Reporting Out

‘Key Guide to Communicate’

Disseminating information and presenting results can be a complex process. This tool will help provide transparency as well as enhance inclusion, communication, and trust throughout the beginning steps of the report-out process. The guide has been developed as an optional tool to elicit discussion, enhance awareness, and direct colleges on the promising practices when sharing information – specifically with the aim of addressing who we should share information with and how we should share that information. The guide contains essential questions and key points that colleges/departments should consider as they begin to engage in the information-sharing process of any given program/project. Key questions and points are intended to elicit awareness and improve the objectives of this tool.

What is the program/project of interest?

 Answer here …

Who & How

* Identifying all target audiences involved and/or affected by the program/project’s purpose is a great starting point to eventually include all individuals in the sharing of all information.
* When there is a need to communicate and share important messages to others, it is critical to focus on the method of delivery and the readability of the information to make sure the message is clear and easy to understand.

How can we effectively share our information, key message, or results? Begin by answering the guiding questions listed on the following page.

Key questions to consider when sharing information

The following questions are intended to guide the user(s) on how to best summarize and share information and/or results.

**Note:** In order to figure out how to share information, one must first understand the audience. Second, one must identify the purpose for disseminating the information. Then, one can finally move onto brainstorming the different ways of sharing information.

Who is affected by this program/project?

Who is involved with this program/project?

Who should the information be shared with?

What is the message/information you would like to share?

What are the main points you are trying to communicate?

How should information/results be organized?

How can information/results be best displayed or communicated in order to be remembered?

Key points to consider when sharing information

The following six principles are meant to help solidify the communication process and consider the key points when choosing the methods of information-sharing. Appendix A contains the questions from the six principles in a checklist format to help keep track of the thought process.

# Key Principles for Effective Communication[[1]](#footnote-1)

Accessible: consider how key audiences receive information

Actionable: consider how to identify if audiences are ready to take action

Credible: consider how to communicate with the aim of building and maintaining credibility

Relevant: consider how specific issues are seen as relevant to the audience

Timely: consider communication actions and products that are timely

Understandable: consider how ensure messages are understandable

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| What channels do audiences have access to?What channels do audiences prefer to seek information from?What channels that are accessible encourage two-way communication with audiences?Which channels best support the objectives for the intended project/program? | What behaviors or actions do we want audiences to take based on our information?Does the target audience understand the purpose?Does the target audience perceive the information as relevant?Do audiences understand the benefits of adopting the recommended behaviors?What are the barriers preventing the adoption of information being provided?What social norms can exist that can impact the adoption of recommended information? | What is the project/program’s role as an authority figure?What questions has the project/program answered, and which questions still need to be answered?What other projects/programs are perceived by the audience as credible, and how can the project/program align with them?Who is the best spokesperson to communicate this information/message? | What demographic characteristics of the audience (e.g., age, education) can inform message design and information dissemination?If the project/program is sharing information about a specific issue, do individuals perceive they are affected?Does the audience have previous experience with similar issues?Does the audience feel that there are steps they can take to contribute to the project/program’s purpose?What is the audience exposed to about the project/program’s issues that may affect their understanding of how information applies to them? | What are the best methods to engage priority audiences quickly?How can messages be delivered so that audiences have enough time to understand and act on the information/message given?How can projects/programs best engage with other departments to get the information/message to the audience quickly?Is there a way to deliver a sequence of messages over time that would increase the effectiveness of information?How can the project/program support other groups so there is timely and consistent dissemination of information?  | How familiar is your audience with the project/program’s topic?Does your message clearly state the action you want the audience to take?How can you use photos or illustrations to provide visual reinforcement of the main message?Are you using language that is familiar to the target audience?Have you, or can you, test your messages with audience members to ensure the meaning is clear? |

Crosswalk

This crosswalk is designed to be a starting point for discussion. Colleges may modify the worksheet to include additional groups unique to them. List the groups (e.g., individuals, teams, and/or departments) who are involved or directly affected by the program/project of interest on the left column of the crosswalk (See Example 1). Various methods of how reports/information can be shared with others are listed at the top of the crosswalk. Please provide an “X”, which will indicate how information/reports will address each group. This process might inspire members to think more closely about how and to whom the information and or idea should be communicated. Appendix B consists of a blank crosswalk for users to modify both the groups and methods of sharing information.

Example 1.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Who is affected by and/or involved in the process?** | **How is information (report) shared with others?** |
| **Reports** | **Brochures** | **Fliers** | **Catalogs** | **Ads** | **Memos** | **Letters** | **Online** | **Printed** | **Charts** | **Graphs** | **Visual Infographics** | **Power Point, Prezi, Etc.** | **In-Person Activity** | **Videos** | **Story Format** |
| **Affected** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Students |  | X | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |
| Staff |  | X | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |
| Direct Supervisor | X |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |
| Peers |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Community Members |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Involved** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Research Department | X |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| IT | X |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Bridge Program |  |  | X |  | X |  |  | X |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |
| Faculty |  | X |  |  | X |  |  | X |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |

Provide an “X”, which will indicate how information/reports will address each constituency below:

Table 1.

| **Who is affected by and/or involved in the process?** | **How is information (report) shared with others?** |
| --- | --- |
| **Reports** | **Brochures** | **Fliers** | **Catalogs** | **Ads** | **Memos** | **Letters** | **Online** | **Printed** | **Charts** | **Graphs** | **Visual Infographics** | **Power Point, Prezi, Etc.** | **In-Person Activity** | **Videos** | **Story Format** |
| **Affected** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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Key questions to evaluate the approach

Is the method of reporting effective for all parties involved? Explain why or why not.

