



**DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
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Communications Assessment

The first step in creating a communications plan is assessing your organization's current situation and establishing some preliminary objectives. By answering the following questions, you can create the necessary focus for a communications plan.

You will likely need to develop specific plans for each audience. For example, your communications plan to reach new members may be different than your plan to reach the media.*

Establishing Goals

What is your current situation? _____

What is your current communication style? _____

Where do you want to be? What are you trying to accomplish by undertaking this plan?

Identify short-term and long-term actions to reach those goals. _____

Defining Audience

Specifically list who you want to hear your message. _____

How does is your audience seek and receive information? _____

*For media communication plans, identify specific people in the local media who may be able to help deliver your message, i.e., identify the editor or reporter who focuses on your issue and identify how best to reach them.

Identifying Messages

What is the purpose for reaching your audience? _____

What will resonate with your audience? _____

Creating Plans

What are you prepared to invest to achieve your desired result? _____

Is anyone else communicating the same information, or have they in the past? Can you learn from them or partner with them to reach your audience?

Specifying Timeline

Set a date or month for accomplishing your communication plan objectives (i.e., establish communications committee by Jan. 5, determine media sources by Feb. 1, create event flier by March 15, etc.).

Identify who will be responsible for accomplishing these objectives.

Evaluate

Regroup every so often to review your progress. This is a time to evaluate your plan's effectiveness and make adjustments.

Sources: <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/after-school/collecting-and-using-data/Documents/Workbook-A-Communication.pdf>. 7-1-2009

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