

# ARE WE THERE YET?

**A HANDS-ON, MINDS-ON GUIDE  
TO DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**





## Table of Contents

Creating a Strategic Communications Plan: A Road Map to Impact .....	1
What Does Success Look Like? Setting Clear Goals and Objectives .....	2
What's Going On Out There? Conducting An Environmental Assessment.....	4
Who Are We Talking To? Learning More About Your Audience/Stakeholders .....	6
What Do We Say? Developing Sharp, Compelling Messages .....	8
Is That Realistic? Assessing Your Assets (and their Limitations).....	10
So, What Should We Do? Getting the Marketing Mix Right.....	12
How Did Things Go? Evaluating Your Efforts .....	14
Additional Resources.....	16



# Creating a Strategic Communications Plan: A Road Map to Impact

Social change activists, nonprofit and government leaders and all of us seeking to make change in the world increasingly see communications as a critical aspect of our work. Connecting with the audiences or stakeholders we wish to engage or influence is central to any change effort. But given limited resources, how do we best organize our outreach? How do we decide whether to pursue media or social media outreach, create a new website or blog, develop various print or electronic materials or take on any number of communications tactics?

A thoughtful, “hands-on, minds-on” approach to strategic communications can help. This work can dramatically amplify the impact of your best ideas, programs or services. A strategic communications plan:

- Creates a razor-sharp sense of what you want to accomplish with your communications efforts;
- Ensures that the investments you make in communications are focused on objectives you and your organization really care about; and
- Provides a mechanism for assessing the impact of your communications and a much clearer sense of the value of this kind of work.

In this guide, we’ve outlined seven steps to get you on the road to creating an effective and strategic communications plan. Follow it, and you’re on your way to making change.

Things to remember as you complete the guide:

- **Communications planning is a “team sport.”** You likely can’t go it alone. You will need help. And be sure to bounce your ideas off others working on the project at each step of the planning process.
- **Remember that implementing the plan may not be a linear process.** You may find yourself having to go back to an earlier step to address new learnings or changes in your situation. For example, you may begin your planning with senior management in your organization as a primary audience. But, a few months into your work, there is a major reorganization, and your audience needs to shift. You’ll want to revisit the various steps of your plan to ensure your efforts remain relevant.
- **Don’t rush, but don’t wait.** Be sure to set aside adequate time to consider, even reconsider, each step of the planning process.

Each of the seven steps is covered in this guide. There is also a “Hands-on, Minds-on” worksheet for each so that you can begin to draft your communications plan. The worksheet’s guiding questions will help you think through each step.

**Let’s get started!**

*Strategic communications is “the purposeful use of communications by an organization to achieve its mission.”*

– Kirk Hallahan,  
Professor, Colorado  
State University

# What Does Success Look Like? Setting Clear Goals and Objectives

The first step in developing a strategic communications plan is to concentrate on setting out a communications goal and one or two (certainly no more than three) specific objectives connected to this goal.

It is important to keep in mind that your communications goal and associated objectives are not the same as your program goals and objectives. For example, the program goal of AgingOut, a (fictional) grassroots organization, is to change state policies that prevent prisoners from receiving the care they need as they reach old age. The group's communications goal is to disseminate information to raise legislators' awareness to the needs of aging prisoners in states with the highest percentages of older inmates. Supporting that goal, one communications objective would be as follows: To educate at least 50 legislators serving on state judiciary committees in West Virginia, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Florida, and Texas in the next six months about the need for appropriate health care and social services for elderly prisoners in their states.

Compared to your goals, your communications objectives should be much more detailed. They should be **specific, measurable and attainable**, and must have an associated **time frame**.

**The following questions may help as you think about developing your objectives.**

- What does success look like? What do you hope your communications and outreach efforts will achieve?
- What will be different as a result of your communications?
- Who exactly will be affected by your communications efforts? (For example, the general public is too broad.)
- How will these efforts change their awareness, knowledge, attitudes or behaviors about the issue/program/service you are talking about?
- By when will this change take place?
- How will you know that you are successful?

