Project BSC

Communication Planning Guide

A guide for developing Project BSC (Better Serving Customers) Communication Plans

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The 10-Step Communication Planning Process

Three Kinds of Plans Are Needed

Project BSC teams need to develop or contribute to the development of three kinds of communication plans, as follows:

- ***Stakeholder Plans: Internal Target Audiences***
  Plans for those team members, team leads and managers who will be directly or indirectly affected by the anticipated changes.

- ***Stakeholder Plans: Senior Managers/Content Stewards***
  Plans for those senior managers who have the power to fundamentally contribute to or alter the design or implementation of the changes being developed by the team.

- ***External Target Audience Plans***
  Plans for customers, providers and other external audiences, who are ultimate targets and beneficiaries of the changes being made.

The focus of this planning guide is on developing internal communication plans. Keep in mind, however, that the processes for developing both internal and external communication plans are similar.

Steps in the Planning Process

The steps listed below are the major steps that need to be taken to develop Project BSC internal communication plans. However, as noted above, you will be adopting similar steps when it comes time to develop your external communication plans.

1. Assess the business situation
2. Identify audience segments
3. Assess audience needs
4. Develop key messages
5. Develop goals, metrics and measurement process
6. Develop communication strategies
7. Develop communication channels
8. Develop an events calendar
9. Develop communication materials
10. Implement and follow up

Integrated Plans Are Essential

The plans you will be developing for your team need to be integrated with the plans being developed by all other Project BSC teams. For instance:

- Messages should have a common theme across all Project BSC teams.
- Unique messages by each team should not be in conflict with unique messages of other teams.
- The timing of messages in various media should be coordinated across teams, so audiences don't become either overwhelmed by too many messages or under-whelmed by too few messages at any point in time.

Communicating Change to Internal Audiences

Overall, our communication goal is to engage team members and win their commitment to the changes being designed as part of Project BSC. To do this, we must explain what's in it for them and what they need to do.

The path to communicating change and earning employee commitment has four phases. The phases build on and borrow from each other and get repeated over time as new information about the change unfolds. The phases are:

1. Informing and creating ***awareness*** of the changes
2. Clarifying and building ***understanding*** of the changes
3. Engaging and developing ***acceptance*** of the changes
4. Involving and cultivating ***commitment*** to the changes

Creating Awareness

Building ***awareness*** of the changes taking place at our company is the first step in the communication process. During this period of transition, team members want answers to questions such as:

1. Why are we changing?
2. What are we changing to?
3. Why is the change better for me?
4. What does the company expect of me?
5. What can I expect from the company?
6. How will I know how I'm doing?

Building Understanding

In the ***understanding*** phase, you'll need to help employees develop a deeper appreciation of the *what*, *why* and *how* of the changes. You'll help them understand the day-to-day implications of these changes on their work and how they need to approach their work differently. This phase is more interactive than the awareness-building phase. People will have more questions for you. You'll want to be sure to plan for deeper, more intense dialog with employees in smaller groups or one-on-one. Training is typically part of the understanding phase.

Developing Acceptance

In the ***acceptance*** phase, action becomes important. You'll be asking employees to get actively involved in implementing the changes. In the acceptance phase, team members will put what they've learned so far to work. Your role as a sensitive communicator and an active listener is essential at this point. People will want to feel successful as they learn new processes. You'll want to make it easy for people to feel good about themselves now.

Cultivating Commitment

Commitment comes a lot easier when you've done your job well in the three previous phases of communicating change. In addition, a key communication requirement at this phase is feedback on performance. Employees need to know where they stand — if they're on the right track or if they're headed in the wrong direction. The most important form of communication during this phase is positive reinforcement, and lots of it. You need to tell employees what they're doing right.

The Internal Change Management Process

You'll find it helpful to be familiar with the "On Your Mark, Get Set, Go" change management process before starting on your communication planning process. Detailed information about the process is available from the change management consultant assigned to your team.

The following table summarizes the way the four-phase process for communicating change dovetails with the change management process.

