



STRATEGIC PLAN

Plan Name:

ICMA-RC is dedicated to partnering with you to develop strategies that target the financial-wellness needs of your employees and address your specific plan goals. We work with you to develop this Strategic Plan as a customized service that will allow you to 1) pinpoint the specific topics most relevant to the needs of your plan and employees; and 2) identify education and communication strategies with those needs in mind.

As part of our commitment to the success of your plan, ICMA-RC will use an approach to education and communications that draws on **more than 40 years of serving public-sector employees**. We work with you to develop targeted, results-oriented, measurable strategies that educate and communicate with your employees about your plan, as well as their goals and behavioral tendencies.

Your employees have a diverse set of retirement needs and communication preferences. With this in mind, we provide education through a range of channels and messages that resonate with employees at all points in their working and retirement years.

To complement the one-on-one guidance that your employees will receive from our representatives, ICMA-RC has developed a **comprehensive library of award-winning educational resources**, including easy-to-understand webinars, interactive calculators, online tools, educational and motivational videos, topic-specific brochures and newsletters, and our “Charting Your Course” brochure series that provides a more thorough overview of key retirement-planning considerations.

We measure the success of our strategies using surveys, personal feedback, and data analysis to confirm that your employees are receiving helpful, inspiring education that truly assists them in building their retirement security.

Education and Communications Approach



Relevant messages acknowledge that employees are at varying career stages as they save for retirement. We generally segment employees into three key financial lifestages that drive positive outcomes:

- ▶ **Enroll** — employees should begin saving as early as possible with each paycheck.
- ▶ **Accumulate** — employees should continue to make regular contributions and ideally boost their contributions over time in conjunction with any raises and bonuses.
- ▶ **Sustain** — employees should continue these healthy habits throughout their career and have a sensible approach to turn their savings into income that meets their needs and that lasts.

Our resources are tailored to meet these lifestages, from the needs of the youngest employee to the oldest retiree.

Straightforward education motivates employees to take action with simple, easy-to-understand instruction. Employees benefit most from clear assistance that lays out concrete steps towards building a secure retirement, whether they're online, reading printed materials, attending a group presentation, meeting one-on-one with a locally based Retirement Plans Specialist, or on the phone with a representative.

Consistent messaging ensures that employees receive the same information regardless of their preferred method of communication. This avoids confusion and reinforces the importance of the message. We maintain consistency across all channels, including:

- ▶ **One-to-one interactions** — In person, on the phone
- ▶ **One-to-many communication** — Live seminars, recorded webinars
- ▶ **Publications & printed materials** — Newsletters, brochures, flyers
- ▶ **Online** — Calculators, videos, articles, emails

Strategic Planning Process

During the strategic planning process, ICMA-RC works with you to:

Conduct a needs assessment. We meet with key plan sponsor representatives to discuss goals for your plan. This meeting generates open dialogue and facilitates clear communication among members and ICMA-RC.

Develop strategies for achieving goals. We evaluate your needs assessment and work with you to develop a strategic approach for reaching your plan goals.

Create a timeline. During this discussion, we identify key checkpoints, deadlines, and responsibilities for specific projects.

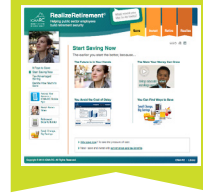
Agree to Proceed. After we develop your strategic plan, both parties agree to proceed with your plan. This represents our partnership and commitment to making your plan a success.

Measure success and report results. ICMA-RC monitors the outcomes of our efforts and report back to you about progress. We discuss successes and challenges so that strategy and actions items can be refined as your goals are met, or as additional opportunities are identified.

1. Maximize Enrollment & Participation

Enrollment and participation determine the financial strength of your plan. High participation rates and a robust array of educational offerings can attract and retain employees while helping them save for retirement.

Our approach recognizes the tendencies of many individuals to delay participating through targeted messages and engaging calculators and videos. As a plan sponsor, you play an important role, too — prior research we conducted among 85 plans of all sizes and types found that **an actively involved plan sponsor could positively affect enrollment by more than 25 percent.**



View enrollment and participation resources on **RealizeRetirement®**
www.icmarc.org/realize

Measuring Success:

We work to ensure employees understand your retirement plan and the benefits of participating.

