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## Welcome

**Jared Lyon**

Hi! I’m Jared Lyon, and I have the distinct honor to serve as your National President and CEO of Student Veterans of America at your Headquarters in Washington, DC. I’m excited to welcome you to our Regional Summit but even more than that, I’m fired up to get you started in developing your SVA chapter’s Strategic Plan so that your chapter leadership team can set the stage for chapter success together!

We are so happy to have you here with us so that we can share the tools, techniques, and tactics of SVA chapter success with all of our returning, newly elected, and prospective chapter leaders. I am especially excited to be welcoming you this year as a student veteran myself – this summer I returned to the classroom on my way to earning a PhD in Social Science from Syracuse University.

Through our research and programs, we know that this training works, and it’s reflected in the success and inclusion of Student Veterans of America chapters across the nation.

Let’s talk briefly about who our Nation’s student veterans are: A large majority of today’s student veterans have families, work full- or part-time, and thrive while maintaining higher average GPAs during college and higher earnings post-graduation than our non-veteran peers. It’s our hard work and resilience that create strong chapter support structures and successful student veteran graduates.

With over 1,500 SVA chapters representing over 700,000 student veterans, your National Headquarters operates under the mission "to act as a catalyst for student veteran success by providing resources, network support and advocacy to, though, and beyond higher education.” Through groundbreaking research, dynamic programs, advocacy on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, and our national network of chapters like yours, SVA has become one of the Nation’s largest student chapter-based organizations and the third largest Veteran Service Organization, right behind our strong allies and friends at American Legion and Veterans of Wars.

The origin story of student veterans is as old as America when the veterans of the American Revolution returned home from their service and entered our nation’s emerging institutions of higher education. Most of history picks up the student veteran story with the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944, also better known as the original GI Bill. In 2008 SVA’s founders came together to advocate for the “Post 9/11 GI Bill” and build camaraderie and community while in attending college as student veterans. Our story continues today with the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act, also known as the “Forever GI Bill” – which thanks to your incredible Government Affairs team in DC, along with countless advocates for benefits for veterans, our families and our survivors, made the GI Bill a permanent rite of military service.

Since our creation in 2008, SVA has hosted an annual national conference, or “NatCon” as we call it, which is designed to reframe the possible for student veterans through higher education, train chapter leaders on salient issues on their campuses to better support veterans and our families and convene the largest gathering of student veterans anywhere in the world.

Each spring, SVA offers programming for student veterans interested in continuing our legacy of advocacy on Capitol Hill during Washington Week. Here, student veterans play a part as we provide testimony presenting SVA’s policy priorities to a joint session of the House and Senate Veteran Affairs Committees. For our chapter leaders, advocacy training and interaction with representatives on Capitol Hill are a key component of this unique experience.

We also host our top chapter leaders here in Washington, D.C. at our annual Leadership Institute. Chapter leaders who participate in the Leadership Institute earn the title “SVA Leadership Fellow,” learn foundational leadership skills, engage with leaders from other chapters around the country, and form relationships with mentors who are the top of their fields and who were once student veterans themselves.

In terms of SVA national programing, we also host our Regional Summits every year, and that is the reason I get to talk to you today. Are Regional Summits are designed to empower and train you, our chapter leaders, in the development of your SVA chapter’s strategic plan, learn key elements to chapter leader roles, and be paired with our corporate partners that will coach you through successful chapter management. Your SVA Headquarters programs and services team will take over in just a moment – but I want you to know that these are experts in SVA chapter management and development, and some of them, are just like me, former SVA chapter leaders themselves.

Student Veterans of America has remained successful because of your hard work, and the hard work of chapter leaders before you. We couldn’t be prouder to have each and every one of you and the campus chapters you represent as a part of Student Veterans of America’s growing mission. That you for all you do to empower student veterans and our families while creating veteran-inclusive campuses around the country – now, let’s get to work!

## Campus Culture

**Deja Joi Brewster**

What is campus culture? What does your campus culture look like?

These questions and more will be answered throughout this section. Here we will discuss how to assess your campus culture, create an inclusive chapter, and how to understand and engage your campus community alongside your chapter.

In later sections, we’ll talk about recruitment, engaging your chapter on campus, and outreach tools. Referring to your campus culture will help in creating the outcomes you’re hoping for when hosting any campus related activity.

Let’s talk about campus culture. Think about your school. Is it a two-year campus, four-year, undergrad or graduate? All these questions are things that should be discussed when attempting to figure out your campus culture. There are also areas that are not usually thought of as part of your campus culture like commuter students, those that live on campus, those with families, and those without.