On Your Mark	Get Set	Go
Create ***awareness*** of the facts:	Develop an in-depth ***understanding*** of the issues:	Build ***acceptance*** and ***commitment*:**
• Background and context • The reason the changes are occurring • The vision of the future — why the future will be better than today • The general nature of the changes to come • The extent of the changes • The likely impact on people	• Precisely what is going to change • What people will be doing differently • An opportunity to engage in dialog about the changes • An opportunity to provide input and feedback	• Feedback on progress • Continuous involvement • Rewards and recognition

The External Change Management Process

At some point in the future, you'll also be attempting to change the levels of awareness, understanding, acceptance and commitment to Blue Shield plans among external target audiences. In the external arena, however, the concept of the "change management" process is replaced by the concept of the "purchase decision" process.

Be aware that the labels used to describe the purchase process are similar to, yet slightly different from, the labels used by internal communication professionals to describe the change process. Essentially, the terms used by external communication professionals are (generically) as follows:

1. Build ***awareness*** of the service
2. Develop a ***preference*** for the service
3. Cause a ***purchase*** decision to be made
4. Build brand ***loyalty***

The language is different between the worlds of internal and external communication, but what goes on conceptually in the change management and purchase decision phases is similar.

The Phases Which Need to be Addressed

Ultimately, your internal communication plans should address all three phases of the change process: On Your Mark, Get Set and Go.

The ultimate objective of your plans will be to build employee commitment. However, you'll need to approach the communication process as an evolving process, where the results of one phase form the platform for the next, and so on. You will need to develop objectives and strategies for each phase of the process and update those objectives and strategies as the change process unfolds.

Why? Because if you're doing what you're supposed to be doing, people's attitudes and preferences will change as you move through the phases. And as attitudes and preferences change, your plans need to change accordingly. Essentially, your objectives and strategies at each subsequent phase of the process must reflect the learning you gleaned from what you accomplished in the previous phase.

Your Entry Point

Start your planning process by determining the phase of the change process for which you'll be developing your plan. Consider the following as you ponder the internal communication plan you need to develop:

- Are you just beginning the communication process? Are your audiences unfamiliar with the vision of the future? If so, you're entering the change process at the "On Your Mark" phase.
- Are your audiences ready for more information? Are you now in the process of needing to build understanding? Do you need to train people on the changes? If so, you're entering the "Get Set" phase.
- Do people understand what they need to know in order to implement the changes? Is implementation imminent? If so, you're entering the "Go" phase.

Staying Linked

Please keep in mind that Project BSC is a large, complex project. It needs to be carefully coordinated across teams. Consequently, you're urged to keep the Project BSC Communications Team informed about key aspects of your plan as it develops. Bear in mind that your plan may influence the plans of other teams and, consequently, changes to both individual team plans and the overall plan may be needed from time to time. The Project BSC Communications Team will do its best to keep you informed of major changes to the integrated plan as it evolves over time.

Steps in the Communication Planning Process

Step 1: Assess the Business Situation

What You Need to Do

Before you can successfully communicate the need for change, you need to understand the current realities of the business and how they have evolved over time. You need to understand the reasons behind the business decisions that are being made, so you can build a communication plan that accurately positions those business realities within a framework that employees can understand.

In short, you need to understand what's going at Blue Shield before you can determine what your audience needs to know and understand:

- What is the current business situation?
- What needs to change, and why?
- What are the market conditions?
- What can the business afford to do?
- What are the business priorities?

This information is essential to help you prioritize your efforts and identify what makes sense to do when, in what sequence.

What Is the Business Situation?

The *business situation* refers to the conditions that exist today that are driving decisions within the company. Our business situation constantly changes as our competitors try to outdo us, our financial position changes or other internal or external issues affect our overall position in the marketplace. As our business situation changes, our challenges and priorities change. To be successful in a competitive marketplace, we need to constantly adjust our goals, objectives and operations to meet the current realities of our business.

Examples

If our revenues drop, we may not have the funding to continue all existing projects. We may need to streamline and improve our operating efficiency and effectiveness.

Results of research may alter our view of what needs to be done and when.

Competitors may develop new products and services that require a response from us.

We may exceed our financial goals and objectives — or we may not meet them.

The dynamics of the marketplace may change, requiring us to adjust our products and services to meet changing consumer needs.

