

Making sure your message is heard and understood

Here are resources referenced from the November 14 presentation at Partners In Public Health conference in Breezy Point, Minnesota.

Accessibility

Plain language

- Center for Plain Language
 - [PlainLanguage.gov](https://www.plainlanguage.gov/)
 - [2022 Federal Plain Language Report Card](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Preventing
 - [Clear communications index](#)
 - [Clear writing assessment](#)
- Hennepin County
 - [Writing and plain language guide](#)

Testing messages

- A/B testing
 - [Data Science in Minutes video](#)
- Paraphrase testing
 - [How to conduct a paraphrase test – CDC](#)
 - [Praphrase testing – PlainLanguage.gov](#)

Testing usability of documents

- From UX Matters
 - [How to Test the Usability of Documents - UXmatters](#)

Audience identification and framing messages

Resources

- Frameworks Institute
 - [Framing the Foundation of Community Health](#)
- Public Health Reaching Across Sectors (Phrases)
 - [Framing: Recommendations to Build Understanding of Public Health](#)
- Harvard Kennedy School of Public Health
 - [Global study: In public health messaging, negative framing triggers anxiety—not better outcomes](#)

Helpful tools

- University of Minnesota tool to frame messages from audiences' perspectives:
 - https://umn.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ezjxyqi7KWR871I

Contact

Amy Olson and Allison Thrash
Hennepin County Public Health
525 Portland Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55415
Amy.Olson2@hennepin.us
Allison.Thrash@hennepin.us
Hennepin.us

11/14/2024

To obtain this information in a different format, call: 612-543-5556.

Basic Communication Plan Template

November 14, 2024

Adapted from the MDH Drinking Water Risk Communication Toolkit

This template works well for program or project level communications needs, such launching a new program or service. There are other communication plan templates that may work better for event planning, projects with complex project management needs, or for public awareness campaigns.

Purpose and background

Description of why you need to communicate about a specific issue or about specific information; define the problem you are trying to solve with communication.

Stakeholder contacts

List of people who need to participate or approve the communication product or project. Add rows as needed.

Contact Name	Contact Info	Organization	Role

Program/project objectives

Clearly state measurable objectives for the program or project.

Communication objectives

Clearly state measurable objectives for communications product or project.

Examples:

- Increase knowledge and awareness of an organization, issue, or problem.
- Support acceptance of a particular issue or solution to a problem.
- Support action that may include behavior change or solutions to a real or perceived problem.

Audiences

Identify the key audiences who will be affected by your communications plan and whom you aim to reach through your plan. Provide a brief description of each audience. Consider your audience's:

- Racial, cultural and language diversity
- Preferences for getting information
- General attitude, knowledge, beliefs and values

Key messages

Identify and develop two to three key messages that you want to tell your audience and supporting messages for each of those. Simple messages are more easily learned and remembered.

Communication methods

Show how you will connect your message to your audience. Include type of communication (email, print, social media), who it will go to (community members, neighborhood group, city officials). Add rows as needed.

Audience	Message	Type of Communication	Material Development Lead

Communication task planning

Plan the tasks needed to get communications products developed and disseminated. Put the tasks on a timeline and be sure to assign responsibility for each task. Add rows as needed.

Task	Date Due	Owner	Notes	Status <i>Not started, In Process, Complete</i>

Spokespeople

List possible spokespeople to speak to this issue, in case of media interest.

- Subject matter expert
- Department leader
- Community partner or another stakeholder

Scope

List some tasks this project might be expected to do that are a part of the plan.

*The following work is **within** the scope of this communication plan:*

- X
- Y
- Z

List some tasks that might be expected that are NOT a part of this plan.

*The following work is **outside** the scope of this plan:*

- X
- Y
- Z

Risks and dependencies

Work associated with this plan may encounter the following limitations or constraints (briefly explain):

- Restrictions/requirements of funding
- Staffing constraints
- Partner capacity
- Project timing issues
- Other?

Budget

If there are costs projected for various tactics, outline them here.

Evaluation

Consider how you will know if your communication efforts were successful.

- What data you might already be gathering that can be used (number of phone calls, social media engagement, website traffic)?
- How often to evaluate communication efforts?
- Who has responsibility for evaluation design, completion, and response/follow-up?
- How to use and share results of the evaluation?