current State** refers to the current level of practice of the target audience.

3rd.   Describe the current state with **Data that Supports Current State.** Planners should use data and evidence to determine and validate the current state. Data gathering may include surveying stakeholders, reviewing quality data, direct observation, and evaluations of other educational activities, trends in healthcare or literature, etc.

   o   Now ask: What knowledge of the problem is missing? What skill is not being performed to best practice? Are both knowledge and skill lacking? What pieces are missing?

4th.   The missing pieces are the **Identified Gap** in the target audience. This could be knowledge (don't know), skill (don't know how to do), and/or practice (not able to show or do in practice).

5th.   Based on the Identified Gap and Desired State, develop your **Educational Goal** (what you want your learners to gain from the activity) and plan to meet the goal. Learning strategies should reflect the learning gap that was identified, i.e., lack of test taking skills would align with a variety of strategies including reviewing common test taking errors and use of practice testing environments.

6th.   Using the same data measures that support your current state, develop an **Outcome Measure** that is specific, measurable, and attainable. Write the outcome measure as a quantitative statement as to how the outcome will be measured.

EXAMPLE					
DESCRIBE DESIRED STATE	**CURRENT STATE**	**DATA THAT SUPPORTS CURRENT STATE**	**IDENTIFIED GAP** (KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND/OR PRACTICE)	**EDUCATIONAL GOAL**	**OUTCOME MEASURE**
75% of the Peri-Anesthesia Nurses will obtain a specialty certification by passing examination after completing an exam preparation course and engaging in appropriate study based on their individual needs.	Only 30% of the Peri-Anesthesia Nurses have obtained a recognized specialty certification.	Survey of Peri-Anesthesia Nurses both with certification and without identified that >75% of Nurses feel unprepared to sit for and pass the required examination (knowledge) and 60% state they lack test taking skills. Current literature trends show that employer-supported program increase passage rates.	Nurses lack the knowledge and skills to pursue a certification exam.	Using a variety of tools the Peri-Anesthesia Nurse will successfully pass a certification exam within 24 months.	Within 12 months, the number of Peri-Anesthesia nurses with a specialty certification will increase by 10%.