1. Purpose of a Communications Strategy

A communications strategy exists to help an organization:

- Communicate effectively
- Achieve core organizational objectives
- Engage stakeholders
- Demonstrate success
- Ensure clarity about services and mission
- Influence behavior and perceptions when needed

It integrates:

- Press/PR plans
- Web strategies
- Marketing plans

These components must align with the broader communications strategy to ensure consistency.

2. Writing a Communications Strategy

Statement of Purpose

This section explains:

- Why the strategy exists
- What it aims to achieve
- How it supports organizational objectives
- Its role as a guiding reference

3. Understanding the Current Situation

The strategy should describe:

- Organizational functions
- Areas of operation
- Past communication successes and failures
- Strengths and weaknesses over recent years

Analytical Tools Used

4. PEST Analysis

PEST evaluates external influences:

Political Factors

- Government changes
- Regulations
- Policy agendas
- Health and safety compliance
- Media implications

Economic Factors

- Interest rates
- Inflation
- Market sustainability
- Cost of capital
- Marketing strategy implications

Social Factors

- Internet usage
- Consumer behavior
- Demographic trends
- Entertainment preferences

Technological Factors

- Software advancements
- Production efficiency
- Marketing effectiveness
- Innovation capacity

Expanded Models

- PESTEL (adds Environmental, Legal)
- STEEPLE (adds Ethical)
- MOST, SCRS, SWOT

Group Analysis Methods

- Brainstorming exercises
- Post-it data collection
- Flip chart sorting
- Three questions framework:
  - What?
  - So what?
  - Now what?

Scoring the Analysis

- Assign weighted scores
- Compare markets
- Support investment decisions
- Identify risks and opportunities

5. SWOT Analysis

Evaluates:

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats

Strengths

- Core competencies
- Market advantages
- Financial resources
- Customer relationships

Weaknesses

- Poor performance
- Outdated technology
- Weak branding
- Bureaucracy
- Customer dissatisfaction

Opportunities

- New markets
- Policy changes
- Technological advancements
- Economic conditions

Threats

- Competition
- Rising costs
- Workforce issues
- Regulatory changes

SWOT Matrix

Combines factors to guide:

- Action plans
- Risk management
- Strategic responses

SOAR Alternative

Focuses on:

- Strengths
- Opportunities
- Aspirations
- Results

Encourages growth-oriented planning.

6. Competitor Analysis

Organizations assess:

- Websites
- Media presence
- Branding strength
- Spokespeople effectiveness

Scoring systems help objectivity.

7. Stakeholder Surveys

Purpose:

- Measure perceptions
- Gather feedback
- Improve messaging

Considerations

- Audience selection
- Sample size
- Survey medium
- Question types
- Anonymity
- Brand monitoring

8. Organizational & Communications Objectives

Communications must align with:

- Vision
- Core mission
- Strategic plans

Objectives must be:

- Measurable
- Realistic
- Time-bound

Examples include:

- Service quality
- Community engagement
- Media presence

9. Stakeholder Identification

Includes:

- Internal audiences
- External audiences
- Potential supporters

Stakeholder Mapping

Criteria:

- Interest
- Influence

Categories:

- Key players
- Keep satisfied
- Keep informed
- Monitor

10. Messaging Strategy

Messages must:

- Fit the audience
- Reflect values
- Maintain consistency
- Align with goals

Tone varies by audience but core messaging remains stable.

11. Communication Methods

Channels include:

- E-bulletins
- Events
- Media releases
- Workshops
- Websites
- Direct marketing

Selection depends on:
- Audience
- Resources
- Objectives

12. Work Plan Development

Includes:
- Activities
- Budgets
- Resources
- Timelines
- Milestones

Helps track progress and accountability.

13. Evaluating Success

Measures:
- Audience engagement
- Donations
- Website traffic
- Media coverage
- Policy impact
- Public perception shifts

Milestones help assess progress.

14. Communication Plan Fundamentals

The 3 M's:
- Money
- Membership
- Manpower

15. Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC)

Functions:
- Plan development
- Trend identification
- Message consistency
- Content production
- Research analysis

Benefits:
- Efficiency
- Knowledge sharing
- Work distribution

16. Marketing Planning Structure

Includes:
- Executive summary
- Situation analysis
- Strategy
- Objectives
- Implementation
- Evaluation

17. Tactics and Implementation

Tactics must consider:
- Budget
- Timeline
- Resources
- Feasibility

Examples:
- Media releases
- Advertising
- Direct mail
- Billboards

18. Evaluation and Improvement

Methods:
- Online surveys
- Stakeholder feedback
- Performance tracking

Organizations should:
- Celebrate success
- Share results
- Revise plans
- Encourage innovation

19. Final Thought

A communications plan provides structure, but success depends on emotional connection and human engagement.

