Communication, Engagement and Advocacy: Developing a Comprehensive Communications Strategy

Trainer(s):

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How to Develop a Communications Plan
Case Studies

- Salt Lake City Public Safety Building Bond
- Salt Lake City New Eccles Theater
Components of a Communications Plan

- Goals and Objectives
- Strategies
- Tactics and Tools
- Target Audience Identification
- Key Messages
- Plan Measurement
Goals and Objectives

What do you want to accomplish through your communications plan?
Sample City Council Communication Objectives

- The City Council wants to increase the percentage of citizens who are familiar with its mission.
- The City Council wants to help people better understand the work and role of the City.
- The City Council wants to promote increased citizen enthusiasm and support for new policy initiatives.

Develop three communications objectives that you would like to accomplish this year.
Strategies

What specific strategies will you use to achieve your goals?

What tasks do you need to complete as part of your strategies?

What tools are available to help you meet your goals?
SMART Strategies

Specific

Instead of: Do better at communicating with media
Try: Conduct two briefings for reporters each month

Measurable

Instead of: Meet with my constituents
Try: Hold 10 town meetings throughout district in 2016

Achievable

Instead of: Get 100 percent of voters to click on Web site
Try: Increase Web site hits by 10 percent in 2016

Realistic

Instead of: Use all methods of technology to communicate
Try: Develop and promote blog to inform constituents

Timely

Instead of: Produce annual report for constituents
Try: Distribute annual report one month after adjourning
Examples of Communications Tactics

- Direct mail
- Flyers/posters
- Brochures
- Annual reports
- Speaking engagements
- Community meetings
- Focus groups
- Newsletters
- News releases
- News conferences
- Newspaper columns
- Mass E-mail updates
- Web sites
- Social Media and Blogs
- Podcasts/webcasts
- Text message blasts
Communications Tools

- Remember your audience when you think about what tools to use.
- Does your audience have the technology to use your preferred tools?
- Low-tech communications tools can be just as effective, if not more effective, than high-tech tools!
Who are you trying to reach with your communications?
Target Audience
Examples

- Community Councils and Civic Leaders
- Community Activists and Influencers
- Local print media
- Local business leaders

Think about three audiences that you will target with directed communications efforts
Other Stakeholder Examples

- Political party leadership
- Other elected officials
- City Staff

Who can be helpful or harmful of your communication efforts? Talk to them first.
Key Messages

What messages do you want to communicate?

Why do you need key messages?
“Someone is going to edit what you say. It might as well be you.”

- Gerard Braud, media trainer
What is a key message?

- Clearly and concisely tells who you are, what you do, and why they should care
- Helps organize your thoughts and avoid rambling
- Helps you stay “on message” and remember your supporting points
- Answers questions you wish you had been asked
- Should be no longer than two sentences
How to Use Key Messages

- Repeat your key messages in all of your communications (print, broadcast, online)
- Control the direction of conversation by bridging back to your key messages
- When at a loss for words, go back to your key messages … they are your safe harbor
Plan Measurement

“What gets measured gets done” - Tom Peters

“One of the great mistakes is to judge policies and programs by their intentions rather than their results” - Milton Friedman

“Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted” - Albert Einstein
Examples of Plan Measurement Tools

- Internal surveys
- Online surveys
- Web hits
- Newspaper clippings
- Number of news releases

How do you plan to measure whether or not you are achieving your communications goals?
Communications Plan Questions?

- Goals and Objectives
- Strategies
- Tactics and Tools
- Target Audience Identification
- Key Messages
- Plan Measurement
Thank you. Please stay in touch.

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