## **REMEMBER!**

*Your communications objectives should be specific, measurable and attainable, and have an associated time frame.*

## **PLANNING IN ACTION**

### **Communications Goal**

To educate primary care physicians about advance directives.

### **Clear and Measurable Communications Objective**

By September 2016, educate 50% of all primary care physicians in Florida about advance directives in order to increase by 25% the number of seriously ill patients who complete an advance directive.



### **Communications Goal**

Promote evidence-based health promotion programs around the country.

### **Clear and Measurable Communications Objective**

By September, convince 12 key legislators on the House and Senate health committees to support pending legislation to expand prevention and Chronic Disease Self-Management programs for older adults.

## **HANDS-ON: STEP 1**

On the worksheet provided, write down your overall communications goal and your specific and measurable objectives.



# Setting Clear Goals and Objectives

WORKSHEET

What is the overall goal of your communications?

**Remember, this is likely different from the overall goal of your program.**

What are your primary, measurable communications objectives? (Whom do you need to reach, with what information, by when, with what outcome?) Make sure these are clear and action-oriented.

1.

2.

3.



- What do you hope to accomplish?
- What will be different as a result of your communications?
- Are your objectives measurable?
- Do you have a time frame?
- Have you considered resource constraints? Does this feel realistic or attainable?

**NOTE:** From this point forward, you should choose a single objective from the list above and proceed through the rest of the strategic planning worksheets with that objective in mind. When you're finished, return to this list and go through all of the exercises for each separate objective.

# What's Going On Out There?

## Conducting an Environmental Assessment

Communications never happens in a vacuum. Your efforts will compete with other information and ideas for the attention of your audience. Now that you have your goal and objectives defined, the next step in developing your communications plan is to assess the communications environment—both externally and internally.

### External

- What is happening in the broader world that may influence how people view your work? Are there popular trends or stories that are connected to your issue or program?
- How is your current work/role perceived by the broader community?
- What, if any, competition is out there? What other similar programs and services are vying for your audiences' attention?

### Internal

- What is going on in and around your organization that may affect your initiative?
- Are there other projects and events that are generating excitement? Could these be influenced to support your objective?
- Are there competing ideas or projects that may distract your audience from your priorities?

Getting a clear handle on these and related issues can help ground your planning in helpful ways.

### PLANNING IN ACTION

In 2009, when Congress was debating health care reform, the term “death panels” was used and promoted by Sarah Palin to criticize a provision in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) allowing reimbursing physicians to discuss end-of-life care, living wills and advance directives with Medicare recipients. The term got broad attention, and heated debate ensued. Ultimately, the provision was removed from the ACA and any initiative or conversation related to end-of-life care was effectively tabled. If you were leading a hospital-based project to increase the number of patients who had advance directives at that time, you would have needed to take a look at your communications efforts and re-work them to address misperceptions created as a result of this polarizing debate.

Internal factors in your organization are no less important to consider. Leadership changes, shifts in funding, employee turnover, internal policy—all of these can positively or negatively impact your communications efforts. Advocates in a South Carolina health system, for example, were able to promote and ultimately implement a patient-centered care transitions program by relating this work to the powerful vision in the organization's new strategic plan: To be remembered by each patient as providing the care and compassion we want for our families and ourselves.

### HANDS-ON: STEP 2

On the worksheet provided, write down all the relevant internal and external factors that might impact your communications efforts.



# Conducting An Environmental Assessment

WORKSHEET

What is going on in the environment that might have a **positive** impact on your communications efforts?

List the factors inside your organization that should **help** your work:

List the ideas or trends outside your organization that should **help** your work:

What is going on in the environment that might have a **negative** impact on your communications efforts?

List the factors inside your organization that may **hinder** your work:

List the stories, trends, competitive ideas or programs outside your organization that may **hinder** your work:



- What are the ideas in good standing?
- What is the hot news?
- What are people worried about/excited about?
- What is going on nationally/regionally that might affect your more-local communications effort?