To determine the success of your plan's participation and enrollment rates, we measure:

- ▶ Overall plan participation rate
- ▶ Participation among employees in various age ranges, especially younger participants
- ▶ Participation of employees at the department level

In addition, the following information can be monitored if eligible files are provided:

- ▶ Employees who are eligible but not currently contributing
- ▶ Percentage of new hires enrolling and participating in the plan

We also will describe how we arrived at these calculations (for example, some totals might exclude layoffs, separation from service, or factor in excessively volatile markets).

Potential messages:

View our [Interactive Education Tools](#) for an organized list of materials we make available.

Potential deliverables:

Due Date:

Owner:

Potential deliverables:	Due Date:	Owner:
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2. Effectively Educate Participants

Many employees can benefit from education that helps them invest appropriately, which includes pinpointing their retirement needs based on their age or career stage, lifestyle, and other personal factors. Educating participants about making wise investment decisions that minimizes emotional or irrational reactions helps them reach their financial goals. A relevant, effective curriculum with straightforward education and services also helps you assist your employees with building retirement security.



View saving and investment education resources on **RealizeRetirement®**
www.icmarc.org/realize

Measuring Success:

ICMA-RC works with you to identify the topics that are the timeliest and most relevant to your employees and retirees.

To evaluate the success of your plan's educational component, we measure:

- ▶ Total amount of employees “reached” through presentations, direct correspondence, and one-on-one sessions
- ▶ Number of group education seminars conducted, attendance at these seminars, and results from satisfaction surveys following the seminars
- ▶ Number of individual counseling sessions conducted

We also implement:

Topical education and communication campaigns, including:

- ▶ Market Volatility education
- ▶ National Save for Retirement Week (each Fall) and America Saves Week (each Spring) resources
- ▶ Department-focused education

Potential messages:

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3. Maintain Plan Health and Growth

Participants who value their retirement plan and its services remain engaged before and after retirement. This active involvement and retention of separated employees helps maintain the financial strength of the plan, and also allows the participant to take advantage of financial-planning services, comprehensive local and online resources, and institutional priced funds. We provide a number of resources specifically for retirees, on topics such as taking distributions, to help you maintain the health and growth of your plan.



View retiree resources on **RealizeRetirement®**
www.icmarc.org/realize

Measuring Success:

Keeping participants enrolled in the plan, encouraging them to increase their contributions, and enrolling new participants are all essential for maintaining the health and continued growth of your plan. Robust enrollment and participation has a positive impact on your plan's pricing and affects the services you can offer to your participants.

To gauge the success of your plan's health and growth, we measure:

- ▶ Outside participants and assets transferring into the plan
- ▶ Participants and assets transferring out of the plan
- ▶ As appropriate, participant satisfaction (via survey results)

Potential messages:

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Action Items

ICMA-RC partners with you to develop tactics that help you achieve your specific objectives. We develop action items based on past experience, a standard review, and an approval process to assist you in attaining these goals.

Action items might include:

- ▶ Re-assess current processes and resources
- ▶ Update current communication messages
- ▶ Utilize indicative data files to develop targeted communications
- ▶ Re-deploy current field staff to focus on specific departments

The table below shows examples of action items that we might suggest, with tie-ins to defined objectives:

ACTION ITEM	OBJECTIVE TIE-IN
<p>SAMPLE: Distribute ICMA-RC’s “Start Saving Now — Enroll Online” HTML email and “Cost of Delay” and “Small Change, Big Savings” calculators, encouraging employees to participate in the plan.</p>	<p>Maximize Enrollment & Participation</p>
<p>SAMPLE: Highlight to plan participants relevant resources available on RealizeRetirement that help them save more and invest smart.</p>	<p>Effectively Educate Participants</p>
<p>SAMPLE: Promote ICMA-RC seminars and webinars for participants nearing and in retirement. Consult our Seminar Lineup to learn more.</p>	<p>Maintain Plan Health and Growth</p>

View our [Interactive Education Tools](#) for an organized list of materials we make available.

ACTION ITEM	OBJECTIVE TIE-IN

Benchmark Your Plan

To help you identify your strategic goals and track progress, consider how your plan compares to governmental plans as a whole. We help plan sponsors benchmark their plans based on our experience working with thousands of governmental plans across 49 states and D.C. as well as industry surveys. For example, consider the following data from the National Association of Government Defined Contribution Administrators, Inc. (NAGDCA) 2015 *Public Sector Defined Contributions Plan Survey Report*:

As of the end of 2014 for responding 457 plans:

- ▶ **40%** participation rate
- ▶ **\$60,100** average account balance
- ▶ **\$5,701** average annual deferral amount

