

# Creating Your Success-Targeted Communication Plan

Defining and Implementing “*Excellence in Action*”

A Set of Planning Tools

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# Orchestrating the Communication Campaign

## Overview

<b>Key Elements</b>	<sup>1</sup> Plan for Success	<sup>2</sup> Select the Best Ways to Succeed	<sup>3</sup> Create the Best First Impression	<sup>4</sup> Build Momentum and Help Employees Decide	<sup>5</sup> Reinforce the messages of the new program
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Develop the communication strategy</b>	<b>Identify the communication tactics, responsibilities, and timing</b>	<b>Launch the initial communication effort</b>	<b>Provide additional definition and new details</b>	<b>Add success stories and on-going messages</b>
<b>Functions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build the communication campaign on “your brand” and “your way” -- and link it to the key success measures</li> <li>• Set guiding principles</li> <li>• Determine communication objectives</li> <li>• Develop key messages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select communication vehicles and techniques that best support the communication</li> <li>• Identify various stakeholders and audiences</li> <li>• Set major milestones</li> <li>• Determine responsibilities</li> <li>• Test vehicles and messages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set the right tone</li> <li>• Manage expectations</li> <li>• Roll out the initial communication campaign</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on the objectives (say), activities (do) and the measures of “Excellence In Action”</li> <li>• Test major communication activities</li> <li>• Implement major communication</li> <li>• Measure results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement continuing communication campaign</li> <li>• Shift focus from the vision of “Excellence In Action” to reporting on who is demonstrating it and how</li> <li>• Conduct follow-up communication planning sessions</li> </ul>

## Potential Guiding Principles—Building on a Solid Foundation

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Having clearly stated guidelines helps focus the direction and implementation of the communication campaign. Here are some typical guidelines. Which ones apply? Which ones need to be modified? What is missing?

### **“It goes without saying that the communication will:”**

Yes    No

- Deliver information in a timely manner—as defined by employees—to help reduce “grapevine” activity.
- Commit to employees who will communicate what by when.
- Ensure all employees have access to the same information—with a deeper level of detail provided or available to people with personal interest.
- Use a variety of communication channels—especially face-to-face communication.
- Acknowledge the personal concerns surrounding any uncertainties—and pledge to address the “me issues” quickly (and define the timeline).
- Have high-status and high-credibility messengers involved in delivering the key elements of the message.
- Explain why the action is being taken.
- Teach employees how to make the best use of any new communication and education tools.
- Explain how the changes support the organization’s values and business mission.
- Identify who made the decision.
- Describe the effort that went into the decision.
- Outline some of the alternatives that were considered.
- Describe what the employees are expected to learn and do by when.
- Involve employees in determining how the new program will be implemented—how the communication effort will be designed and rolled out.
- Identify additional sources of information.



## What Do You Wish for in Developing a Successful Communication Campaign?

1. I wish we could create a perfect communication campaign that would *get all employees to understand*: \_\_\_\_\_

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2. I wish we could create a perfect communication campaign that would *accomplish these key things*: \_\_\_\_\_

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3. I wish we could develop the perfect communication campaign that would *use the most effective communication techniques and vehicles* including: \_\_\_\_\_

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4. If we could “*wish away*” *major problems or obstacles* that we are likely to encounter in our communication efforts, I would wish

away: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. If we could “*wish away*” *major causes of misunderstanding*, I would wish away: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. If we could “*wish away*” *major uncertainties*, I would wish away : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Focusing on the Intended Accomplishments

I wish we could demonstrate how the new program:

- Directly supports the organization's key business strategy by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Reflects the organization's intended people values (HR) by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Incorporates the organization's customer and marketplace strategy by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Allows for key cultural differences by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Creates more value for customers by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Allows for critical differences among various business and functional units by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Adds value to shareholders by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Strengthens and builds up employees' trust of the Company's message by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Involves the best people-to-people communication (one-to-one and one-to-many) by: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Is described in the same way through each of the communication touch points ... at the same time by: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Creating the “Excellence In Action” Destination

Objectives / Values ... Where We Are Headed	What Will Be Happening When We Have Arrived ... the Success Measures	How We Will Get There ... and When	How the Company Will Help Employees Arrive at the Destination	What the Company Expects From Employees
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## Communication Objectives

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All these objectives are important – but what is the order of importance.

List from most important to least important

- |          |           |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____  |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____  |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____  |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____  |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

The “Elevator Ride” Measure:

If the CEO steps into the elevator with you and asks, “How well is the implementation of the new program going?” – what things will flash through your mind as you formulate your answer?

- |         |         |
|---------|---------|
| • _____ | • _____ |
| • _____ | • _____ |
| • _____ | • _____ |

And which ones are most important to the CEO – and to you?