Let’s talk about an example. Here we can discuss military culture and relate it to campus culture. We’ll start with active duty. Active-duty military have a culture which is vastly different from those of guard or reserve, in college this can be seen as those who live on campus and those who commute. Those active duty or those who live on campus are always around each other and have difference experiences than those who are on campus part time similarly to those who are in the guard or reserve. Creating these similarities could help with understanding your campus more.

Throughout this module we’ll also discuss different types of colleges and universities. Are you aware of the difference between a college and a university? What about private and public? Profit or Non-profit? These may have been things you looked up before choosing an institution for higher education, if it isn’t, pause this and google it. We can't’ give you all the answers!

Are you back? Cool, lets continue.

Where were we... ah, yes, types of colleges. In this area we’ll also discuss MSIs. Are you in an MSI? Wait, let’s back up, do you know what MSI stands for? MSI is the acronym for Minority Serving Institution. Do you know how many MSIs there are in the US and their different variations? I’ll give you this answer. In the US there are 852 MSIs.

The term MSI is the umbrella term while under that umbrella are Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (NASNTIs), **\*script edit\*** Predominately Black Institutions (PBIs), and Asian American and Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AAPISIs). Are you at an institution like this? If not, are there any in your area that you could partner with their SVA chapter and hold events together?

In this section, we’ll also discuss how to make your chapter inclusive. At SVA we believe in being inclusive. This means we also believe in and pride ourselves in diversity. There are many ways to have a diverse chapter outside of the normal race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. First, there are members that are military family or military/veteran allies. Allies are those who may not have any military or veteran connection at all but still are wanting to be part of the community. Having these members join SVA is important to our mission and to our campus culture. Furthermore, consider varying abilities and differing political ideals for your chapters also. Creating an inclusive campus chapter means everyone working toward a common goal.

With being on a campus there are also those of varying majors that can bring something to your chapter. Each major has its own niche and something to offer. Business, psychology, sociology, anthropology, theater, science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), human resources, graphic design, certificate programs, and more all can play a vital role in growing your chapter and future leadership positions.

I want to challenge you with this: Bring two people with you to your next chapter meeting. Bring someone completely different from you but someone that you think will help your chapter. Get comfortable with being uncomfortable. If you can’t bring two people, then talk to two people about SVA. Share with them your chapter and the inclusive community we have and see if they are part of any student organization as well.

Well, as Rafiki would say, “It is time.”

## Strategic Planning

**Dr. Abby Kinch**

Hello, and welcome to the strategic planning section of the regional summit program! This is going to be by far one of the most important topics that we will cover in this program.

So first let's start by asking ourselves, what is a strategic plan? A strategic plan is a document intended to provide direction for your chapter by laying out actionable goals for realizing your mission and vision. Think of your strategic plan as a way of transforming your chapter’s ideals—such as the impact you’d like to have on the community in which you operate—into specific actions that your chapter can accomplish within a defined period of time.

As we work through this module, I will encourage each of you to take the opportunity to create a strategic plan for your chapter, or if you have one to review it along with the program and make any revisions you see fit. Student Veterans of America believes in the strategic planning process to ensure that new and established chapters can excel on their campus.

Each section is designed to guide chapters through the planning process seamlessly. The topics we will cover include:

1. Why is it important to review chapter strategic plan annually?
2. When should you revise a strategic plan?
3. We will also review what core values are and how they inform your chapter’s overall mission and vision.

For now, all you will need to know is, the core values your organization form are the foundation on which your team performs work and conducts themselves. After this section we hope that you will have an understanding of what your chapter’s core values are and how to build a strategic plan that encompasses them.

From there we are going to explain what a mission and vision is. In this section you will be able to create your own mission and vision statements. Having a mission and vision statement will allow you and chapter leaders to set objectives for the new academic year. Your chapter’s mission statement describes what the group is going to do, and why it's going to do that. You as chapter leaders will employ strategies to meet your mission and vision. Generally, organizations will have a wide variety of strategies that include people from all the different parts, or sectors, of the community. These strategies range from the very broad, which encompass people and resources from many different parts of the community, to the very specific, which aim at carefully defined areas.

Once you understand your mission and vision you will be able to lay out objectives and goals for your chapter. And when we say objectives what we mean is specific measurable results for your chapter’s broad goals. An organization's objectives generally lay out what will be accomplished and by when. You will learn how to create meaningful and measurable objectives with the S.M.A.R.T. acronym. Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timed.

To help you reach your chapter’s objectives and goals you will then be guided as to how to develop tactics. Tactics are the activities that take place to achieve the objectives you lay out, allowing the strategic plan to progress from milestone to milestone. Think of tactics as the way the plan will be delivered.