# Who Are We Talking To?

## Learning More About Your Audience/Stakeholders

The next step in developing your communications plan is to identify, prioritize and get to know your target audience or audiences. This step is critical, yet it is often taken for granted. In order to achieve your objectives, to whom do you need to speak or communicate? Often, the answer is relatively clear from your objectives, but it is important to define the audience as precisely as possible.

With your list of audiences in hand, identify which are the most important. Remember, we all have limited resources for communications. You must prioritize. If you hope to achieve your objective(s), which one or two audiences are most critical? Which will have the most powerful impact on your ultimate goal? Be discriminating.

Once your list is pared down, try to understand each audience. What are their biases and backgrounds? What are their values? Who influences them? Where do they get their information? Importantly, how do they perceive you or your issue? Are there other related issues that they are interested in? Are they ready to hear what you have to say?

If you are seeking to influence a single stakeholder or a small group of stakeholders (e.g., decision makers), you may want to take a page from Alex Osterwalder's excellent *Value Proposition Design* and try to understand their:

- **Jobs**—What they do each day, what they are responsible for;
- **Pains**—What a bad outcome or concern looks like; and
- **Gains**—What success looks like to them.

This kind of stakeholder profile can help you understand what your program or service might mean to this person or group and allow you to shape your messaging and tactics accordingly.

If you do not know the answer to these kinds of audience or stakeholder analysis questions, chances are you may need to do some additional research before you finish your plan.

### PLANNING IN ACTION

"Organizational leadership in our health system" might be your audience. But are you referring to multiple layers of leadership or really just the C-Suite? Maybe you really are just talking about the managers of a particular hospital or clinic or perhaps simply a single decision maker.

"State Medicaid officials" might be an audience you identify. But do you really mean all Medicaid officials? Do you really mean their policy staff? Or perhaps you simply mean the Medicaid chief?

### REMEMBER!

*With limited resources, we have to prioritize...*

### HANDS-ON: STEP 3

On the worksheet provided, list your primary audience(s).



# Learning More About Your Audience/Stakeholders



Who are your primary audiences—the people with whom you are most interested in communicating? Think specifically: “hospitals” is likely too general. Focusing on a smaller segment of this audience, like “discharge planners at referral hospitals,” is better.

Below, list your primary audience(s), what they know about your issue/program/service, what they most care about, and how they get their information. If you don’t know the answers, how will you get them?

## Priority Audience for Objective #1:

- What do audience members know about your idea/program/service?
- What do they care about?
- How do they prefer to get their information?
- If you are trying to target a specific stakeholder or decision maker, what are his or her jobs, pains, and gains?

## Priority Audience for Objective #2:

- What do audience members know about your idea/program/service?
- What do they care about?
- How do they prefer to get their information?
- If you are trying to target a specific stakeholder or decision maker, what are his or her jobs, pains, and gains?



- What does your audience care about?
- Who influences audience members?
- Where do they get their news and information?
- Whom do they listen to?

- What do they think about your issue?
- What do they think about you?
- Are they in a position to act on your message?
- What are their jobs, pains, and gains?

# What Do We Say?

## Developing Sharp, Compelling Messages

Now that you've defined your objectives, assessed the environment and identified your audience(s), it's time to get down to creating your messaging. A message is a statement that describes what a program, service or initiative is, does or, most importantly, stands for. A message or set of messages can serve as a critical building block for all of the communications tactics you ultimately use (e.g., speeches, testimony, presentations, campaigns, work with the media and in social media).

Creating an effective message can be a challenge, particularly with complex ideas and projects, but it's important to take the time to get it right. If you don't boil your message down into a concise yet meaningful statement, someone else will. And chances are, they'll get it wrong.

Think about your objectives and audiences. What is it that you want to say to these audiences to convince them, to move them to action in the service of your objectives? What is the most important thing this audience needs to know?

