The Who, What, Where, When and How of an Effective Communications Plan

AWC team meeting 2/23/10

Who?

What?

Where?

When?

How?

"I'll be happy to give you innovative thinking. What are the guidelines?"

The Who, What, Where, When and How of an Effective Communications Plan

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Linda Feltes (MMB) and Lynn Frank (Mn/DOT)

"If you build it, they won't come if they don't know about it."

Who?

Who are you?
Create a brand for your wellness program. Think Target.

A brand is created when a name, a logo, a tagline, a tone and graphics standards are constantly and consistently used. Every time we see one of your communications, we can quickly identify the sender and the general content. Branding also means having a consistent tone or style to your communications. Is it personable? Is it business-like?

Work Well has a logo of green and black that appears, almost always on the bottom right of posters, presentations, Web pages and other communications that Work Well distributes. The tone is casual and personal.

Work Well SM
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Note: the Work Well logo is available to any agency to use for your wellness program.

Example: Work Well—MDH

Who are you trying to reach?
Over the course of, say one year, strive to reach every employee.

Examples:

- POWER's Seven Dimensions of Wellness
- Mn/DOT's Run at Work Day 5K

Who are you trying to reach (part 2)?
Provide regular reports to the leadership to create and maintain visibility at the highest level.

Work Well SM

What?

What are you communicating? And what are your agency's guidelines for what media can be used by whom, where and when?

- Can you put posters in the lavatories?
- Can you use all employee e-mail?
- Can you write a newsletter? How will you send it?

Tell stories and use graphics/photos! Provide evidence and sources! Our audience is diverse. Some will learn from stories; some will need just the facts. Think Myers-Briggs personality tests.

Partner with your communications office. They have experience delivering messages to your target market. They may be able to help you develop your identity and your brand, and they will know how to deliver messages that will be well received.

Where?

Where will/can you communicate your message? Integrate your communications into existing communications vehicles. Be consistent in your placement so that employees know where to go for information.

"I'll be happy to give you innovative thinking. What are the guidelines?"

Exploit a variety of media:

- e-mail
- posters
- blog/journal/other social networking tools
- intranet
- newsletter
- calendar
- presentations
- library
- video monitors
- meetings: staff, manager, executive, union, trainings
- word-of-mouth

When?

How often will you communicate your message: daily, weekly, monthly, annually, randomly? Be consistent in your timing, so employees know when to expect information.

How?

How can employees participate in wellness? Link your messages to actions steps. If you are encouraging physical activity, what facilities and classes (and stairwells!) do you have to support that message? If you're hosting a lunch and learn on nutrition, partner with your cafeteria to feature a healthy option and brand it with your and their logo.

Example: Work Well MDH on Intranet News:

Physical activity is the gateway to good health

Exercise is the single most effective thing you can do for your health. It helps prevent and manage cardiovascular disease, diabetes, pain, arthritis, obesity, depression, and constipation (there, it's said). Physical activity maintains and improves sleep, balance, strength, endurance, and activities of daily living.

But perhaps it's because exercise makes you feel great that it's such a frequent gateway to health. Your self-confidence and self-efficacy—your belief that you will succeed—encourage you to be healthy in other ways.

MDH provides facilities that enable you to be active. Most MDH locations have light fitness equipment, including yoga mats, weights and fitness balls for your use at work. Most buildings have stairs, bike racks, fitness spaces, classes and bus routes that help you move around in healthful ways. Freeman and Golden Rule staffs have created walking maps. There are tools to help you organize your own walking, running or exercise clubs or classes. And more and more, MDH employees are invited to share the wellness resources of other state agencies. For details, get to know the Work Well website, especially the Move Well pages.

Work Well Website: http://fyi.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/workwell/
Work Well questions or comments: health.work.well@state.mn.us

Be well; it matters.

How are employees receiving your messages? Evaluate your communications. For example, include questions about your communications in your pre and post-evaluations. How do people want to receive information, are they receiving information. Who are you reaching? What are they hearing from your communications (are they being reached?)

Questions?

