

THE COMMUNICATION PLANNING PROCESS

DEFINE AND PRIORITIZE THE ISSUES

ANALYZE STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (SWOT)

IDENTIFY AUDIENCES

- Identify each targeted audience.
- Segment each targeted audience into *actionable* sub-sets.
- Profile each audience and audience segment. This process *must* be informed by primary or secondary research.
- Prioritize audiences and segments in terms of importance to achieving the objectives of the program.

SET GOALS

- Broad statements of a long-term intended result. May be measurable but not necessary.

SET OBJECTIVES

Each objective *must* have these four components:

- Targeted audience and/or segment;
- Desired *behavioral* or opinion-change result;
- Level of measurement to be attained; and
- Date by which objective is to be achieved.

DEVELOP STRATEGIES

A broad statement of an *approach* to accomplishing desired goals and objectives; a way of *thinking* about things to do, *not* doing them. This is the heavy lifting in program development. If a strategy statement includes a "to do," it's a *tactic*.

DEVELOP MESSAGES

Succinct statements of the messages to be delivered to each audience and/or segment. Often, campaign messages are tied to a broader organizational position statement.

DEVELOP TACTICS

Specific courses of action or parts of a strategy and how it can be implemented. The means, method or action for accomplishing an end. A tactic defines an activity or set of activities to be accomplished.

DETERMINE EVALUATION METHODS

Must be tied to the *measurable* objectives. Since organizations cannot always afford the means required to measure *outcomes* (changes in opinion or behavior) they frequently are satisfied with measuring *outputs* (quantities work products such as news releases, phone calls, brochures, meetings, events, etc.) Since communication programs always are designed to produce a behavioral or opinion change (either of which can be measured). News clippings generally are considered *outputs*, even though it can be argued that since they are not under the control of the practitioner, they might be considered *outcomes*. More rigorous programs consider news clips as an interim marker that may or may not result in the desired behavior or opinion change.

STRUCTURE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Develop the GANNT chart (time, cost and agent) for all tactics, including evaluation