



Communication Plan Worksheet

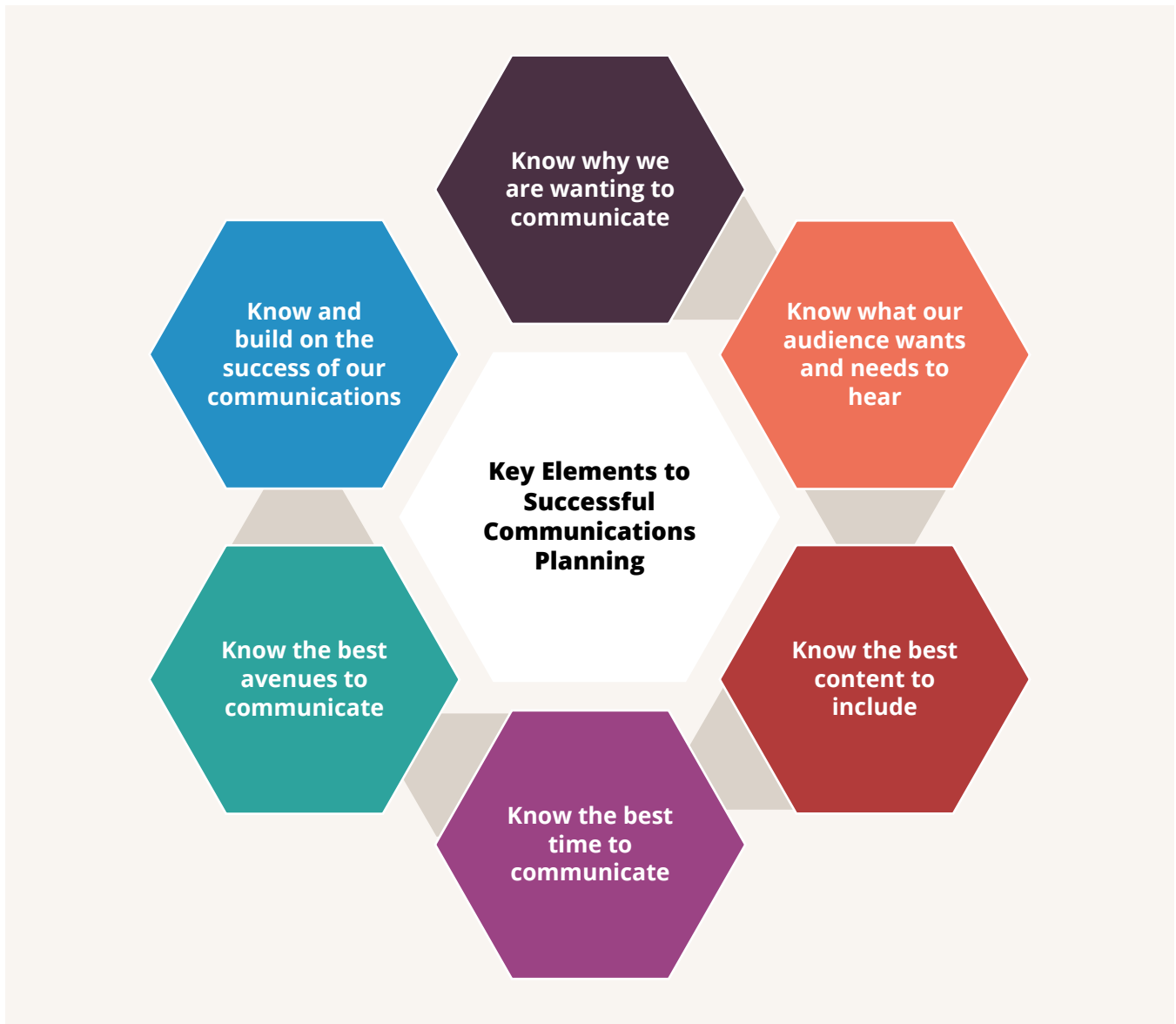
Worksheet Output

- ✓ Understand the necessary and important elements of strong communication
- ✓ Develop a robust communications plan to connect with the community
- ✓ Determine the necessary steps to put the communication plan into action

Key Elements of Communication

In order to share the success stories of your team in a meaningful way, it's imperative that your team spends time planning and strategizing how you will communicate. Communication goes beyond the simple sharing of information. It's necessary to know your audience, their preferred method of communication, and your own motivation for sharing information.

When sharing information, it's recommended that your team develops a communication plan. A communication plan outlines key stakeholders, content, timing, and methods of communication for your shared material. Examine the graphic on the next page to understand how key elements of communication that need to be represented in your communication plan.



Instructions

Step One: If Appropriate, Develop a Communications Team

→ If resources allow, reach out to public health and public safety members to solicit interest of those who would like to work on developing a communication plan for your partnership. However, if there is capacity for only one individual to handle these matters, please move to Step 2.

- This group would meet regularly until the plan is developed, then periodically to monitor progress.
- Responsibilities include:
 - ✓ Developing a communication plan and ensuring goals are met; updating as needed.
 - ✓ Sharing the communication Plan with public health and safety members for input and approval.
 - ✓ Developing and/or overseeing the development of communication content.
 - ✓ Sharing content with public health and safety members for approval before external release.
 - ✓ Working with external partners who can assist with communication planning and implementation.