Why should this be important to audience members? What should they do once they hear your message? Why is it urgent?

*"Insider language, which is often abstract and conceptual, rarely helps your audience visualize the subject matter. If they can't see it, it's a good bet they won't make the extra effort to understand it."*

– Andy Goodman

### Some things to keep in mind:

- Think like a beginner: Most people won't know nearly as much about your idea/issue/project as you do.
- Avoid jargon, language that is likely only understood by people in your office or in the field. Imagine you're at a family reunion talking about your project. Will your cousin understand what you're talking about?
- Simple is better: Don't pull ancillary details into the mix, or your main message will be lost.
- Speak from the head and the heart: People will remember you and your message if you are smart, thoughtful and genuine. Make sure you include the "so what?"—the why your audience should care.
- Strive to create "sticky" messages, that is, messages that resonate with the audience and stay with them. Concrete language, metaphors and other poetic devices like rhythm and rhyme can help people remember your message more easily.

In crafting your message, it is often helpful to develop an overarching idea or general message, appropriate for many or all audiences. Then, you can add more specific messages needed to influence particular groups.

Finally, if possible, test these messages with representatives of your target audience. This might mean formal interviews, surveys or focus groups, but you might also evaluate your messages in informal conversations or social/professional settings where you interact with people who represent your audience and who can give you some feedback on whether the language resonates.

### PLANNING IN ACTION

#### **Overarching Idea or Message**

The OPTIMISTIC program enhances the lives of long-stay nursing home residents by implementing evidence-based strategies that prevent unnecessary trips to the hospital and improve treatment of pain and other medical conditions.

#### **Specific Message to C-Suite or ACO Leaders**

The OPTIMISTIC program will dramatically improve the quality of care in nursing/long-term care facilities in your network, reduce per patient per month costs and help you avoid financial penalties with hospital readmissions.

### HANDS-ON: STEP 4

On the worksheet provided, begin drafting your messages. You should have an overarching message and specific messages for separate audiences.



# Developing Sharp, Compelling Messages

WORKSHEET

What is your overarching or general idea or message?

Now, what are the specific messages for the various audiences? For each audience consider:

- What is the ONE thing it audience members need to know?
- Why is it important to them?
- What should they do?
- Why is it important that they act now?

Specific message for audience #1:

Specific message for audience #2:



Review your message

- Can it be shorter, simpler?
- Can it feel more surprising? Is there an unusual data point you might use?
- Can you use an example, analogy or metaphor to make it more concrete?
- Is it credible?
- Can it connect with your audience's emotions, values, belief systems more effectively?
- Is it free of jargon?
- Is there a single, powerful story or example to tell that brings this to life?
- Who can you test your message(s) on?
- **BONUS:** Can you fit it into a 140-character Tweet?

# Is That Realistic?

## Assessing Your Assets (and their Limitations)

With your message(s) in hand, but before you start considering the tactics or vehicles you will use to achieve your objectives, it is important to do a reality check, an inventory of the resources you have (or may not have) at hand to accomplish your work.

### Relationships

What are the relationships that you have currently with your target audience? Are they direct or indirect? Are they positive relationships or somewhat contentious? Do you know the key decision makers or staff people involved? Do you know their influencers? Have you worked with these leaders or their influencers before?

Strong relationships and contacts are a critical communications asset. If you don't have these connections, it will likely require time and effort to establish them.

### Knowledge/Skills

The ability to conduct effective communications requires staff expertise that is not always immediately available. What skill sets are easily accessible? Do you have the capacity to outsource work like developing print materials or creating a website? Do you have the ability to engage your audience through social media or do community outreach?

### Budget/Time

Communications planning is about the art of the possible. What kind of budget do you have on hand to conduct your communications effort? Just as importantly, do you and/or your staff have the time necessary to conduct or even oversee your communications activities?