Tips on How to Assess the Business Situation

1. Review the company's budget and financial plans.
2. Review company communication materials, including the Annual Report.
3. Review non-company information about the marketplace, our competitors and the company, such as news media coverage, Internet Web sites and Annual Reports of our competitors.
4. Review company products, markets and promotions.
5. Understand our long-range plan and our short-term plan for getting there.
6. Understand the company's mission statement, goals and overall strategies.
7. Determine what company initiatives are under way.
8. Look at what's going on in the industry as a whole. What's the future of the industry, and how fast is it evolving?
9. Find out what our competitors are doing.
10. Determine our position within the marketplace.
11. Examine how competitive we are today, and how fast we need to change to remain competitive.
12. Outline our strengths and weaknesses compared to our competitors.

What You Need to Do

List the organizations or individuals who will be affected by the changes, or who will have an interest in knowing about them. Break the groups down into meaningful segments.

What Are Audience Segments?

Audience segments are those target groups or individuals who will be directly or indirectly affected by the changes designed by the team, or who may simply have an interest in or need to know about the changes. Target audience groups can often be segmented into sub-groups with varying characteristics. Target audience groups should be segmented based on your expectations of the way the need for information will vary from group to group.

Examples

(fictional)

The table below provides an example of how you could characterize your audiences. The example does not represent any specific Project BSC effort. Be aware that the audience segment charts will be different for each of the various Project BSC teams, based on what each team is doing.

Audience Characteristics	Internal Segments	External Segments
• People who will be significantly affected – Their work will change – How they access or use the system will change	• Member Services • Sales	• Members
• People who will be somewhat affected – Working upstream or downstream – How they use or access the system	• Marketing • Information Services	
• People who may be slightly affected – May get or provide information to the process that is of interest	• Provider Relations	• Brokers • Providers
• Anyone who may have an interest	• All Team Members • All Managers	• Media • Consumers

Consumer Segments

Each of the internal and external segments you identify (as in the example chart) might be broken down into additional segments with distinct characteristics associated with each segment. For instance, Blue Shield has broken down the consumer segment into four segments of interest to it. The four segments and a description of the characteristics of each are:

1. ***Loyalists*** – Consumers who are satisfied with their current plan and who generally have a high level of trust for their doctor and insurance company. Nothing that we offer them would encourage them to switch plans.
2. ***Contents*** – Consider themselves healthy and seem generally content. They’re not concerned with their health and don’t make a concerted effort to get or stay healthy. If there’s stress in their lives, it doesn’t cause health problems. They’re highly satisfied with their health care providers.
3. ***Working Hards*** – Health concerns create stress for this group of consumers. They’re occupied with their own and their family members’ health. They seek answers from both traditional medicine and complementary care. Looking for solutions, they use the full range of health care services.
4. ***Innovators* –** These consumers are interested in and use alternative care. They don’t believe that traditional medicine provides all the answers, and they seek out doctors who promote alternative medicine and care. Innovators like to control their own health and take the lead in gathering information and understanding issues involved with their care. They’re technology-savvy.

External Segmentation

Keep in mind, the focus of this document is on helping you develop your internal communication plans. You’ll be receiving more in-depth information about external communication planning separately.

Tips on How to Identify Audience Segments

1. Identify meaningful audience characteristics. Characteristics shown in the example above may work for you.
2. Identify internal organizations that fit into each segment.
3. Identify external segments in the same manner.
4. Determine if segments you identify can be broken down any further.
5. Validate your list of internal and external segments with your key stakeholders.

What You Need to Do

1. Determine the criteria (characteristics) you'll use to segment your audiences. Then match the various internal and external audiences affected by the changes with the characteristics you've defined.

Segment Characteristics	Internal Segments	External Segments

2. For each segment you identified, determine if it can be broken down into additional meaningful segments.

What You Need to Do

Identify:

- Unique information needed by individual segments
- The likely reaction to the changes on a segment-by-segment basis
- The degree of resistance or approval that may be expected from each segment

What Are Audience Needs?

Audience needs are the kinds of information your audiences need to help them implement, support, commit to or use the changes you're designing.

