# Step Four: Create an Action Plan

It is now time to create an action plan to bridge the gap. Ensure that you have a clear idea of what resources are available so that your action plan is realistic. A multi-phased action plan may be appropriate depending on your project.

Sample Project: Improve Response Times to Customer Inquiries

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Future State** | **Current State** | **Gap** | **Action Plan** |
| Customer e-mail inquiries will be replied to within 24 hours on average | Average response time is 32 hours | 8 hours | Create e-mail templates about the most frequent inquiries  Conduct training on using and customizing these templates  Conduct problem-solving training |
| Customer telephone inquiries will be answered within 5 minutes on average | Average hold time is 8 minutes | 3 minutes | Create electronic templates to replace paper templates  Conduct training on the new templates    Provide customer service reps with more clearly defined authorization and spending levels  Stagger lunch and shift changeover times |

# Step Five: Implement and Follow Up

The final stage of the process is to implement the action plan. After the gap-reducing measures are in place, gather data and evaluate the new metrics. It may also be appropriate to repeat the training needs analysis to ensure that the gap has been successfully bridged.