### PLANNING IN ACTION

The (fictional) Family Care Foundation is launching a campaign aimed at raising federal policymakers' awareness that family members caring for patients with dementia need services. It has clarified its objectives, conducted a thorough assessment of its audience and the environment, and created messages for the campaign. Through this process, it has determined that Twitter and the foundation's blog will need to be significant elements of its campaign. However, there is only one staff member who is comfortable using Twitter, and she does not have the time to tweet on behalf of the foundation every day. Several people on staff have written blog posts in the past, but they are too swamped to do this on a regular basis. In order to conduct these activities effectively, the foundation will have to look for alternatives. For example, it might provide Twitter training to all staff and create a schedule of tweets so that no one person is responsible for all tweeting. It could also hire a consultant to help draft some of the blog posts, thus lightening the load on the staff members.

*"You will also need realistic insight on the current state of your organization, a smart assessment of your team's talents and the roadblocks that could slow you down."*

*– MakingChange365*

<http://mc365.jhartfound.org>

### HANDS-ON: STEP 5

On the worksheet provided, write down all the assets that you can bring to bear on your communications efforts. Don't forget to consider the limitations inherent in some of those, too.



# Assessing Your Assets

WORKSHEET

Who/what are your communications assets in terms of:

- Staff expertise
- Staff time
- External resources
- Budget
- Existing relationships
- Needed relationships

What will you do to address any limitations?



- Consider the relationships critical to your communications efforts. Are they positive? Negative? Strong? Weak?
- What partnerships might you have to develop in order to succeed?
- Is your budget/time allocation realistic?
- Be sure to note the assets you have on hand as well as the assets you need to build.

# So, What Should We Do? Getting the Marketing Mix Right

The next step in developing your communications plan is to think about how to get your message to your audience(s). There are generally a wide range of tactics or “vehicles” to choose from. Tactics can include one-on-one conversations, small group presentations, community meetings and events, infographics, speeches, academic articles, emails, newsletters, websites, op-eds and letters to the editor in the local media or in other publications, and more general media outreach as well. They can include new media, everything from a blog to a Facebook page to a Twitter campaign or a YouTube channel. Other activities that physically or even virtually convene your target audiences can serve as powerful tactics as well.

You can no doubt identify a plethora of useful ways to reach your audience. Getting the right mix of marketing or outreach approaches, however, is more challenging. Which vehicles are most clearly connected to or most influential with your target audiences? Which are most leveraged across audiences? Check the previous page. Do you have the assets on hand, the needed capacity to implement the tactic or group of tactics that might be useful?

*“Providing messages in multiple formats increases accessibility, reinforces messages and gives people different ways to interact with your content based on their level of engagement and access to media.”*

– The Health Communicator’s Social Media Toolkit, CDC

## PLANNING IN ACTION

The target audience for a pregnancy prevention project in downtown Detroit is low-income teenagers. The project’s director recently attended a workshop on using Facebook to promote social change and is pushing hard to create a Facebook page and an associated campaign for this project. After all, the ALS “Bucket Challenge” was a huge success. But is Facebook the best way to reach the project’s target audience? Are there other social media or even more traditional tactics to consider, given what is known or learned about these young people and their communications habits?



Shelia, a staff member in a local Veterans Health Administration (VHA) office, wanted to engage 15-25 local community health organizations and create a new regional collaborative focused on diabetes prevention. But what was the best way to reach these groups? Email certainly seemed like the easiest and most cost-effective approach to start, but several of the first set of emails went unanswered. Some further audience research found that these community health organizations paid close attention to two state newsletters, attended an annual state public health meeting, and joined in part of a monthly public health call focused on physical activity and nutrition.

With her boss, a senior VHA administrator, as a liaison, Shelia connected with the state public health department and infused information about the collaborative into these and related communications channels. After two months of this awareness building, Shelia’s next set of emails elicited 12 volunteers for the collaborative, including two who helped to reach out to additional colleagues to get the group started.

## HANDS-ON: STEP 6

On the worksheet provided, rate the tactics that you think will work best for each of your audiences.