Every strategic plan created is developed using relevant data to guide the decision-making process. One of the most important pieces of data that will drive your decision making for the coming year will be your chapter’s budget. This final section will give you a basic understanding of a budget. You will learn how to list expenses, revenue, and how to tie in fundraising.

Finally, to effectively fundraise for your chapter, we will end the unit off with an explanation of an elevator pitch and will give you tips and tricks to effectively craft your own.

With that, let’s make a strategic plan!

## Strategic Plan Mission and Vision

**Deja Joi Brewster**

Well... How are you feeling? Do you need a break yet? I know the strategic plan can be a huge undertaking, but I promise it’s worth it. Think of it like this, has anything ever worked out well without some type of plan behind it? If you’re nodding your head or internally saying ‘yes’, we aren’t here for that so keep listening.

So far, you’ve had our introduction to Summits, heard from Jared, worked out the knots of campus culture, you’ve been introduced to your Stategic plan or "Strat” plan, and now you’re here at mission and vision.

These are not words that aren’t uncommon. In fact, I’m sure you’ve heard the word ‘mission’ or ‘vision’ for quite some time in different contexts. For instance, ‘we’re on a mission to get Nickelodeon magazine..’ Oh, not ringing a bell.. Okay how about ‘your mission, should you choose to accept..’ anything? Maybe? Okay what about, “The most pathetic person in the world is someone who has sight, but has no vision.” said by the famous Helen Keller?

During this module, you’re going to be creating your own mission and vision statements. These statements set the tone for your strategic plan and your chapter. When someone reads your mission, they want to be able to resonate with it, believe in it, and it should make them want to join your chapter to support your mission.

Think back to a mission that you supported. What were some key things in that mission that made you say ‘yeah, I want to be a part of that’ or ‘this is something I believe in’? Mission statements should not only grab the attention of potential members but should also create a sense of purpose in a person. You do not need a super lengthy mission statement either. I’m sure you’ve seen mission statements that look more like a miniature thesis and that is not what we’re asking for here.

Think of it like this. The mission of (whisper: this is where you insert your chapter name) at (whisper: and here is your university) is to (whisper; what do you want to do as a chapter) student veterans, their families, and our allies by (and this is how you’re going to do it). From there, the rest writes itself.

Your vision is your long-term goals. This is the big picture thinking. Your vision is what you use as a guide for your events, fundraising, outcomes, and goals each year. This area is for those who have dreams and want those dreams to become reality. They are not too lofty and are attainable. They are also something that those who are putting a vision together can see actually coming to fruition during their time within the chapter. A vision is again, short and succent. It also keeps from sounding too generic or basic.... speaking of, I lost my Starbucks...

Think of it like this: Our vision at (whisper: here is where you insert your chapter and university) is to (whisper: here is where you put the goal) so that we can (whisper: here is where you say something inspirational.)

Your mission and vision are different; however, one works with the other. They are both used as tools for recruiting and retaining members for your chapter as well as ways to maintain engagement and have purpose. Well, this is where I leave, and I’ll see you again at the end of the start plan.

May the Force be with you.

## Strategies

**Kevin Monell**

Hello! Okay so I know some of you have started a drinking game where you take a shot every time you see the word strategic plan. And that is fine but stay with me a little bit longer. As my colleague Joi put it this will all be worth it at the end.

With that let’s quickly go over what we have discussed so far in the strategic planning process. By know you should have a 30,000-foot overview as to what a strategic plan or "strat” plan is. To briefly go over this, it is the process of documenting and establishing a direction of your organization. Joi then went over what is a mission and vision statement within a strategic plan. In short, the difference between a mission and vision statement is that the vision statement is your organization’s desired future. Whereas the mission statement is the definition of an organization’s state and objectives.

Now it is time to talk about strategies within your strategic plan!... Clearly it is hard for some of you to be enthusiastic about this, but I just need y’all to trust me on this one.

When thinking about strategies I want you to put them in the context of your mission and vision statement. Now is the time to review that section if you decided to quickly skim over the material. Don’t worry hit the pause button and I’ll wait patiently for you to return.

Okay, glad you decided to take the time to review what a mission and vision statement is. So, strategies are going to broadly explain how your chapter is going to reach its mission and vision. This is not going to be a detailed step by step process. Instead, you are going to ask yourself “how are we going to get this done.”

To better understand what I am trying to say let's use a sample mission statement from a real-life organization. In this case I will be using LinkedIn. Their mission statement is, “To connect the world’s professionals to make them more productive and successful.”