Examples of an Internal Audience Needs Assessment

Potential Reactions by Audience Segment

Different internal audiences may react differently to the changes. Determine if each audience will be:

- Happy or unhappy
- Enlightened or confused
- Confident or afraid
- Supportive or obstructive
- Believing or skeptical
- Neutral

Potential Resistance by Audience Segment

Different internal audiences may need to overcome different kinds of resistance, such as:

- Concerns about learning a new skill
- Concerns about changing their job
- Fear of losing their job
- Concerns about moving to a new location
- Fear that the changes will be implemented in an unprofessional manner

Examples of an External Audience Needs Assessment

Potential Reactions by Audience Segment

Different external audiences may react differently to the changes. Determine if each audience will be:

- Favorably disposed
- Interested in getting more information
- Comparing your offering to some other offer

Potential Resistance by Audience Segment

Different external audiences may also need to overcome different types of resistance, such as:

- Concerns about changing a paperwork or billing process
- Concerns about ability to compete with other plans
- Concerns about timing

Tips on How to Assess Audience Needs

1. For each individual segment, brainstorm the kind of detailed information people in that audience segment would want or need.
2. Assess how you think people in each audience segment might react.
3. Brainstorm the kind of resistance that may exist in each audience segment.
4. Assign an overall resistance rating of none, low, medium or high to each audience segment.

What You Need to Do

For each audience segment you identified in Step 2, determine: 1) The likely reaction to the changes, 2) The level of resistance or support that may be expected from each segment and 3) The unique information that may be needed by each segment.

	Likely Reactions	Level of Resistance	Level of Support	Unique Information Needed
Audience Segment 1				
Audience Segment 2				
Audience Segment 3				
Audience Segment 4				
Audience Segment 5				

What You Need to Do

You need to determine the top three to five things you want to communicate about your project. Think broadly. Do not exceed five key messages, because people won't remember more than five. You can have sub-messages, but keep them simple. Be sure your key messages link with or support the overall Project BSC messages.

What Are Key Messages?

Key messages are those messages that should be core to every bit of communication you develop about your project. Ideally, key messages should be repeated, or paraphrased in some manner, in every memo, overhead presentation, article and hallway chat you have.

Key messages will vary by segment — internal messages will be different from external messages, and team member messages will be different from team leader messages.

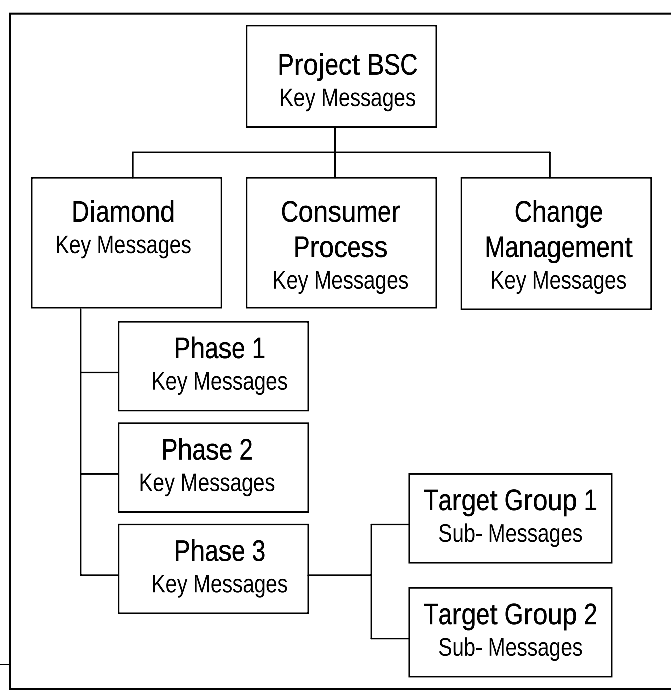
Key messages should be based on what you want to say about your project, but they should be spoken in terms that appeal to the target audience you're addressing.

Three Levels of Key Messages

For Project BSC, there will be three levels of key messages, all of which must be linked to and supportive of one another. ***First*** will be the overall key messages for Project BSC as a whole. ***Second*** will be key messages for each team. ***Third*** will be additional key messages for different "releases" or programs within each team, if needed.