# Getting the Marketing Mix Right

WORKSHEET

Consider the list below and rate each of the tactics in terms of relevance/usefulness for your project's priority audience(s) and communications objective(s). Add others to the list, as needed.

Tactic	Influence on Audience (Strong, Moderate, Weak)	Asset on/at Hand (Yes, No)	Cost (No, Low, High)
Face-to-face meetings			
Telephone calls			
Emails, e-newsletter			
Website/blog			
Report or white paper			
Symposium or conference			
Presentations, webinars, or trainings			
Grassroots mobilization			
Media event/outreach			
Op-eds, letters-to-the-editor, blog posts			
Social media tactics including a Facebook campaign, YouTube channel, Twitter engagement, LinkedIn outreach, and/or use of infographics and online video			
Internet or traditional advertising			
Promotional events (e.g., galas or community events)			
Printed materials and other promotional items			
Trainings, toolkits, educational activities			
Other tactics:			

**Now, select the 3-5 tactics that are MOST appropriate/feasible for you to implement in the next three to six months and give details about them.** For example: Face-to-face meetings—Hold meetings with leaders of 10 hospital COOs; Twitter—meet with staff to plan for 2x/week Twitter posts and daily monitoring; Presentations—visit the Greater Care, Hands On, and Jefferson assisted living facilities and present overview of our services to nurse managers.



- Which tactics are strongest or most influential for each audience?
- Which can be used to reach multiple audiences?
- Do you have the assets on hand and the capacity to utilize the tactics you identify?

# How Did Things Go? Evaluating Your Efforts

You've defined your objectives, assessed the environment, prioritized your audiences, created a strong message, tallied your assets, and selected your tactics. Now, it's time to think about how you will evaluate the success of your communications plan.

Too often in communications, people do not assign sufficient rigor to evaluating what is working and how. Just as if you were testing some kind of program intervention or even examining a new product launch, ask yourself, how will I know my communications efforts worked? Setting measurable objectives is an important first step.

Also important is matching the resources required to measure your progress with the scope and size of the project at hand. Randomized, double-blind studies to measure changes in attitudes or behaviors are probably not called for. Exhaustive qualitative evaluation may be overkill as well. However, strategic, systematic, and low-impact data collection (e.g., through phone conversations, evaluations at meetings and brief email surveys) can provide both a baseline understanding of an audience's awareness or understanding of your work, as well as any changes in that understanding over time.

Evaluation of your progress should be an ongoing and iterative process, not just a one-time, final step of your project. Taking stock of how things are going along the way, and retooling when necessary, are smart and often necessary steps.

For example, let's say your initial audience analysis revealed that the best way to engage your target group, the executive directors of 12 community-based organizations, was by email and social media, particularly LinkedIn. After two months of this kind of outreach, however, you find through an interim assessment that you have only been able to connect with just two leaders of these groups. You can then gather your communications team to identify what you've learned and to brainstorm alternatives (e.g., direct phone calls, a different message, a different messenger, an in-person meeting) and find better ways to achieve your objective.

## **REMEMBER!**

*Evaluation of your progress should be an ongoing and iterative process, not just a one-time, final step of your project.*

## **PLANNING IN ACTION**

The John A. Hartford Foundation in New York City has a variety of communications goals, one of which is to enhance its positioning as a thought leader in national conversations about the care of older adults. One objective toward achieving this goal is to increase traffic to its Health AGEnda blog by 25 percent each year. Progress is measured by tracking page views through Google Analytics.

Additionally, the Foundation gauges the number of links, comments and other responses to the blog. It also evaluates the qualitative value of the posted responses and tracks anecdotal reports of articles, speaking invitations and other in-person interactions generated by interest in specific blog posts among practice change leaders and policy makers.

By evaluating all of these metrics regularly, the Foundation is also able to see which posts generate more engagement and to adapt the blog's content to more closely meet the interests of its readers.

## **HANDS-ON: STEP 7**

On the worksheet provided, answer the questions that will help you develop an evaluation plan for your communications effort.