Was the information articulated and displayed in an easy-to-read format for all parties? If so, what approach was taken?

Were the results discussed beyond dissemination? If so, how?

Key behaviors to consider when sharing information

The following checklist provides a few sets of inclusive behaviors that improve inclusion and transparency throughout the reporting process.[[2]](#endnote-1) Please provide an “X”, which will indicate which behavior you have considered (see example in bold).

I have modeled or incorporated the following behaviors when sharing information:

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| **Example: I provided honest communication using unbiased information/results.** | **X** |  |
| I provided honest communication using unbiased information/results.  |  | I thanked individuals who were both involved in and affected by their contributions to the program/project's process. |
| I communicated information/results to everyone involved in this process. |  | I empowered contributing members to take part in the decision-making of the reporting process.  |
| I communicated information/results to everyone affected by this process.  |  | I intentionally sought different perspectives from other individuals about the reporting process. |
| I genuinely communicated the importance and value of each contributing member. |  | Issues and/or difficulties about the reporting process were discussed with contributing members.  |
|  |  |   |

Conclusion

The more engaged and aware individuals become about the reporting out process, the more likely they are to address common communication issues and seamlessly share the big-picture message. Questions similar to those provided in this tool will serve as an ongoing guide and, ultimately, help structure different perspectives and conflicting viewpoints in ways that can only strengthen the sharing efforts. Continue to use this tool as you see fit throughout the year. Remember to utilize this tool to help guide your reporting out process and become an inclusive member of your team. Consider sharing it with others!

Appendix A

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| **Example: What channels do audiences have access to?**What channels do audiences have access to?What channels do audiences prefer to seek information from?What channels that are accessible encourage two-way communication with audiences?Which channels best support the objectives for the intended project/program? |  | **Example: What behaviors or actions we want audiences to take based on our information?**What behaviors or actions do we want audiences to take based on our information?Does the target audience understand the purpose?Does the target audience perceive the information as relevant?Do audiences understand the benefits of adopting the recommended behaviors?What are the barriers preventing the adoption of information being provided?What social norms can exist that can impact the adoption of recommended information? |  | **Example: What is the project/program’s role as an authority figure?**What is the project/program’s role as an authority figure?What questions has the project/program answered, and which questions still need to be answered?What other projects/programs are perceived by the audience as credible, and how can the project/program align with them?Who is the best spokesperson to communicate this information/message? |  |

The six communication principles are presented in a checklist format to help keep track of the thought or actual process when reporting out information. Please provide an “X”, which will indicate which key points you have considered (see examples in bold).

World Health Organization. (2017). Who strategic communications: Framework for effective communication. Retrieved from <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/communication-framework.pdf?ua=1>

Actionable:

Consider how to identify if audiences are ready to take action

Accessible:

Consider how key audiences receive information

Credible:

Consider how to communicate with the aim of building and maintaining credibility

**X**

**X**

**X**

**X**

Please provide an “X”, which will indicate which key points you have considered (see examples in bold).

World Health Organization. (2017). Who strategic communications: Framework for effective communication. Retrieved from <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/communication-framework.pdf?ua=1>

Timely:

Consider communications, actions, and products that are timely

Relevant:

Consider how specific issues are seen as relevant to the audience

Understandable:

Consider how ensure messages are understandable

**X**

**X**

**X**

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| **Example: What demographic characteristics of the audience (e.g., age, education, etc.) can inform message design and dissemination information?**What demographic characteristics of the audience (e.g., age, education, etc.) can inform message design and dissemination information?If the project/program is sharing information about a specific issue, do individuals perceive they are affected?Does the audience have previous experience with similar issues?Does the audience feel that there are steps it can take to contribute/reduce to the project/program’s purpose?What is the audience exposed to about the project/program’s issues that may affect their understanding of how information applies to them? |  | **Example: What are the best methods to engage priority audiences quickly?**What are the best methods to engage priority audiences quickly?How can messages be delivered so that audiences have enough time to understand and act on the information/message given?How can projects/programs best engage with other departments to get the information/message to the audience quickly?Is there a way to deliver a sequence of messages over time that would increase the effectiveness of information?How can the project/program support other groups so there is timely and consistent dissemination of information?  |  | **Example: How familiar is your audience with the project/program’s topic?**How familiar is your audience with the project/program’s topic?Does your message clearly state the action you want the audience to take?How can you use photos or illustrations that provide visual reinforcement of the main message?Are you using language that is familiar to the target audience?Have you, or can you, test your messages with audience members to ensure the meaning is clear? |  |

Appendix B

This worksheet is designed to be a starting point for discussion. Colleges may modify the worksheet to include groups unique to them. List the groups (e.g., individuals, teams, and/or departments) who are both affected by and involved with the program/project of interest on the left column on the left side of the crosswalk (see Example 1). Colleges/teams/individuals can adapt this worksheet to suit their needs and modify not only the groups but also the methods of sharing information. This process might inspire members to think more closely than they anticipated when sharing information. Varying methods of how reports/information can be shared with others are to be listed at the top of the crosswalk. Thereafter, please provide an “X”, which will indicate how information/reports will address each group (see Example 1).

Table 1.

| **Who is affected by and/or involved in the process?** | **How is information (report) shared with others?** |
| --- | --- |
| Fill in here… |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Affected** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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1. World Health Organization. (2017). Who strategic communications: Framework for effective communication. Retrieved from <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/communication-framework.pdf?ua=1> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
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