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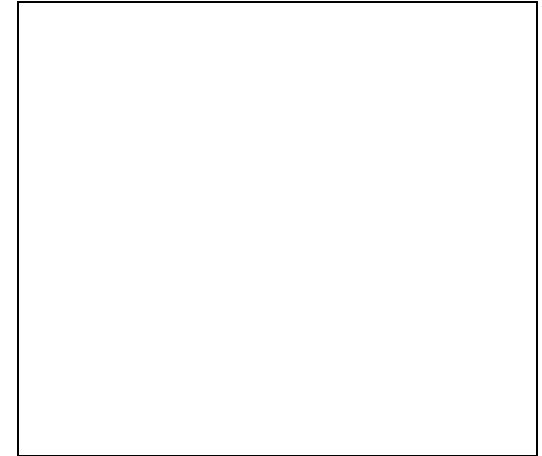
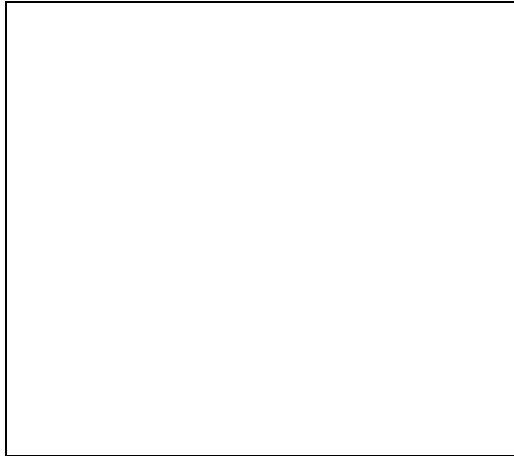
## Signs Along the Road to Success—A Group Exercise

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Road signs that will help the “travelers...”

### Arrive at the intended destination

**You are the ‘purchasing department of one’ for your health care ...are you using our medical plan to buy the services and treatments that work well and are cost-effective?**



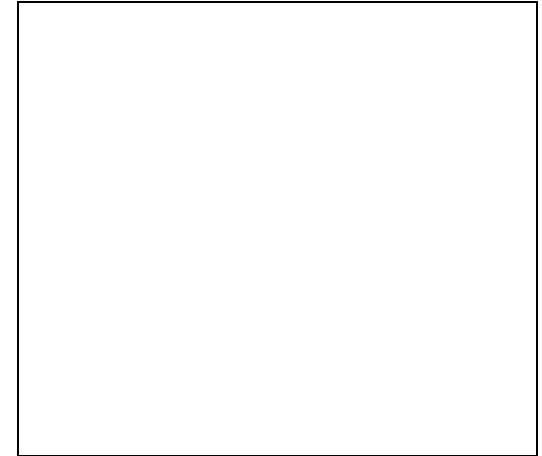
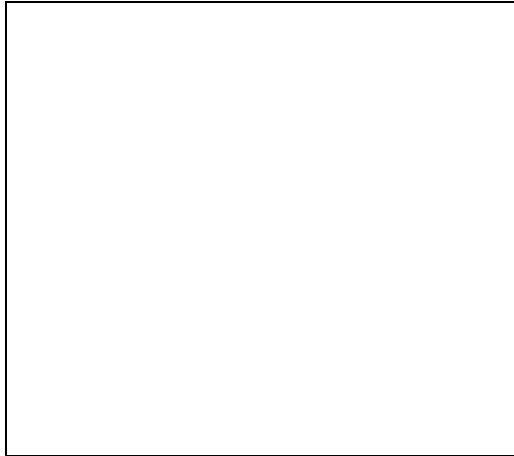
## Signs Along the Road to Success—A Group Exercise

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Road signs that will help the “travelers...”

**See the important “what’s in it for me” aspects of the plan**

**Our medical plan protects you financially from a catastrophic illness or injury ... up to \$5 million in the lifetime of each enrolled person.**



## Signs Along the Road to Success—A Group Exercise

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Road signs that will help the “travelers...”