Now, take a moment to think about the objectives employees at LinkedIn might use to achieve the goals they outlined in their mission statement.

Looking at the statement we can see that there are three goals that LinkedIn have within their mission.

The first is to connect the worlds professionals.

Second, to make them more productive.

And finally, to make sure that these professionals are successful.

Understanding the mission let's give a general answer as to how LinkedIn can reach these goals. Remember we are not prescribing a specific course of action. We are trying to determine the how we can reach these goals.

So, let’s ask, how can LinkedIn connect the worlds professionals?

Some potential strategies can be

* Assist direct communication between professionals, or
* Provide a space for people with similar professional interest.

Now take a moment to come up with ideas for making professionals more productive {pause}

Cool now that you had a moment lets name some.

* LinkedIn can provide organizations with virtual tools to increase performance when working remotely or
* assist hiring managers and human resource analyst in the hiring process.

Let’s do the last one together. How can we make professionals more successful?

* Well one option is through offering professional development courses.
* Or creating a space to connect professionals with potential employers.

As you see we came up with general ideas as to how LinkedIn can achieve its mission. The strategies we laid out were very broad. We did not prescribe a specific course of action. That is what we will cover in tactics.

To quickly recap what we discussed.

Strategies explain **how** your organization will reach its mission and vision.

With that make sure the strategies you develop are aligned with the mission and vision of your organization. If your mission and vison changes, make sure that you and your team take the time to make any necessary adjustments to your strategies.

Oh! One last thing before I go, if at any point you or your team needs any help in the strategic planning process feel free to reach out to any of the program coordinators at SVA HQ. Our contact information can be found on our website, studentveterans.org.

Ok that is all I can say about strategies. I’ll see y’all later!

## Objectives and Goals

**Kevin Monell**

I know you are all excited to see my face again for another topic within the strategic planning process. Trust me my dad gives me the same look every time I show up to his house unannounced.

Anyway, let us discuss why we are together again! This time I am going to introduce you to a topic that is just as exciting as strategies! You’re thinking, “there is no way anything can be more exciting than strategies!” But you are wrong. Let me introduce you to goals and objectives!

What is the difference between goals and objectives?

A goal is what we as an organization desire. Ask yourself, “what do I ultimately want to achieve?”

Now to reach that goal we are going to need to develop objectives. Remember, objectives are a measure of the progress that is needed to get to reach your goal. It is a good idea to frame an objective as trying to answer three basic questions.

Ask yourself:

What am I trying to accomplish?

How much am I trying to accomplish?

And by when am I trying to reach my goal?

Answer those three basic questions and you have set yourself up for success when creating objectives.

Now let's take this a little further.

When creating objectives, we also need to make sure they are SMART!

S…M…A…R…T

Yup smart.

What does it mean to have SMART objectives?

Well, that means that your objectives need to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timed.

When creating an objective, you want to make sure it is specific. This will connect to the how much question you ask yourself.

Let’s say that your goal is to take 10 chapter members to NatCon, and last year your chapter brought 5 members. Your objective to reach this goal should not be generic.

Do not say that your objective is to bring more chapter members to NatCon.

In this case we can say our objective is to double our chapter’s NatCon attendance from the previous year.

Now let us ask ourselves, “Is this this objective measurable?”

The answer to that is yes. We can quantify how many people we take to NatCon and compare it to the year before.

Cool, so we went through the S and M in SMART. The next step is to determine is if our objective is achievable?

Let’s say for the sake of simplicity doubling our chapter’s NatCon attendance is achievable. When you go through this exercise in your strategic plan, it is important to review what resources your chapter has and see how it can affect your goals. If your chapter is large, it may be easier to raise funds to bring more people to NatCon, than if your chapter is smaller.

The letter R in SMART ask if your objectives are relevant to the mission of your organization. In this case we can say that our objective to double our chapter’s NatCon attendance is in line with the mission and vison of the chapter.

The last portion of the SMART acronym is T for timed. What this means is that you and your team state when you want your objective to be achieved. In this case our objective is timed. NatCon is an annual convention, so there is a hard deadline as to when you can register your members for this event.

Now you all understand what goals and objectives are and how they fit in the context of your strategic plan.

Now it is time for me to let you go on your own and let you develop your own objectives!

## Tactics

**Deja Joi Brewster**

You’re almost there. You are powering through these and trust me, Kevin and I are ready to get you to the finish line! Last two sections here. So, pause this if you need to. Get some coffee, water, a snack, maybe some ibuprofen, you know the essentials.

You’re back. Good! Let’s push through tactics. What do we use tactics for and how can we apply that to our strat plan? In this module you’ll work through just that. Here we’ll discuss how a tactic is different from a strategy, why both are necessary, and how we can execute tactics effectively.