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PART 3 — COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES

Comprehensive Study Summary

I. Effective Teamwork Techniques

I.1 Communication in Team Environments

Different communication techniques produce different results in teamwork. Effective communication requires knowing:
- Which technique to use
- When to use it

Verbal Communication

Verbal communication allows team members to:
- Express emotion
- Show intent
- Use vocal inflection and word choice

Open-ended questions:
- Encourage opinions
- Expand discussions
- Improve effectiveness

Email Communication

Email should:
- Provide basic information
- Prompt verbal follow-up for details

Best practices:
- Proper grammar and spelling
- Clear messaging

Best uses:
- Meeting minutes
- Scheduling
- Data sharing

Weakness:
- Less effective for group discussions

Social Media / Digital Workplace Platforms

Used internally within organizations:
- Encourage collaboration
- Ensure privacy
- Centralize tasks, documents, and conversations

Features include:
- Project management tools
- Cloud storage
- Knowledge repositories
- Private/public communication channels

Benefits:
- Reduces app overload
- Encourages contextual collaboration

Body Language

Indicators include:
- Seating distance = group cohesion
- Slouched posture = disinterest
- Physical touch = confidence/intimacy

Observing body language helps:
- Assess team comfort
- Improve collaboration

I.2 Communication & Teamwork

Benefits of teamwork:
- Friendship
- Shared accomplishment
- Responsibility distribution

Challenges:
- Tension
- Anxiety due to poor communication

Effective communication reduces:
- Stress
- Misunderstandings
- Conflict

Characteristics of Effective Communication

Team members must:
- Keep open minds
- Practice active listening
- Understand project goals

Active listening includes:
- Note taking
- Asking questions
- Repeating for clarity

Effects

Good communication:
- Builds trust
- Encourages harmony
- Creates productive work culture

Training

Methods:
- Seminars
- Role-playing
- Communication exercises

Communication Platforms

Include:
- Email
- Letters
- Phone
- Face-to-face

Each has etiquette and skills.

Warning Signs of Poor Communication
- Missed deadlines
- Slow problem solving
- Team disagreements
- Lack of focus

I.3 Qualities of an Effective Team Leader
1. Communication
2. Organization
3. Confidence
4. Respect
5. Fairness
6. Integrity
7. Influence
8. Delegation
9. Facilitation
10. Negotiation

Leaders:
- Inspire trust
- Guide team productivity
- Resolve conflicts

I.4 Main Leadership Traits
Effective leaders are:
- Personable
- Visionary
- Motivational

They:
- Listen
- Empathize
- Inspire goals
- Reward success

Leaders grow through:
- Mistakes
- Reflection
- Adaptation

II. Questioning Techniques
Importance of Asking the Right Questions
Better questions lead to:
- Better information
- Stronger relationships
- Better management
- Enhanced learning

Open vs Closed Questions
Closed:
- Short answers
- Used for confirmation

Open:
- Encourage discussion
- Explore opinions
- Gather detail

Funnel Questions
Start broad → move to specifics
Useful for:
- Clarification
- Confidence building

Probing Questions
Used for:
- Clarification
- Evidence
- Deeper understanding

Includes the 5 Whys Method:
- Identify root causes
- Focus on facts
- Best for simple/moderate problems

Leading Questions
Guide respondents toward agreement.
Often:
- Closed
- Framed to encourage "yes"

Rhetorical Questions
Used for:
- Engagement
- Persuasion
- Emphasis

Applications of Questioning
Helps in:
- Learning
- Relationship building
- Conflict resolution
- Persuasion
- Clarification

III. 15 Communication Techniques
1. Silence
2. Asking questions
3. Listening
4. Feedback
5. Observation
6. Reading
7. Stress management
8. Empathy
9. Enthusiasm
10. Language choices
11. Humor
12. Smiling
13. Honesty
14. Speaking equally
15. Continuous learning

IV. Steps to Better Communication
1. Stop and listen
2. Reflect/rephrase
3. Be open and honest
4. Observe nonverbal cues
5. Stay focused
6. Manage emotions
7. Be willing to compromise
8. Use humor
9. Communicate beyond words

V. Venture Capitalist Expectations
Investors look for:
1. Quality team
2. Strong idea
3. Market demand

Innovation Strategies
- Diverse interests
- Observational thinking
- Customer needs
- Extension of existing ideas

Examples:
- Social networking
- Nintendo Wii innovation

Entrepreneurial Traits
- Risk tolerance
- Open-mindedness
- Collaboration
- Communication skills

Business Success Factors
- Marketing
- Innovation
- Customer understanding

Peter Drucker's key ideas:
- Business purpose is creating customers
- Marketing and innovation are essential

Entrepreneurship Advice
DO:
- Gain diverse experience
- Learn finance
- Manage teams

DON'T:
- Stay stagnant
- Avoid expressing opinions
- Follow failing strategies rigidly