

Communications and Communications Plans

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Communications – What is it?

The active process of exchanging information and ideas

Effective communication goes beyond that

- Process of exchanging information and ideas so that the message is received and understood with clarity and purpose
- Includes plain language, accessibility, etc.

Effective communications

The 7 Cs

1. Clear
2. Concise
3. Concrete
4. Correct
5. Coherent
6. Complete
7. Courteous

The 7 Cs: Clear, concise, concrete, and correct

1. Clear: Be clear about your goal or message
2. Concise: Get to the point and keep it brief
3. Concrete: Details (not too many) and vivid facts
 - Message is solid
 - Audience has clear picture of what you are telling them
4. Correct: Make sure terms used fit audience's level of education or knowledge, avoid jargon; no spelling or grammatical errors

The 7 Cs: Coherent, complete, courteous

5. Coherent: Make it logical

- All points are connected and relevant
- Tone and flow are consistent

6. Complete: Audience has everything to be informed

- Call to action: Make it clear
- Include all relevant info

7. Courteous: Friendly, open, honest

- No hidden insults or passive-aggressive tones
- Keep reader's viewpoint in mind

Communications vs. marketing

They are not the same

- Marketing
 - Deals with reaching specific audiences
 - Tends to be customer-centric and sales driven
- Communications
 - Focuses on the message to audiences
 - Helps audience understand the product or service

Communications plan

What is it?

- A strategic document that outlines an organization's objectives, key messages, channels, and communications activities

Why is it important?

- Helps everyone to be on the same page
- Can prevent or mitigate the effect of potential crises
- Ensure that information is shared effectively and efficiently

Creating a communications plan: Steps 1-5

1. Establish goals
2. Identify your audiences
3. Do a SWOT analysis – Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
4. Plan and design your key messages
5. Consider your resources

Creating a communications plan: Steps 6-9

6. Determine communications channels you will use (media, email, publications, presentations)
7. Create a tactical outreach plan
8. Specify a timeline for moving forward
9. Decide how you will evaluate the plan and adjust it as needed

Sample communications plan

Audience	Deliverable	Timeline	Description	Delivery methods	Owner
Small businesses	Finance structure recommendation	June 2025	Communicate the finance structure recommendation from the Finance and Revenue committee	Website, email, social media	UHPGB, DCBS Communications
Large businesses					
Health care providers					
Insurance companies					

Questions?

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