I know what you’re thinking... tactics, strategies, tomato, tomatoe; right? Wrong! The biggest and most important difference between the two are that tactics are more fluid and are easily altered while strategies are more concrete and require more planning to change.

I’ll give you an example. Let’s use something most people know about and if you don’t by now well spoilers are ahead.

Han Solo shot first. (I know, I know, but stay with me) The strategy (or the plan) was to go to the smugglers.... the plan wasn’t going so hot and Han had to get out alive.... so, he shoots Greedo. Strategy... tactics.

There will be another example provided in the module that is more focused on your strategic plan and what you can do for your chapters.

After our example, you’ll delve into KPIs. Does anyone know what a KPI is? Feel free to share. (check watch count down from 5) If you said Key Performance Indicators you would be correct. If you said anything else, I’m sure that an acronym somewhere just not here. Key Performance Indicators or KPIs are a quantifiable measure used to evaluate the success of an organization in order to meet objectives for performance. This is how we find what’s working and what isn’t. Think of it like command climate surveys, they would find what’s working and what wasn’t... the only difference here is that we’re going to take the data from KPIs and make meaningful changes to better programs, events, chapters, and the organization as a whole.

Let’s be honest, no one wants to do more work than they need to, and no one wants to do things only for those things to not be successful. KPIs will help your chapter in not doing things that will not work. When creating KPIs be sure to also look at past events and how successful they were (or weren’t) so that your team can determine if that is worth doing again, altering for the future, or scraping all together.

Aside from creating KPIs you also need a way to get your data. Creating an exit survey could be helpful here, having sign in sheet during events could be helpful also, lastly asking chapter members is another way of gathering the data you’ll need to see if your KPIs are efficient.

Try to review your tactics and KPI’s each semester. This can keep generating only data and ideas to increase membership.

Phew. That’s all I have for you. Keep moving forward and may the odds be ever in your favor.

## Chapter Budgets and Finances

**Calvin Jensen**

As you are developing a strategic plan and think about a budget, set financial goals for what your SVA Chapter wants to achieve as priorities for the next 6 to 12 months. These priorities will give a snapshot of the objectives and specific strategies and tactics that will help with your fundraising efforts. So, when you are creating a budget for the year, here are some key considerations:

An SVA Chapter, just like any business, should not only create a budget but should also regularly maintain it. There are some colleges or universities that might require student organizations to submit a budget to be a recognized student organization. Regardless of if this is the case or not, having a financial plan will help your chapter be more effective whether operating on-campus or off-campus.

As you are planning a budget, also consider how revenue can be generated… some examples of this are:

**Institutional Funding**—Do your research and reach out to places like student government to see if funding is available and if so, then what does the application process looks like and does your chapter qualify? Budgets will often need to be reviewed by funders, campus administration offices, or event partners and as you creating your chapter’s strategic plan, think of this plan as a detailed blueprint or roadmap to help provide these potential funding sources on campus with what the chapter has planned…it might help them consider making an investment in the chapter for things like… sending a chapter leadership team to the SVA National Conference or… to help cover costs associated with a veteran orientation or… a flagship chapter event like a student veteran ball or… to help fund chapter operating costs throughout the year. If never hurts to ask because there very well might be unallocated school funds set aside for high profile events or strategic initiatives like Increasing first-generation students or supporting STEM projects or even supporting diversity and inclusion initiatives for non-traditional students. One potential revenue stream is through your Student Government or through other student organizations on your campus. Campuses might have explicit guidelines for student organization funding and how to maintain a budget. This is an opportunity to learn and understand the process for accessing funds from your campus and understand the stipulations on how money can be spent and on what.

**Membership Dues** -- At SVA National Headquarters, we do not mandate that your chapter collects or asks for membership dues, we believe that as veterans we have already paid our dues. This will be either up to you or your campus but also consider the limitations this may have on recruitment goals. We are college students after all.

**Merchandise sales** -- Chapter SWAG like t-shirts, water bottles, laptop stickers, pens, or hats are great ways to not only help raise funds but also expand the visibility of the Chapter on our campus. Remember, this may require significant upfront expenses and some institutions may have strict guidelines regarding logo usage or for using authorized merchants or vendors.

**Grants or awards** -- Some schools might award grants and prizes to impactful student organizations that they want to invest in and an SVA Chapter is no exception. There are also many Non-profit organizations, philanthropic causes, and veteran service organizations that may offer grants to help you run your chapter’s operations.

