

Communications Planning

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PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS 

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Purpose: The success of new projects and agency initiatives is dependent on the effective delivery of targeted communications to a variety of stakeholders and external parties. A well prepared communications plan is designed to facilitate change, alleviate confusion and facilitate the project's benefits realization.

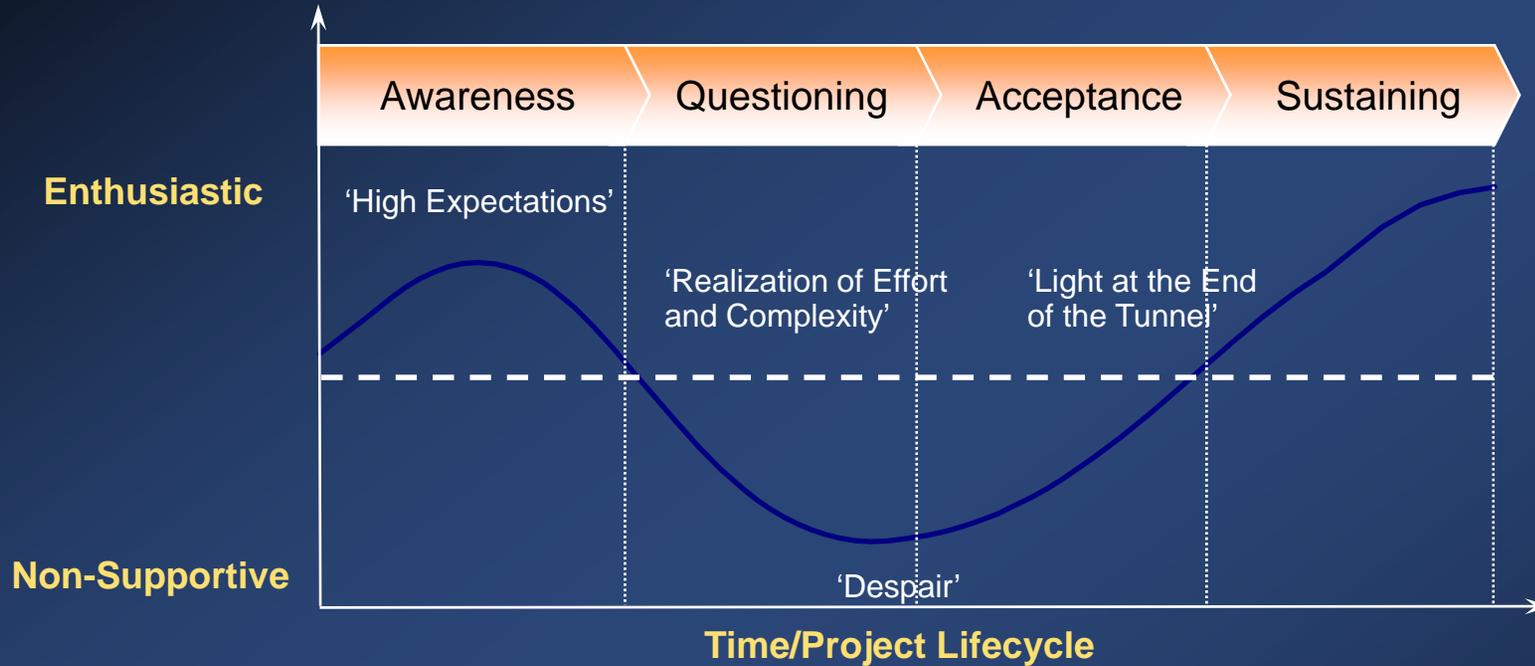
Process: A communications strategy guides the key activities by outlining the approach for determining and satisfying communication needs. This communications plan will cover internal communications but must be consistent with the external effort as well.

Product: This effort will result in a coordinated and focused communications effort. Additionally, it will generate excitement, keep affected and interested parties informed about project status, milestones and business impact and gain commitment from stakeholders. Most importantly, this will further the success of USAID.



Change Readiness Phases

Stakeholders of major policy initiatives commonly progress through four stages



Time/Project Lifecycle

- ↗ Unclear on scope, rationale, and nature of change
- ↗ Unrealistic expectations
- ↗ Rumor mill activity
- ↗ Seeking information

- ↗ Start to comprehend the effort and complexity
- ↗ Uncertainty and confusion
- ↗ Fear of the unknown
- ↗ Concern over personal impact

- ↗ Recognition of personal benefits
- ↗ Value to organization is understood
- ↗ Comfort achieved
- ↗ Willing to use new policy

- ↗ Change internalized
- ↗ Supporting behaviors demonstrated
- ↗ Improved performance



Goals of the Communications Plan

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Goal: To establish and manage communications with stakeholders about MFR

