



R E S O U R C E

Charting Your Course:  
Data Review



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SCHOOL of EDUCATION  
and HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
YOUTH-NEX

# Data Review

## Building on Existing Knowledge

Reviewing existing information and data is an important step that can help save time and effort when you develop an action plan. This process allows you to identify gaps in knowledge and determine where additional information is needed. It also provides clarity on the scope and impact of the problem so you can develop more effective solutions.

### 1. Organize Existing Information

- Identify ideas or topics that appear frequently in the data
- Note any similarities and differences between different sources of data.
- Create charts or graphs to visualize patterns and trends in the data.
- Use mind maps, charts, or diagrams to visualize the relationships between different pieces of data.



### 2. Identify Knowledge Gaps

- Identify areas where your own experiences/observations differ from or contradict previous research.
- Identify any gaps or inconsistencies that appear across different sources of information.
- Consider what additional information would be helpful to further clarify the problem or develop solutions.

### Example:

#### *Analyzing Data on High School Dropout Rates*

- Create a spreadsheet to track dropout rates, student demographics, academic performance, and other relevant factors.

- Group data by student characteristics (e.g., gender, race, socioeconomic status), academic performance (e.g., GPA, standardized test scores), and attendance.
- Look for patterns in dropout rates among different groups of students, such as higher dropout rates among males vs. females or in 11th and 12th grade compared to 9th and 10th.
- Compare dropout rates in your school or district to national or state averages.
- Consider whether there is enough data on some of the potential contributing factors such as student engagement, mental health, or access to support services.