

Communications Planning Template and Samples

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Identifying Audiences for a Strategic Communications Plan

The “target” audience is the group of stakeholders, who can help bring about the policy change you hope to achieve. They are the key decision-makers who can improve existing policies, create new ones, and ensure that policies are implemented.

There are two kinds of target audiences: **primary** and **secondary** audiences.

Primary audiences are those individuals **with the direct authority to make the desired policy changes.**

Secondary audiences are those people who can **influence the decisions of your primary audience.** Secondary audiences are important because they can provide a way to reach the primary audience some of whom may not be available for you to reach directly.” Secondary audiences may include the general public, media, or stakeholders.

Steps to Audience Identification







1. Develop a list of primary and secondary audiences.
2. For each individual or group on your list, think through these questions:
 - Who are they? Can you write a brief profile describing them?
 - How much information do they already have about your issue?
 - Do they already have an opinion?
 - Have they already voted or taken a public position on your issue?
 - What is their most pressing issue, problem or desire? What do they value?
 - How will your policy change proposition meet one of their needs or speak to their values?
 - Where do they get their information?

Policy Change Outreach and Communication Planning Template



Policy Goal:

Communication Objective:

Audience (from Audience Map) 	Values 	Current connected outreach efforts (tribal, county, region, state, national) 	Message (story)  	Target Date 	Action plan number
					1
					2
					3
					4
					5
					6

Instructions: Policy Change Outreach and Communication Planning Template

Policy Change Outreach and Communication Planning Template



Policy Goal: Communication Objective:					
Audience (from Audience Map)	Values	Current connected outreach efforts (tribal, county, region, state, national)	Message (story)	Target Date	Action plan number
					1
					2
					3
					4
					5
					6

REDE GROUP
COMMUNITY RESEARCH & DESIGN

1.

Before developing your communications plan, you will have already identified your policy goal. List your policy goal here.

2.

Write your communication objective(s) here. These objectives are "top level" statements that encompass the intended goal of this communication plan. In other words, if this communication plan is successful, what will your audiences understand, believe and do as result.

3.

In a separate exercise, identify your audiences and their values. There are various ways to do this. Ultimately, this boils down to the key decision makers and influencers deciding on your policy (audience) and what will motivate them to support your proposed policy change (values). Transfer that information to this plan.

4.

Research current outreach efforts happening in your area that you can tap in to support your messages. Linking with current state-level campaigns is an important way to increase your reach. Also, think about other counties' and tribes' educational campaigns.

6.

Now that you have the top level details of your plan, create a detailed action plan for each audience. Use the action plan template with the corresponding number.

5.

Carefully consider each message (story) that you will use to motivate your audiences to support your policy change. Stories **must** be based on how your policy change speaks to the values of your audience. Input messages/stories here.

Policy Change Outreach and Communication Planning Template



Policy Goal: *Strong Tobacco Retail License in every city and town in County*

Communication Objective: *By June 30, secure commitment from community leaders in largest city to support tobacco retail policies including licensing tobacco retailers.*

Audience	Values	Current connected outreach efforts (tribal, county, region, state, national)	Message (story)	Target Date	Action plan number
Mayor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Community health -Voters -Healthy local business -Livability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Statewide prevention campaign -Retailer hero videos -Outreach from County Health Improvement Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Unregulated TRs are bad for community health -There is strong community support for TRL 		1
City Councilors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Constituent opinions -Local economy -Livability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Statewide prevention campaign -Retailer hero videos -Outreach from County Health Improvement Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Unregulated TRs are bad for community health -There is strong community support for TRL 		2
Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Protecting/supporting local business -Tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Statewide prevention campaign -Retailer hero videos -Outreach from County Health Improvement Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -There is strong community support for TRL -TRL is not bad for business -Kids health 		3
School Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Student achievement -Student attendance -Student health -Parents' opinions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Outreach from County Health Improvement Plan -Hero videos of teenagers on SFO website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The prevalence of retailers in your school zone and effect on kids -Safe, healthy routes to school -Tobacco industry targeting kids on external retail walls and windows is harmful 		4
Boys and Girls Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Protecting kids -Kids health -Local environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Outreach from County Health Improvement Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The prevalence of retailers in local school zone and effect on kids -Safe, healthy areas near schools -Tobacco industry targeting kids on external retail walls and windows is harmful 		5
					6