Also make sure you are detailing expenses like food or transportation costs to or from events, fees for booking a room for a chapter event. If your campus requires a detailed summary of your budget, make sure to complete and submit required budgetary forms. In any case, it’s important to do this anyway as it will help the chapter in its development efforts for both fundraising and relationship building as you continue to grow. Your budget will dictate which plans you can implement as far your programs and events go but will also provide your chapter with a grasp on what you can actually purchase.

Seeking and finding donors and matching their interests with the needs of the chapter requires a unique combination of both skill and perseverance and many potential donors might want to support your cause because they already believe in your mission and are looking for ways of giving back. This might be an Alumni who has directly benefited from your SVA Chapter, which is a great place to start as people are more likely to invest in people that they believe in. After all, money, time, and people are all needed to turn our plans into reality. Because we are dealing with people, it’s important to always remember that this is a practical exercise in building and maintaining relationships. We have probably heard the saying that goes something like “if you seek money or opportunity, you’ll probably receive advice. But if you are seeking advice or support then you might eventually receive money or opportunity.”

Treat your chapter financial records like a living document by preparing regular budget reports, which is a smart way of understanding what has been done in the past so that the chapter can realistically plan for the future. When preparing these reports provide a detailed breakdown of cost and quantity of both your income and expenses. Each line item should include a brief description and should also reflect what you have budgeted for the expense and what the actual cost is. Remember that this is a labor of love and I will say it again…being detailed and realistic is key! Another important note regarding a chapter budget is the actual costs should be recorded and are consistent with your chapter records. In your Summit Guidebook, we have provided you with some additional resources and tools to help you out with creating and maintaining your chapter’s budget and finances.

## Chapter Programming

**Sam Erickson**

Oooookay! You’ve made it this far, and now you have a grasp on the meat and potatoes of leading an SVA Chapter on your campus.... say it with me! STRAT PLAN!

In this module, we are going to cover how to bring your strat plan to life, and that is through programming.

Programming is just a fancy way of saying “engaging with your community”, which is just a fancy way of saying hosting events, workshops, and meetings and more!

When we talk about engaging with your community, we aren’t just talking about your college community, or your student veteran community...we are also talking about your neighborhood community!

Engaging with your student veterans will look like events, workshops, meetings. Don’t worry, we will get into that later.

Engaging with your campus can also look like events, workshops, and meetings, but also consider campus campaigns like R.E.D: Remember Everyone Deployed, where everyone wears red on Fridays!

Engaging with your neighborhood community is including your local community for on campus student veteran activities, or hosting fundraisers and events at their location. We see this engagement a lot with local VFW and American Legion Posts. We’re talking local parades, laying flags and wreaths for fallen service members, casino nights.... the possibilities are endless!

So...as a reminder...

We reviewed goals, tactics and KPI’s (Key Performance Indicators...in case you forgot), and that is a great start in developing your chapter programming. Has something worked for your chapter in the past? Have you indicated things that were a total bust?

If you are creating a brand-new chapter, or it’s been a while since your chapter has been active, or you just need some ideas to get you fired up again, don’t worry, we will cover all the good stuff during this module and you will complete it feeling empowered to develop some awesome programming!

I’ll introduce some major themes of this module now, but no one likes a spoiler alert, so I’ll keep the details for later.

Time for a rapid fire of info!

* Who, what, why!
* Service
* Professional
* Development
* Team building
* Events!

Okay, maybe that wasn’t so rapid. But you get the point.

These are the main elements of programming. And don’t forget, all of this is directly tied to your mission and vision statement, your strategies, and your tactics!

You thought you were done with the strat plan, didn't you? Sorry not sorry, but that is truly your chapters manual! Continue referring back to it as we work through this module and think about concrete actions to allow your plan to flourish!

Now, let's get started on chapter programming and community engagement!

## Chapter Meetings

**Sam Erickson**

You’ve made it this far, and we are proud of you! Stick with it because we are almost done!

But first, a quick recap of what we have covered until now. Because we all know it's been A LOT of information.

We started with learning about our campus culture and how that impacts everything we do. Everything from the type of institution you're at, to the student population will drive what you do as a chapter.

Next, we covered the...dun dun dun...strat plan. Have we caught on to how important your strat plan is? If not, let’s hit the nail over the head one more time.

Your strat plan consists of your mission and vision statement which are big picture “goals” if you will. This is something that resonates with each and every one of you and will gain support from your chapter members. If they *feel* your mission and vision, you’re doing something right!

Your strategies are the next tier down and consist of broad ideas of how you will maintain your mission and vision.