Sub-Messages Also May Be Necessary

Sub-messages are additional messages that support your key messages. They may build on the key messages for all target audiences, or they may address the specific needs of certain audience segments.



Examples

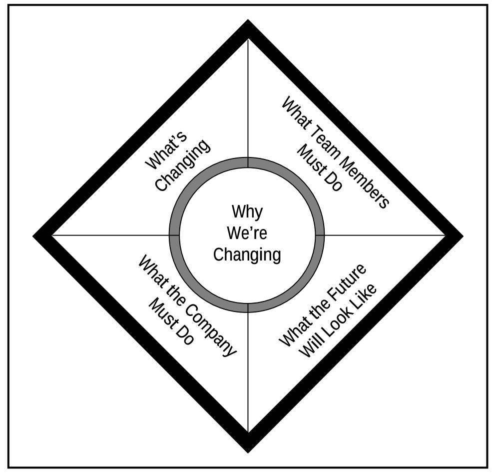
Project BSC Message	Project BSC is a key part of Blue Shield's strategy to become a highly innovative, consumer-focused organization that serves a diverse range of consumer needs.
Diamond Message	Diamond provides the core technology that's essential for successfully serving the broad range of consumer needs.
Phase 1 Message	Phase 1 implementation won't negatively impact service levels.
Target A Sub-Messages	• Organizations responsible for implementing Phase 1 will receive extensive training. • Our goal is to make everyone feel successful.

Remember

Be sure your messages are supportive of the overall Project BSC messages and are linked across all releases or programs for which your Project is responsible.

Tips on How to Develop Overall Key Messages

Use the “Project BSC Message Model” as a guide. Consider the issues posed by the model, and then boil your messages down to those that are most important.

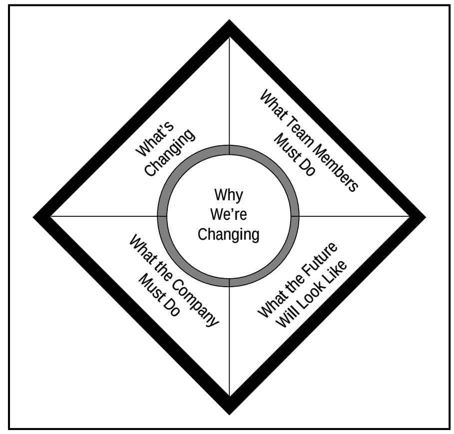


The “what” and “why” questions you should ask as part of the message development process are:

1. Why are we changing?
   - What consumer needs will we satisfy?
   - What competitive challenges will we overcome?
   - In what ways will the change support overall Project BSC goals?
   - What are the benefits to employees?
2. What’s changing?
   - What is your team developing?
   - What purpose will it serve?
   - What other efforts does it link to?
   - In what ways does it support overall Project BSC goals?
3. What must the company do differently?
   - What must the company do differently for consumers?
   - What must the company do differently for team members?
   - What will the company do to support team members through the change?
   - What kind of processes must change inside the company?
   - What are the key challenges faced by the company?
4. What must Blue Shield team members do differently?
   - What new behaviors are needed?
   - What new skills will be needed?
   - What about attitudes?
5. What will the future look like?
   - Why will the future be better than now?
   - What will team members be doing?
   - What will consumers be doing?
   - What will competitors be doing?
   - What will we do to be sure the company is financially viable?

Tips on How to Develop Sub-Messages

1. Review the needs of your target audiences. Look for gaps between what you want to say (your key messages) and what specific audiences may need to know to feel motivated or compelled by the message.
2. Develop supporting sub-messages that bridge the gap — messages that provide the link between the messages you want to deliver and the messages your audience needs to hear. (See **Examples** above.)
3. Be sure to specify for which audiences these supporting sub-messages are appropriate.
4. Remember that fewer messages are better.



What You Need to Do

Determine the top three to five things you want to communicate about your project. Think broadly. Do not exceed five key messages.

Your sub-messages, if any, should be succinct. Be sure to specify to whom your sub messages are directed.

Before you begin, determine for what phase of the change process you're developing these key messages — "On Your Mark, Get Set, Go" (or some combination).

