***Set out your communications activity in this simple template.***

An effective way of capturing an audience’s attention is with a steady, even stream of communications, using different channels to reach them and to reinforce your messages.

The following principles and communications plan template should help you in that task.

**Principles for good communications activity planning**

### Effective communication is more than a good launch. What are you going to say once you have an audience’s attention? How are you going to develop that initial interest you have generated?

### Build a relationship. Where possible, plan to engage your audiences over a course of time. Warm up your audience to your subject before asking for something in return.

## Be aware of external factors. Is there a time of year that these communications might seem particularly relevant? Are there any external events or announcements that will lend your communications extra relevance?

Use a variety of different communications channels simultaneously or cumulatively to increase impact and reinforce your messages (ie a media article is published, is shared on twitter and Facebook, and followed up with an e-news bulletin on your organisation website or newsletter).

Tailor your communications to specific audience groups, especially if they have different needs and levels of knowledge. This will mean adapting materials for different audiences.

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**Ensure that you build in time for:**

• Finding suppliers and external support.

• A production timetable for communication materials.



Communications plan template  
  
  
Use the template below to summarise your main decisions on the target audiences: what you want that communications action to achieve, the message/s you will aim to get across, what channel/s you will use and when you will do it. You can type directly into the boxes below.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Communications plan for project X: | | | | |
| Overall communications objectives (from [communications strategy](http://www.health.org.uk/commskit-1-4)): | | | | |
| Launch phase (where you introduce your project to key audiences, raise awareness of its objectives and may try to achieve recruitment of patients, practice change, etc.): | | | | |
| Audience | Activity | Messages | Channels | Timing |
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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sustain phase (where you may ask for certain support or behaviour change in key audiences, or seek to maintain support or behaviour change): | | | | |
| Audience | Activity | Messages | Channels | Timing |
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| Spread phase (where you seek to spread the awareness, adoption of practice or new ways of working to audiences outside your original target audience groups): | | | | |
| Audience | Activity | Messages | Channels | Timing |
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