Now on to the nitty gritty...your tactics. Your tactics will be concrete actions that you will work towards achieving. We are talking numbers here people! “Increase participation in meetings by 50%, increase budget by 25%, you get it! Your tactics support your strategies, which support your mission and vision.

Is it all coming together now? Good!

So, we have done all this planning, now what? Well, we have covered how to turn that plan into action by reviewing how to plan for your chapter programming through things like events.

To keep the wheels greased all year around, you’re going to host MEETINGS!

Meeting, meeting, meeting, meeeeetings....MEEETIINGGGS!

There are three core meeting types that we will review during this module.

1. Regular Meetings
2. Ad-hoc/Planning Meetings
3. Open meetings/Townhalls

Just like everything else we have covered so far, we want to have the population we serve in mind. We will review the life cycle of student veterans and how that impacts participation.

Speaking of participation, a meeting isn’t successful without it! Remember our discussion about campus culture? That will play a critical role in deciding when, where, and how you will host meetings. See...it’s all coming together now!

Let’s go ahead and dive into chapter meetings!

## Career Readiness and Professional Development

**Calvin Jensen**

Hi, my name is Calvin Jensen, Development Manager at SVA National Headquarters. As cliché as it may sound, a large part of my job is to help get student veterans curious about their careers and to help connect them with career opportunities.

As student veterans, we all know that we aren’t your typical students in the classroom. Not only are we a little bit older than the typical student, we come to campus with a wealth of real-world experience, a developed sense of character, and a foundation of direct and in-direct professional skills, often referred to as “hard skills” and “soft skills”.

Uncertainty in the transition process can prove some truth to the notion that “you don’t know what you don’t know”.

The thing that might not be very clear, and it is one of the top questions that I get from student veterans... “When do I start preparing for my career?”

* The answer is NOW!

This is something that takes time, focus, and direction to help achieve. This is where the focus on career readiness and professional development programming and activities for your SVA Chapter is going to help shape the future career outlook of your membership and will help strengthen your SVA Chapter’s network.

As we think about the journey after college, there is a saying that I think it perfect to use here...“The journey of a thousand miles, begins with a single step.” For most of us, we are currently on a journey in our transition from the military and into higher education. So, let’s think about this nebulous journey into a career as just a series of steps where we learn more about ourselves and get more comfortable with being uncomfortable, which is where growth comes from and is where the SVA Chapter can start planning for success!

Our primary goal on this special topic on Career Readiness and Professional Development is 3-fold:

1) Get individuals in the SVA community to think about their future careers earlier, while in college.

2) Prioritize and take part in career-building activities like workshops, internships, mentorship, and general professional development activities throughout college.

3) Help connect your SVA Chapter to resources, programs, and opportunities through SVA’s Career Center and consider implementing a Career Services Liaison for your SVA Chapter.

Now as you start putting together your Chapter’s Strategic Plan and are looking to recruit new members into the Chapter and attend your Chapter’s professional-focused events, here are some considerations to focus on when planning the upcoming year:

**Identify and recruit student veteran members based on academic field of study.**

**Survey and assess the career interests and types of programs or events that your Chapter Members want or are interested in taking part in**.

**Build a community of support and opportunity by creating and leveraging a LinkedIn Group for your SVA Chapter.**

**Leverage existing partnerships, resources, and programs on your college campus and at the National level.**

Throughout the SVA Summit, you have learned extensively about how to create a Chapter Strategic Plan and what kinds of resources or types of support there are to help your SVA Chapter succeed. Here are some helpful goals or things to consider with regard to career readiness and professional development programming for your SVA Chapter:

**1) Create a chapter training schedule of your events and what things you would like taught to your members.**

**2) Conduct at least (1) chapter career or professional focused event each semester.**

**3) Connect with the College/University Career Services center and Alumni Association.**

**4) Partner with campus and community clubs, organizations, companies, or societies with a focus on professional development or have a connection to the greater community.**

As you begin the process of creating and expanding on your Chapter Strategic Plan, we encourage you and your SVA Chapter to consider adding a “Career Services Liaison” to your ranks. The Career Services Liaison is responsible for all aspects of career readiness and professional development for the SVA Chapter and its members and serves as a link between membership and the career services office on campus. The focus of SVA’s Career Services Liaison program is to learn about and create cultural competencies related to improving access for student veterans using your campus’ Career Services and to “normalize help seeking behavior” as a way of getting student veterans and military-connected students to think about and start building their careers earlier in college.