- Why?**
- Generate excitement
 - Create awareness for change
 - Manage concerns
 - Keep affected and interested parties informed of project status, milestones, and business impact
 - Reinforce key elements of the project
 - 100% end-user understanding of scope
 - Encourage dialogue between team and users
 - Educate stakeholders
 - Inform and gain commitment from stakeholders
 - Establish two-way communication channels

Critical Success Factors:

- Consistent, key messages that produce the desired sense of direction
- Communication infrastructure and coordination of information
- Feedback and listening mechanisms



Integrated Managing for Results

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Communications Matrix

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1. Communications Matrix is a working document (i.e., planning, tracking, assigning ownership, etc.)
2. Provides understanding of internal communications within the Agency
3. Assigns communication roles and responsibilities for development and delivery



Matrix Columns

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- ◆ **Audience(s):** Establishing the audiences into three categories: Strategic, Management, and Tactical
- ◆ **Themes:** Developing themes will enable the owner to establish correct messages (Value proposition, Risks, Budget, Accountability, Deployment Plan, Metrics, Back-up Plan, Resource Timing, and etc)
- ◆ **Mediums:** Identifying the vehicles that will carry the messages (I.e. email, Newsletters, Meetings, Conference Calls, Cables etc.)
- ◆ **Timing/Frequency:** Establishing the frequency of the messages to coincide with the timing of the release
- ◆ **Owner:** Identifying the deliverer and the developer of the messages



Matrix Columns

- ◆ **Themes:** Themes must be precise, candid statements of the "Desired State". They must also be specific to fit the audience, segmented and prioritized. It is critical to have few in number and stated in receiver's language.
- ◆ **Typical themes include:**
 - **Value Proposition:** Addresses the level of impact on a particular audience
 - Tactical Level: What's in it for me (WIFM)
 - Management Level: What in it for the department/mission (WIFD)
 - Strategic Level: What's in it for the Agency (WIFA)
 - **Accountability:** Who is accountable for adopting new measures
 - **Expectations:** Identifying any expectations (timing, deadlines)
 - **Metrics:** Establishing metrics across the whole organization
 - **New Policies:** Identifying the differences between previous versions



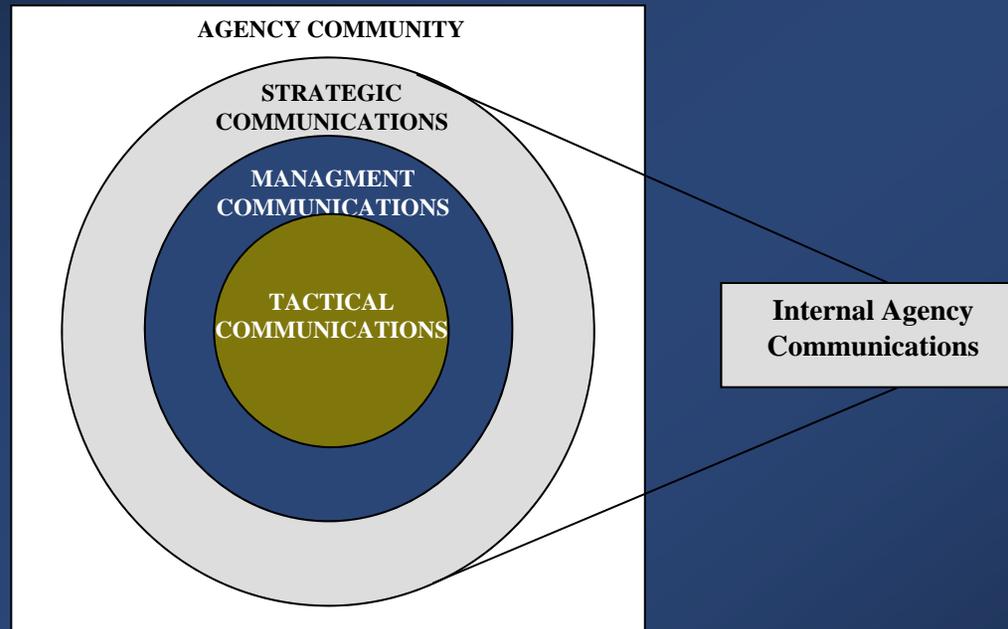
Communications Matrix

Audience	Themes	Medium	Frequency/ Timing	Owner/ Deliverer



Communication Audiences

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- **Tactical Communications:** Promote an in-depth awareness to encourage and impact change at the employee level. This is performed through targeted messages and training.
- **Management Communications:** Target specific audiences and promote an understanding of new strategy and capabilities and how it impacts USAID at the departmental level.
- **Strategic Communications:** Heighten awareness for ADS across large audiences within USAID's organization. The theme of this audience is to promote or market the implications of the new initiative on the agency to its stakeholders.