Phase____________________

	Key Messages	Sub-Messages
Why We're Changing		
What's Changing		
What Team Members Must Do		
What the Company Must Do		
What the Future Will Look Like		

What You Need to Do

Use this template if you have a number of sub-messages that need to be directed to different target groups.

	Sub-Messages by Audience Segment		
	Audience 1	Audience 2	Audience 3
Why We're Changing			
What's Changing			
What Team Members Must Do			
What the Company Must Do			
What the Future Will Look Like			

Step 5: Develop Goals, Metrics and Measurement Process

What You Need to Do

You need to determine exactly what you want to accomplish with your communication, and how you will measure progress toward your goals.

What Are Goals, Metrics and the Measurement Process?

Goals are general statements of what you want to accomplish. *Metrics* are the quantifiable measures associated with the goals. The *measurement process* specifies the method you'll use to measure progress toward your goals.

Examples

Goals	Metrics	Measurement Process
All team members will become *aware* of why changes are needed	80% by June	Company-wide survey sent to random sample of all target audiences
Team members in the Customer Operations group will *understand* details of the changes and how they impact their organization	80% by June	Project BSC Consumer Teams survey sent to random sample of Customer Operations people
All team members will feel *committed* to adopting the change	50% by June 80% by September	Company-wide internal survey process

Company-Wide Survey Processes

Blue Shield will be establishing overall goals, metrics and measurement processes for the project as a whole.

Internal Survey Process
Currently an internal measurement process has been defined, which includes a combination of quarterly focus group interviews with random groups of people and an addendum to the Denison culture survey.

Initially the focus of the internal process will be on developing benchmarks to help create an understanding of the current situation. Once we have a good grasp of where we're starting, goals will be developed to move us in the direction in which we want to head.

Be aware that this process will measure *overall* results, and is not the vehicle for measuring *specific* results on a team-by-team basis. Teams who want specific feedback related to the issues they're addressing will need to develop their own measurement tools.

External Survey Process
Teams will be updated when this process has been developed.

Ensuring an Integrated Effort

We want to avoid over-surveying team members throughout the company. Consequently, you're urged to submit any survey process you intend to implement to the Communications/Change Management Team. The team will incorporate your plan into the integrated planning calendar. If your survey interferes with other surveys that are planned, you may be asked to amend your plans.

Tips on How to Develop Goals, Metrics and Measurement Processes

1. Your goals should be aimed at closing any gaps that exist between what you want your audience to know or how you want them to act and the current state. You may need to benchmark the current state to know where you're starting.
2. Refer to the "On Your Mark, Get Set, Go" change process. Remember that change is not embraced all at once. It's a process. Your goals are likely to change at each phase of the process.
3. Consider the following:
    - What percentage of your target audience do you expect to reach?
    - What do you want your target audience to know?
    - What do you want your target audience to understand?
    - How do you want your target audience to think or feel?
    - What do you want your target audience to do differently?
4. If it is possible to quantify your goals, do so. For instance:
    - 95% of our target audience will report being aware of the changes
    - 85% will believe that the changes will be good for the company
    - 65% will believe that the changes will be good for them personally
5. Determine how you'll measure the effectiveness of your communication effort. Consider the following:
    - Feedback forms
    - Surveys
    - Performance management results
    - Random calls
    - Anecdotal comments
    - Focus group discussions
6. Consider how you might integrate your measurement process with those of other Project BSC groups:
    - Does every team really need to measure its own results, or would the overall survey process suffice?
    - Will there be too much confusion if every team tries to measure everything?
    - Be sure to coordinate your efforts with the Communications/ Change Management Team
7. Get professional help when you need it
    - Ask for advice or counsel from the Communications/Change Management Team

TEMPLATE

What You Need to Do

Use this template to determine exactly what you want to accomplish with your communication and how you'll measure progress toward your goals. Try to limit the number of goals. Focus on what's most important.

Goals	Metrics	Measurement Process

Step 6: Develop Communication Strategies

What You Need to Do

Determine how you will accomplish your goals. In other words, consider what would be the best overall approach or combination of approaches for addressing the needs of each segment and for getting your messages across. Consider the message strategy, as well as the delivery/channel strategy. Also consider how to deal with obstacles.

What Are Communication Strategies?