Step Two: Develop a Communications Plan

Using the Communication Plan Worksheet, create a communication plan that outlines communications for your public health and public safety partnership. It should answer these six key questions:

1. What successes are we planning to share?
2. With whom are we communicating?
3. What is our message and approach?
4. When are we communicating?
5. How are we communicating?
6. How well are we communicating?

Step Three: Put the Communication Plan into Action

- Once the plan is complete, begin rolling out the actions outlined in the plan.
- Ensure that goals are met and adjustments are made as needed.
- Monitor success of outreach efforts and regularly update public health and public safety members on communication activities.

Process Suggestions

Have the Communications Team work together to complete the plan by planning group meetings at various times.

- It is estimated that it should take approximately 2 hours to complete the entire plan with limited audience analysis.
- The amount of time will be determined by how many supplemental exercises your team includes in your process.
- Supplemental exercises include such tasks as completing *Communication Planning Worksheets* and developing reports.

If scheduling time for the whole Communications Team to meet is an issue, consider breaking out into smaller sub-groups of 2-3 people and assign sections of the plan for them to complete and report back to the whole Communications Team.

Key Tips for Communication Planning

- Seek out local PR/marketing and graphic design firms, local artists, etc., who are willing to donate time to your public health and safety partnership to assist with communication planning and implementation. Ask them if they would be willing to donate their time to the cause—many firms designate a certain number of hours for pro-bono work—remind them that they would be a key partner around the table and it would be good PR for their firm!
- Although the majority of communication planning is done by a smaller group, it is necessary that each member understands their own role in effective communication. To do this, highlight individual responsibility in communication planning as an important piece of the overall public health and safety work plan.
- Create a short “elevator speech” about your public health and safety partnership that all of your members can communicate easily. This would contain concise information that could be communicated quickly at a moment’s notice. You can have more than one – but be sure that members have them ready when the time is right!
- Ensure that you use your equity lens when communication planning! Having diverse and equitable representation on your communications team is vital to ensure that your partnership includes appropriate communication styles and user-friendly channels when disseminating information.



Review the Amplifier Suite resource [2f-Data Literacy](#) section on framing data equitably

- When determining equitable communication practices for your specific audience(s), try to use plain language, link structural determinants of health, and avoid stigmatizing, judgmental, and blaming language.

Communications Planning Worksheet

Step 1: Develop a Communications Team

If your public health and safety partnership has the resources to create a Communications Team, solicit interest from those who would like work on developing a communication plan and walk through the below questions with your group. This will help identify strengths, gaps, and next steps in creating a strong team with cohesive expectations.

| | |
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| <p>What skills do we need to complete our communication plan?</p> <p><i>e.g., Exceptional writing skills, marketing/PR skills, social media skills</i></p> | |
| <p>Which public health and safety members hold communications-related positions?</p> <p><i>e.g., Agency public relations (PR), community liaison</i></p> | |
| <p>Are there other possible key community partners to consider?</p> <p><i>e.g., Local marketing/PR firms, graphic design firms, artists, universities</i></p> | |
| <p>When, Where, and How Often will our team meet?</p> <p>.</p> | |

Step 2.1: Develop a Communications Team

Complete this worksheet to outline your big-picture communication planning. Use this document to show annual communications that will be sent out internally and externally.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>What successes/main points will we share about this topic?</p> <p><i>e.g., Data updates, recovery highlights, event news, partner showcase</i></p> | |
| <p>With whom do we need to communicate about this topic and why?*</p> <p><i>e.g., Communicating with audience x will create more awareness of public health and safety partnership efforts and garner interest in joining, utilization of community resources, education to change behavior</i></p> | |
| <p>At what frequency will the communication take place?</p> <p><i>e.g., One-time release, periodically over a year period</i></p> | |
| <p>What methods will be used to deploy this communication?</p> <p><i>e.g., Email, newspaper, social media</i></p> | |

How will we know the communication is working?

e.g., Social media analytics, event attendance, leadership communication, uptick in new membership

Complete **2.2 Understanding Your Audiences** below for each audience identified.

Step 2.2: Understand Your Audience

Complete this worksheet for each of the audiences identified in Step 2. Use this as an analysis tool to help you/your Communications Team better understand your audience’s needs, what they need to know about the public health and safety partnership, and why you need to communicate with them. This activity aims to increase overall effectiveness of your communication strategies. When completing this activity, remember to use plain language, try to link structural determinants of health, and avoid using stigmatizing, judgmental, and/or blaming language.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Audience</p> | |
| <p>Who are specific audience members we need to reach out to directly? <i>e.g., Name specific things you need to know about them</i></p> | |
| <p>What does this audience care about most? <i>e.g., efforts that align with our mission?</i></p> | |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Are there issues that pertain to us that don't pertain to them?</p> | |
| <p>What role do they currently play with us? <i>e.g., Current interaction level, knowledge about us</i></p> | |
| <p>Why does this audience need to hear from us?</p> | |
| <p>What are this audience's preferred modes of communication and who is the key contact?</p> | |
| <p>What are the best equitable communication practices to include for this audience? <i>e.g., Culturally responsive, accessible for differently-abled people</i></p> | |

Step 3: Put the Communication Plan into Action

Complete the worksheet below. Use information generated from the previous step (Step 2) to assist you/your team in identifying the necessary steps to put your communication plan into action.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>What are the top priorities of your communication plan?</p> <p><i>e.g. audience, communication methods, frequency</i></p> | |
| <p>What are specific outreach goals for this priority?</p> | |
| <p>Who will track our progress on this priority?</p> | |
| <p>When and how will we update our members of our progress on this priority?</p> | |