**By reinforcing when they are on the “right road”**

**Over 60% of employees  
are using cost-effective,  
government-approved  
generic drugs ... are you?**

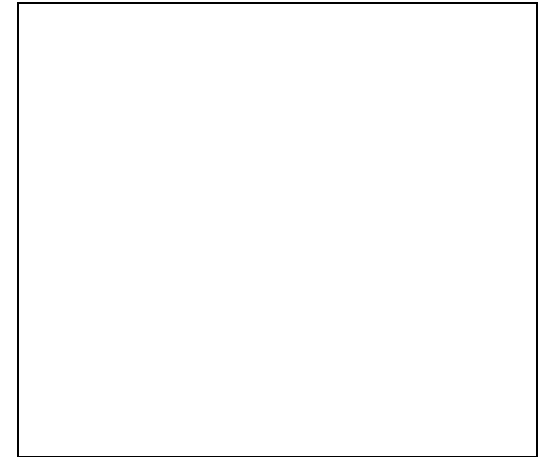
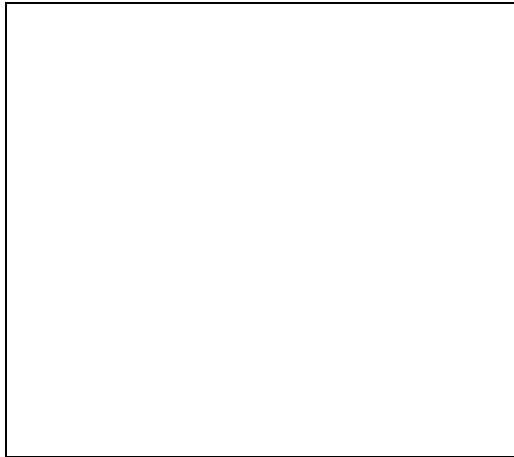
## Signs Along the Road to Success—A Group Exercise

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Road signs that will help the “travelers...”

### Clear up misunderstandings?

**You and the Company pay every dollar in medical plan claims ... it's not an insurance company's money.**



## Signs Along the Road to Success—A Group Exercise

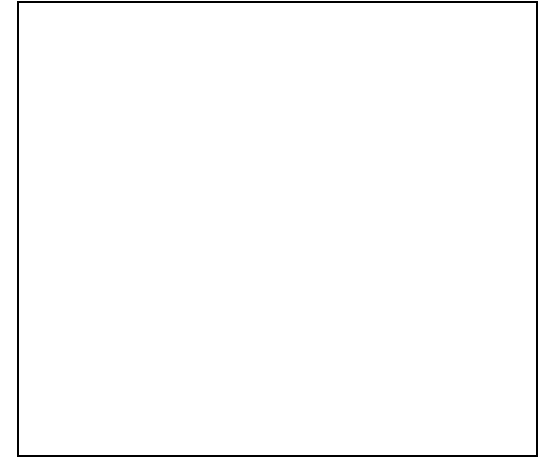
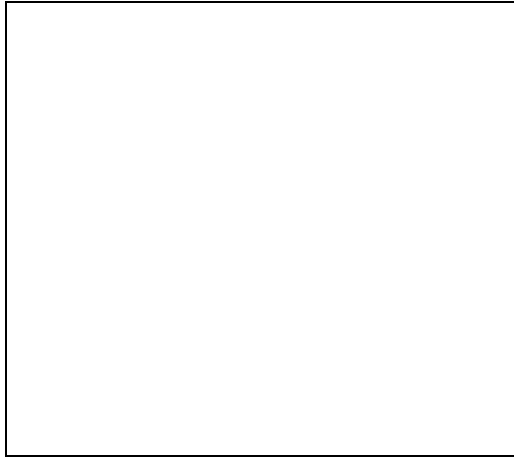
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Road signs that will help the “travelers...”

### **Avoid hazards and obstacles**

**Half of all health problems are related to poor behaviors – tobacco use, improper diet and sedentary lifestyle.**

(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)



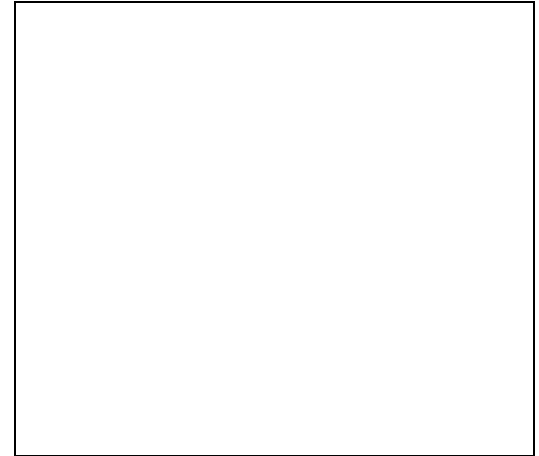
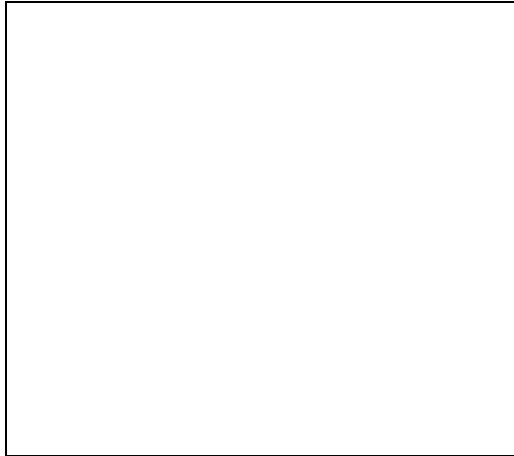
## Signs Along the Road to Success—A Group Exercise

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Road signs that will help the “travelers...”