Communication strategies are the high-level, general approaches to achieving your goals. They should not be confused with tactics. Tactics are actions, such as placing a story in *Team Connection*. Strategies, on the other hand, might focus on determining if *Team Connection* is the right medium in the first place. Strategies don't have to be complicated. They can be stated briefly and succinctly.

Examples

1. We will overcome audience resistance to the changes by:
   - Using primarily face-to-face communication
   - Ensuring that target audiences have an opportunity to provide input to the changes we're designing
2. We will achieve target audience commitment to the changes by:
   - Ensuring that Blue Shield team members have an opportunity to engage in open and frank dialog about the changes
   - Helping Blue Shield team members feel that they can successfully learn the details of the new system
   - Training managers in their role as nurturers of the change
   - Developing and communicating clear expectations of performance
3. To avoid confusing our target audiences, we will:
   - Coordinate our change management and communication efforts with other Project BSC teams

Integrate Your Strategies with the Overall Plan

Keep in mind that you aren't creating a communication strategy in a vacuum. Your strategies must be in synch with the overall communication strategy developed by the Communications/Change Management Team. In other words, your strategies and plans must dovetail with the overall plan. That plan will be shared with you by the communications team as you embark upon this step in the planning process.

Tips on How to Develop Communication Strategies

General Hints

1. Refer to the "On Your Mark, Get Set, Go" process and the four-phase communication process.
2. Review the needs of your target audiences and the goals you want to achieve.
3. Be sure you keep asking yourself if the strategies you're developing are really going to help you accomplish the goals that you've set.
4. Determine what stands in the way of success, and what you should do to overcome any obstacles.

Message Strategy

1. Determine what is the best overall approach for the "tone" of your messages:
   – Informative?
   – Directive?
   – Collaborative?
   – Whimsical?
   – Forceful?
   – Polished?
   – Heart-felt?
2. Determine how your messages should be integrated with other Project BSC messages. In particular, determine how can you work with other project leaders and with the communications team to: 1) ensure all Project BSC messages are linked, and 2) avoid communication overload for your audiences.
3. Who are the opinion leaders? Is there a way to involve them that helps you get your message across to the rest of the organization in a more effective manner?

Delivery/Channel Strategy

1. Determine how important each of the following delivery mechanisms will be to your communications effort. What role should each play — primary, supporting, reinforcing?
   – Managers
   – Team members
   – Large-group meetings
   – Small-group meetings
   – *Team Connection*
   – E-mail
   – Internet
   – Special brochures/flyers
   – Other

What You Need to Do

Determine how you will accomplish your goals. In other words, consider what would be the best overall approach or combination of approaches for getting the needs of each segment addressed, and for getting your messages across. Consider the message strategy, as well as the delivery/channel strategy. Also be sure you have reviewed and understand the overall communication strategy, and that your plans are supportive of it.

Situation/Challenge (What must your strategy address)	Overall Strategy	Message/Delivery Strategy

Step 7: Develop Communication Channels

What You Need to Do

What you do at this stage depends on decisions you previously made about channel strategies. Be sure you have considered the channels identified in the overall communication plan. You should avoid creating new channels at this point, unless it's absolutely essential to the success of your team's effort. Keep in mind that we do not want to inundate team members with more channels or messages than they can realistically consume.

What Does "Develop Channels" Mean?

Channels are the media or the vehicles through which you deliver your messages. You determined the general way you wanted to communicate in Step 6; now it's time to determine what you need to do to make your preferred channels available for your use.

Examples

Channel	Things to Consider
Managers	• Solicit support in advance • Manager tool-kits • Training (content and communication skills) • Coordination with other Project BSC teams and with the Project BSC Communications Team
Training	• How to design the training • Who will deliver it
Large-group Presentations	• Securing facilities and equipment • Invitations (distributions lists)
E-mail	• Build distribution lists
What's New	• Line up writers • Obtain and use the Style Guide • Secure resources

Tips on How to Develop Channels

1. Above all else, keep in mind the need for an integrated effort. PLEASE coordinate your needs with the Project BSC Communications Team.
2. Use the channels recommended by the communications team.
3. Use the Style Guide provided by the communications team.