Each individual Career Services Liaison will act as a link to SVA National Headquarters and our growing network of Career Services Liaisons and partners seeking student veteran talent. Each Career Services Liaison will also receive specialized, role-specific training, resources, and guidance later on in the SVA Summit. For more information about SVA’s Career Services Liaisons, implementing one for your SVA Chapter, and more on resources, programs, and opportunities for your SVA Chapter and chapter members, please refer to your Summit Guidebook.

## Marketing and Outreach

**Dr. Abby Kinch**

Come here...no closer...I have a secret to tell you… **you** are your best chapter ambassador. In this moment, you can flex your social muscles to make great things happen for your chapter, whether that’s growing your membership, sharing those incredible chapter events you planned with Sam, finding funding to join us at NatCon [awkward wink], or highlighting campus partnerships.

I am now going to take a few minutes to talk you through some of the marketing techniques and messaging that can be used to recruit new members, entice sponsors, or solidify supporters. Marketing is how you as a chapter can communicate “who you are, what you do, and **why it matters**” to encourage participation from everywhere.

Marketing lesson #1: When in doubt, **brag**. But brag from the heart! What makes you proud to be an SVA chapter leader? What is your mission? What has your chapter leadership achieved together? What important relationships have you made, or opportunities have been presented, all under the umbrella of SVA? When you speak authentically about your pride in the chapter, you make a compelling statement that sparks interest and invites others to join you. This seems like a small act, but word-of-mouth communication about the chapter impacts the bigger picture, the campus, the community, and your overall success.

Marketing Lesson #2: be kind, rewind...no that’s not it...We Scare Because We Care...no, that’s Monster’s Inc....

Another marketing strategy at your disposal is collaboration amongst on-campus organizations. This is a wonderful way to diversify audiences and can lead to even more meaningful partnerships with student and community groups. Another bonus— attendance at partnered events skyrockets through the increased awareness about those events. And, the financial and logistical needs of those events often decreases when the work is shared.

Closely related to partnerships is the idea of an influencer lifting up your chapter. An influencer can be defined as an individual who has the power to affect decisions of others because of their authority, and there are no shortages of them on college campuses. That could be a team captain (go sportsball team!), a popular professor, an editor of the school paper, or even high profile alumni – boards of trustees are filled with former student veterans. When you connect meaningfully with them and give them a great impression at an event or online, you might just have a powerful fan in your pocket moving forward.

Additionally, in this digital world, think about your chapter’s online presence. The sky is truly the limit here. Heck, OG SVA got itself started on MySpace! Does that mean a chapter TikTok to better engage with students on campus? My TikTok is filled with dogs and puppies! Perhaps sharing an event on Instagram Live? Share what your chapter is up to across social media and plug into SVA Headquarter’s accounts and hashtags - #SVALeads or #WeAreSVA- we can share your posts and amplify your message across the entire SVA network. Create some hashtags of your own to keep track of what you’ve got going on. You can find more information and ideas in the Chapter Guide under the Communications and Marketing & Branding sections.

The last kind of messaging is the kind you do without having to say a word. Branding, or **visually** offering information about your SVA Chapter is a wonderful way to show your presence in your community while you go about your campus life. Branding can be placed on t-shirts, hats, stickers, [can I possibly be loaded up with this stuff while I say this – maybe SVA stickers on my face?] and other swag, as well as on banners and posters in photographs or social media profiles. These visual assets are recognized, sometimes subconsciously, and create knowledge about the strength of your chapter, especially when repeated. This passive, yet effective, kind of awareness-building actually makes it easier to **then** discuss the who’s / what’s / why’s of your chapter once you’ve been seen.

And, the great news is, we at SVA’s National Headquarters have made it as easy as possible for you. You can find SVA Brand Guidelines, Logos, Letterheads, Chapter Logo Templates, Event Fliers and even a Business Card Template, all in the Chapter Guide under Branding & Marketing. This is available to you 24/7 on the SVA website at studentveterans.org.

Now, putting all of these elements together in a real-life example: INFULTRATING AN ENEMY COMPOUND! No...’cause they’re not our enemy 😊 How about just show up to another student organization meeting or event while wearing something branded. This is a great place to meet a few new friends, share a few meaningful words about your chapter, and further cement the presence of your chapter in the campus ecosystem. The result is that students who are at these events will then be able to recognize the Chapter Members outside of that gathering and create more relationships, like ripples on the pond. What’s also important is that supporting other organizations exhibits true leadership and is crucial to extending a sense of belonging for **all** students, especially those who are not typically included.

We’ve said it before, and we’ll say it again. We are always available here at SVA’s National Headquarters if you want to run marketing ideas by us. Don’t hesitate to reach out. And don’t forget to tag us when you post on social media!

Now, you have all the tools in front of you to level up, wherever you may be in your chapter’s development.