# Evaluating Your Work

WORKSHEET

Evaluation budget:

Staffing (Who will gather data, conduct the evaluation?):

Key success metrics:

What kind of interim assessments will you conduct?

Additional tools and assets needed:



- Are the resources required to measure progress commensurate with your evaluation plan?
- Do you have a time frame established for your evaluation?
- What interim metrics will you use to assess your progress?

# Additional Resources

## Books & Newsletters

- Goodman, Andy. "Free Range Thinking." Web. 11 April 2016.  
Free Range Thinking is a free, monthly online journal on public interest communications from The Goodman Center.  
[www.thegoodmancenter.com/resources/newsletters/](http://www.thegoodmancenter.com/resources/newsletters/)
- Heath, C. and Dan Heath. Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die. New York: Random House, 2007. Print.

## Online Resources

- Fenton Communications. "Clear, Simple, Concise Messages." NOW HEAR THIS: The 9 Laws of Successful Advocacy Communications. 2009. Web. 11 April 2016.  
This chapter includes excellent examples of effective messaging.  
[www.nae.edu/File.aspx?id=21570](http://www.nae.edu/File.aspx?id=21570)
- FrameWorks Institute. "Five Minute Refresher Course in Framing." 2001. Web. 11 April 2016.  
The Frameworks Institute offers excellent resources on the concepts of framing and messaging, including a FAQ section on their website, an interactive online game, toolkits, and e-courses including the Five Minute Refresher Course in Framing.  
[www.frameworksinstitute.org](http://www.frameworksinstitute.org)
- "Gateway to Health Communication & Social Marketing Practice." CDC National Center for Health Marketing. Web. 11 April 2016.  
This is a very helpful resource to help build health communication or social marketing campaigns and programs. It includes tips for analyzing and segmenting an audience, choosing appropriate channels and tools, evaluating the success of your messages and campaigns, and much more.  
[www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/](http://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/)
- Harvard Family Research Project. "The ABCs of Strategic Communications." The Evaluation Exchange. 2001. Web. 11 April 2016.  
This blog post, based on The Jossey-Bass Guide to Strategic Communications for Nonprofits, written by Kathy Bonk, Henry Griggs and Emily Tynes in 1999, provides the basic steps in creating a strategic communications plan.  
<http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation/the-evaluation-exchange/issue-archive/strategic-communications/the-abcs-of-strategic-communications>
- The John A. Hartford Foundation. "Drive Change." MakingChange365. Web. 11 April 2016.  
This online resource from The John A. Hartford Foundation Change AGENTS initiative provides valuable information about the steps needed to implement change, including communications, in the health care arena, particularly around the care of older adults.  
[mc365.jhartfound.org/drive-organizational-change/](http://mc365.jhartfound.org/drive-organizational-change/)
- Schwartz, Nancy. "Nonprofit Marketing Plan." Web. 11 April 2016.  
This is a complete guide to creating a baseline marketing plan for your organization in five hours.  
[gettingattention.org/nonprofit-marketing/nonprofit-marketing-plan-template.html](http://gettingattention.org/nonprofit-marketing/nonprofit-marketing-plan-template.html)
- "Smart Chart 3.0." Spitfire Strategies. Web. 11 April 2016.  
"Smart Chart 3.0: An Even More Effective Tool to Help Nonprofits Make Smart Communications Choices" builds off its original Smart Chart. The guide includes lots of hands-on planning exercises and helpful tips and tools.  
[www.spitfirestrategies.com/tools/#tab1](http://www.spitfirestrategies.com/tools/#tab1)
- "Template for a Strategic Communications Plan." W.K. Kellogg Foundation. 2006. Web. 11 April 2016.  
This template walks the reader through the steps of creating a strategic communications plan.  
[www.wkcf.org/resource-directory/resource/2006/01/template-for-strategic-communications-plan](http://www.wkcf.org/resource-directory/resource/2006/01/template-for-strategic-communications-plan)





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