What You Need to Do

Review the channels developed by the Project BSC Communications Team. Determine which of these you'll be using, and identify any additional channels you feel may be essential. Identify who on your team will be responsible for "developing" each channel and the kind of outside support you may need.

Existing Channels	Which You Will Use	Who's Responsible	Outside Help Needed
Additional Channels*			

* Be sure to review the need for any additional channels with the communications team before committing yourself to the development of these channels. While we want to be sure we are communicating effectively and sufficiently with everyone, we don't want to over-communicate or drown people in too much information.

Step 8: Develop an Events Calendar

What You Need to Do

You should develop an "events calendar" that indicates the dates of all the communication events you're planning, including the following:

- Meetings
- *Team Connection* articles
- Internet updates
- Train-the-trainers sessions
- Manager communication
- Special events

What Is an Events Calendar?

An events calendar is simply a calendar of when and how you plan to communicate — publish a brochure, hold a meeting, run an article in *Team Connection*, etc. An events calendar is not a project plan. It doesn't indicate start times and all the tasks associated with achieving the end result. It only shows the date the communication is supposed to "hit the streets."

The Master Events Calendar

The Project BSC Communications Team has developed and is maintaining a master events calendar for all Project BSC communication activities. The team will provide you with a copy of this calendar and any significant updates as it changes over time. Keep in mind that you're responsible for providing inputs to the master calendar and for coordinating your events with the communications team.

Tips for Developing an Events Calendar

1. You should ensure that your calendar is fully integrated with the overall communication plan. Do this by working closely with the Project BSC Communications Team.
2. Do not assume your calendar is finalized until you have closed the loop with the communications team. In turn, the communications team will let you know what events other teams plan. This will help us avoid communication overload.

TEMPLATE

What You Need to Do

Refer to the existing events calendar, which is being maintained by the Project BSC Communications Team. Identify all communications you want to implement and the timing for each communication. Consider all communication requirements, including:

- Meetings
- *Team Connection* articles
- Intranet updates
- Train-the-trainers sessions
- Manager communications
- Special events
- Fact Sheets
- *What's New*
- Project BSC Updates

Step 9: Develop Communication Materials

What You Need to Do

Once you reach this phase of the planning process, you're actually out of planning and into development. You know what you want to say, how you're going to say it, what vehicles you're going to use, and who you need to coordinate with.

STOP at this point. Are you sure you have coordinated with other Project BSC teams? Have your key stakeholders reviewed your communication plan? Has the Project BSC Communications Team reviewed your plan?

If so, you're now ready to produce the communication materials you identified in your events calendar. You'll need to use the key messages you crafted to develop presentations, write articles, produce flyers, etc.

What Are Communication Materials?

Communication materials are the actual printed and/or electronic materials you'll use in the communication process.

Examples

Brochures, videos, audio tapes, intranet pages, presentations, posters, flyers, e-mail messages, etc.

Tips for Developing Communications Materials

1. It's important to maintain a similar look and feel for all Project BSC communications. We urge you to work with the communications department and the communications team to help you achieve the proper look and feel for anything you plan to develop on your own.
2. Be sure you plan sufficient lead times to do a quality job in developing materials you need.
3. Assign the development of communication materials to people on your team who are good communicators — good writers, presenters, etc.

Step 10: Implement and Follow Up

What You Need to Do

Execute the plan you developed. Measure your results using the measurement plan you created.

Tips for Implementation and Follow Up

1. Be sure you've allocated sufficient time for this phase. While the plan may call for you to facilitate a meeting for two hours, the reality is that you'll need time to plan for that meeting and to decompress from it — meaning that two hours could easily turn into four hours or more!
2. Be willing to adjust your plan as you go along. After implementation begins, you may discover that you were overly optimistic — or not optimistic enough — about what you could accomplish during implementation.
3. Be prepared for unplanned events. For instance: You've planned a large-group meeting which is essential to the success of your communication effort. However, unbeknownst to you, one-fourth of our employees are out sick with the flu and are unable to attend.
4. Be ready to adjust your plans based on feedback. You should be measuring the success of your efforts right from the start. If you find you're doing something wrong, don't keep on doing it. Stop, adjust quickly and be ready to go again.