**Communications Plan—Template**

## Background

**In this section, you write a few paragraphs about the event or the issue being addressed by this communications plan:**

* How did this event/initiative come about?
* Are there issues to be addressed?
* What do you hope to achieve with this event or by managing the issue?
* What do you hope to achieve with this communication plan (briefly)?

## Objectives of the Communications Plan

**What are your objectives of this plan? Some examples could be:**

# To build broad understanding of and support for the event/initiative

# To inform internal staff and external stakeholders about the event/initiative

* To enhance the reputation of the University
* To manage the risks of negative response to the event/initiative
* To manage expectations of key stakeholders

## Strategies

# **The communications plan will achieve its objectives by employing certain strategies. Some examples could be:**

* Campaign to Inform and educate internal stakeholders
* Community relations campaign to reach external community stakeholders
* Public relations campaign to raise public awareness of UTM and the event/initiative
* Media relations strategy – proactive and reactive

## Tactics

**What are some of the tactics and tools you need to for your strategies? Some tactics include:**

* Web site content (or even developing an initiative-specific Web site)
* Promotional materials for external distribution
* PowerPoint presentations (tailored to various audiences)
* Customized backgrounder and/or Question and Answer document
* Briefings for selected audiences (i.e., reporters, internal and external stakeholders)
* E-Mail communication to internal audience
* Write-up in Internal and external publications
* Organizing a speaking tour
* Development of graphics packages
* Development of media distribution list

## Audiences

**Who do you want to reach with this communications plan? Some examples include:**

* Faculty and staff
* Students
* Student associations
* Media
* Donors
* Broader public
* Academics (beyond the university)
* Government officials

## Vl. Key Messages

**What do you want to say to your audiences? Usually, you have 2-3 main messages and then some secondary ones based on audience needs.**

* What is the most important message about your event/initiative (e.g., This event at the University of Toronto marks the first time it has been held in North America)
* What is the second-most important message? (e.g. This event recognizes the leadership role that the University of Toronto plays in international academic circles)
* What are your secondary messages? (e.g., Staff and faculty will benefit greatly from participation in this event)

## VII. Tactics/Rollout

**This chart is essentially a road map for your tactics and messages. It is a useful tool to keep the plan on track.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Audience** | **Tactics/Vehicles** | **Lead** | **Status** |
| **Chart in chronological order** | **fill in pertinent audience(s)** | **What is the tactic you are employing at this point in time?** | **Who is responsible for making this happen?** | **What is the status of this tactic?** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**VIII. Evaluation:**

**This section helps you assess your efforts and set benchmarks for future events. It could include:**

* Bi-weekly review and update of the plan to assess the effectiveness of tactics and messages;
* Periodic check of timelines; ensuring program is on schedule
* Daily media monitoring to identify potential issues and to assess what we need to do to increase/decrease media coverage

*(Updated November 2020)*