Reaching the Hard-to-Reach

Presented to Agency Wellness Champions
7/29/08

The hard-to reach are defined in many ways:

1. Unwell employees
2. Well employees
3. Those who read e-mails and those who don't
4. Those who read posters and those who don't
5. Those who like "!" and those who don't
6. Leaders
7. Supervisors
8. Union reps and legislators

1, 2. All Employees

Your target market is ***every*** employee.
Smokers: 22%
Overweight/obese 59%
Inactive 66%
Risky drinking 21%
These unhealthy behaviors co-exist, so sum is >100%
9.7% of the population has zero risk factors.

Our target audience is 90% of the population.

But this picture is not static. People move in and out of unhealthy states.

Triangle theory: 5% of the population accounts for 55% of the claims. But 50% of those high-cost claimants will be low cost next year. Others will move in to high cost.

The high cost claimant will never be as inexpensive as someone who maintains their good health.

The biggest health care expense today is your employees with acute or chronic illness. The biggest cost savings over time will come from keeping your healthy employees healthy.

Strategies:

- Design programs that will touch each employee every few months or over the year.
- "Start where you are" messages and programs
- Messages and programs that meet people at their stage of change

- Precontemplation - lack of awareness that life can be improved by a change in behavior;
- Contemplation - recognition of the problem, initial consideration of behavior change, and information gathering about possible solutions and actions;
- Preparation - introspection about the decision, reaffirmation of the need and desire to change behavior, and completion of final pre-action steps;
- Action - implementation of the practices needed for successful behavior change
- Maintenance - consolidation of the behaviors initiated during the action stage;

So wellness offerings range from education to opportunities to participate in programs, and programs vary from relaxation to physical activity competitions.

- Communicate breadth of services provided by health plan/DOER e.g. disease mgmt.
- Don't just respond to the "need showers" requests.

Example from **MDH: What is Work Well?**

Work Well is the worksite wellness program for ***all*** Minnesota Department of Health employees. The vision of Work Well is to create a workplace in which employees care for themselves as well as they care for all Minnesotans.

- Move well
- Eat Well
- Be Well (relaxation/stress/EAP/sleep)

3, 4, 5. Those who read e-mails and those who don't:
Those who read posters and those who don't:
Those who like "!" and those who don't:

Strategies:

- Use multiple communications vehicles.

- What are the guidelines in your department around communications?
  - posters
  - brochures
  - e-mails/ all agency tool
  - Web pages
  - Word-of-mouth/Champions/Managers and other leaders

- Listen to employees. (Collect all comments.)

6. Leaders/Upper Management

Strategies:

- (See previous "Creating Management Support" presentation.)

- Managers fall in these categories. Focus first on the 50% of managers who are quiet supporters or wellness champions:

Active Opposition 1-2% -- Don't antagonize
Quiet Opposition 15-25% -- Listen
Neutral 40-50%-- How can they get involved if they wish
Quiet Supporters 30-40%-- Pair with a wellness champion
Wellness Champions 5-10%-- Recognize! Keep informed!

7. Supervisors

Strategies:

- Build a toolkit
    - Share toolkit
    - Be available to speak at meetings about your program
    - Encourage upper management to promote to supervisors

8. Union reps and legislators

Strategies:

- Be aware of concerns and ready to communicate program benefits and cost-savings

Minnesota Department of Health
Communications Strategy and Project Planning Form (Sample)

1. Working title for communications plan
2. Your division
3. Project manager (person updating this form)
4. Project sponsor (manager or supervisor above you who is ultimately accountable for the project)
5. Public health issue your project will address
6. Communications goal
   (Target outcome related to public health issue above, e.g., measurable increase in audience knowledge about...)
7. Communications strategies for reaching the goal
   (e.g., public awareness campaign, media plan, public event)
8. Primary audience(s) (Most critical to reach, e.g., educators, high school students, parents)
9. Secondary audience(s) (Also need to be reached)
10. Key messages or content you are considering
11. Communications materials being considered, if known
    (e.g., printed materials, Web page, ads, promotional materials, CDs, videotape, display)
12. How do you intend to reach your audience with those materials?
    (i.e. distribution via mail, Web site, events, etc.)
13. Proposed deadline for project completion
14. Short-term deadline(s)
    (please provide a brief description of any short-term deadline(s) that must be met before the completion of the plan)
15. Proposed budget
16. Evaluation plans
    (How will you measure your accomplishments against your objective?)
17. Project team
18. Mode of communication.
    Select one or more check box to indicate the type(s) or product(s) that you will be developing. Then, briefly describe the product(s) in the corresponding text box.