**Recognize what behaviors are not appropriate and what can happen if these actions continue**

**Last year, our Medical Plan paid over \$X million for smoking-related medical care. ... any questions why smoking is not permitted at our worksites?**



## Potential Audiences/Stakeholders

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	Best at Delivering	Sequence of Communication
• Board of Directors	_____	_____
• CEO	_____	_____
• Other Senior Leaders	_____	_____
• Middle Managers	_____	_____
• Line Managers	_____	_____
• Team Leaders	_____	_____
• Individuals of influence	_____	_____
• Employees	_____	_____
• Human Resource Staff and Representatives	_____	_____
• Service Center	_____	_____
• Recruiters	_____	_____
• Labor Relations Staff	_____	_____
• Bargaining Units Management	_____	_____
• Bargaining Units Employees	_____	_____
• Media/Public Relations	_____	_____
• Retirees	_____	_____
• Terminating Employees	_____	_____
• New Employees	_____	_____
•	_____	_____
•	_____	_____

<b>Best at Delivering</b>
1. Corporate overview
2. Big picture concepts
3. HR/people values and support
4. General endorsement
5. General content overview
6. Specific details

<b>Sequence of Communication</b>
A. Preview announcement and testing
B. General announcement
C. Ongoing
D. Reinforcement

## What are the Effective Existing Communication Tools?

Use?

Person Responsible for the Medium

- Company internal home page
- Employee portal
- Bulletin boards
- E-mail
- Orientation Guide – paper and electronic
- Corporate-wide publications
- Benefits publications
- Paper memos
- Meetings
- Recruiting brochures
- Retiree communication materials
- Video – live and recordings
- Celebrations and gathering (sales events, picnics, holiday parties, etc.)
- Safety/Quality/Success meetings
- Benefits/Compensation Statements
- New hire orientation
- Benefits fair
- Company employee surveys
- “Ads” on the internal web pages or in company newsletters
- Manager meeting materials
  
- Recent retirees

- Company billboards/posters
- Union publications
- Investment club meetings
- Web-based educational sessions
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- What resources from your organization are available – or MUST be used – as part of this communication campaign?

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## How Should the Organization be Portrayed in Communication Materials?

- Aggressive?
- Caring?
- Changing?
- Competitive?
- Conservative?
- Cost-conscious?
- Creative?
- Decisive?
- Diversified?
- Dynamic?
- Efficient?
- Established?
- Friendly?
- Frugal?
- Fun?
- Growing?
- High-tech?
- Independent?
- Individualistic?
- Industrious?
- Influential?
- Informal?
- Innovative?
- Inventive?
- Large?
- Leading-edge?
- Lean?
- People-oriented?
- Personal?
- Polished?
- Practical?
- Progressive?
- Responsive?
- Secure?
- Serious?
- Stable?
- Successful?
- Thoughtful?
- Tolerant?
- Traditional?
- Unique?
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## What Tone Would You Like to Establish in Your Communication?

- Formal?
- Informal?
- Straightforward?
- Warm, friendly?
- Not complicated?
- Legalistic?
- Low key?
- Just-the-facts?
- Technically complete?
- Personal?
- Upbeat?
- Fun?
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## What "look" would you like your communication materials to have?

- Slick?
- First rate?
- Simple, plain?
- Nice, middle-of-the-road?
- Light, bright?
- Graphically sophisticated?
- High quality?
- Flashy?
- Low cost?
- Somber, serious?
- Soft?
- Colorful?
- Conservative?
- Simple, elegant?
- Glossy?
- Innovative?
- High-tech?
- Hard working?
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## Critical Challenges/Obstacles/Solutions

<u>Audience/Stakeholder</u>	<u>Critical Impediments to Receiving The Messages...</u>	<u>Critical Impediments to Attaining the Success Measures...</u>	<u>Best Approach to Overcoming the Impediments...</u>	<u>Responsibility...</u>
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## Managing and Meeting Expectations

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What information do employees expect to receive...

By when...

How can this expectation be met—or modified?

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## Overall Responsibilities

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<b>Individuals and Functions</b>	<b>Roles</b>	<b>Accountability for Championing Specific Key Messages</b>	<b>Accountability for Completing Specific Tasks</b>
Leaders			
Supporters			
Others			

# Procedures

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## Content

### Approvals

- who reviews  
drafts \_\_\_\_\_  
(are there any additional reviewers for:
  - print materials
  - web-based materials
  - visual/meeting materials
  - other)
  
- mockups \_\_\_\_\_  
paper printing procedures \_\_\_\_\_  
electronic publication procedures \_\_\_\_\_  
(web-based and e-mail distributed)
  
- who approves  
production-ready materials \_\_\_\_\_  
meeting schedules \_\_\_\_\_

### Brand/Style Guidelines

Approval for:

- brand
- graphics
- signage
- text style and word usage preference