Detailed Outreach and Education Action Plan

Action Plan 1

Messenger	Mode/Tools	Date(s)	Desired Outcome	Outcome	Follow-up
Touch 1					
Touch 2					
Touch 3					

Action Plan 1 (continued)

Messenger	Mode/Tools	Date(s)	Desired Outcome	Outcome	Follow-up
Touch 4					
Touch 5					
Touch 6					
Touch 7					

Instructions: Communications Action Plan

1.

Carefully think through the best messenger for each message. Even the most compelling message delivered by the “wrong” messenger will fail. Whom does this audience trust? Whom do they relate to? Find a messenger who is trusted and respected by your audience.

2.

Determine and outline how you will deliver your message. Will it be delivered in an in-person meeting, through the media, or through email blasts? Keep in mind that delivering the same messages through multiple modes & methods is ideal. This repetition can be called “Touches.”

Action Plan 1					
Messenger	Mode/Tools	Date(s)	Desired Outcome	Outcome	Follow-up
Touch 1					
Touch 2					
Touch 3					

3.

Input the date whereby the touch will ideally happen. Timing of outreach is especially important when there is a specific date (such as a hearing or vote) whereby decision makers will decide on your policy. Other considerations include connections with other outreach efforts and key events, media hooks (other events such as The Great American Smokeout) that will increase media interest, and the rolling out of all the messages of your educational outreach campaign

5.

Use the planning tool to keep track of actual outcomes of outreach and to note any follow-up that needs to happen as a result of outreach touches. At regular intervals, review your entire plan and make adjustments based on progress in reaching and motivating audiences.

4.

Decide and input what you want to happen as a result of each Touch. Simple outcomes such as “willingness to learn more” or “positive exposure to issue” are examples of desirable outcomes. Ultimately, expressed support for policy change is a desired outcome.

Detailed Outreach and Education Action Plan

Action Plan 3

Messenger	Mode/Tools	Date(s)	Desired Outcome	Outcome	Follow-up
Touch 1: <i>TPEP Coordinator</i>	<i>Telephone call to the President of the Chamber of Commerce</i>	<i>July 25th</i>	<i>Chamber president supports TRL policy proposal</i>		
Touch 2: <i>Community Champion</i>	<i>Letter to the Editor of local paper</i>	<i>August</i>	<i>Letter printed in newspaper showing good outcomes for kids and how businesses can support</i>		
Touch 3: <i>TPEP Coordinator/ CHD Admin</i>	<i>Key informant interviews with local business people/chamber members</i>	<i>Mid August</i>	<i>Gain support of local business people for TRL who are willing to be listed as supporters</i>		

Action Plan 3 (continued)

Messenger	Mode/Tools	Date(s)	Desired Outcome	Outcome	Follow-up
Touch 4: <i>Champion from Chamber of Commerce</i>	<i>Chamber Newsletter</i>	<i>End of August</i>	<i>Letter printed in the Chamber newsletter talking about the benefits of TRL and businesses</i>		
Touch 5: <i>C4D/Tobacco Program/OHA</i>	<i>Facebook/new hero video</i>	<i>Beginning of September</i>	<i>Facebook posting promoting and tagging local businesses who support TRL through new hero video</i>		
Touch 6: <i>Friendly County Commissioner</i>	<i>Local Newspaper article where commissioner is interviewed about the benefits of TRL and how businesses should also support in order to support community health</i>	<i>Mid September</i>	<i>Favorable news article promoting the benefits of TRL</i>		
Touch 7: <i>President of Chamber</i>	<i>Chamber resolution of support for TRL</i>	<i>End September</i>	<i>Chamber of Commerce votes for a resolution to support TRL</i>		