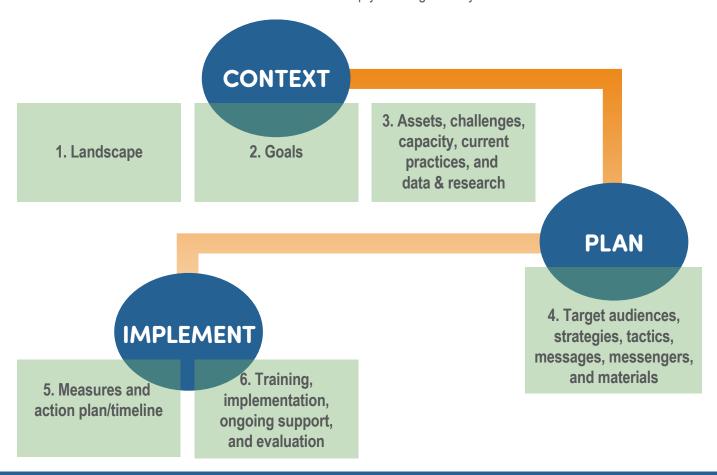# Advocacy & Communication SOLUTIONS

ACS Strategic Communication Framework

Strategic communication is purposeful, informed, deliverable, and measureable. Thinking strategically about your organization's communication will help you connect with your audience in a targeted way, use informed approaches to deliver your message, and achieve the maximum impact with respect to your capacity.

Through years of research and experience in the field, ACS learned there are multiple (sometimes non-sequential) steps to an effective communication process. Ideally, you would tackle each of these steps at some point in your communication approach. Some of these steps are more difficult or take more time to complete than others. Use this guide to answer focused questions to help you review context, plan, and implement an effective communication approach. Don't forget to check out ACS' additional resources and materials to help you along the way.

CONTEXT

1. Landscape

2. Goals

3. Assets, challenges, capacity, current practices, and data & research

PLAN

4. Target audiences, strategies, tactics, messages, messengers, and materials

IMPLEMENT

5. Measures and action plan/timeline

6. Training, implementation, ongoing support, and evaluation

1. Goal	What is your goal?
2. Assets/Internal Capacity	What are the 3 most significant **strengths** that will help you reach the goal?
	What are the 3 most significant **weaknesses** that may hinder your goal?
	How much time can your organization devote to this effort per week?
3. Audience	Who is your audience(s)?
4. Strategies	Write 1–2 strategies that will help meet your goal.
5. Tactics	Write 1–2 tactics for each strategy.
6. Data/Research	What data/research is available to help you meet your goal?

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7. **Message**	What is your key message(s)?
8. **Messenger**	Who is the most appropriate messenger(s)?
9. **Timeline**	Keep in mind any major deadlines or decisions that would affect strategy. What is your timeline for completing the tactics?
10. **Cross-training**	Does anyone need training share the message?
11. **Materials**	Do you need any materials? Are those materials written with your target audience in mind?
12. **Evaluation**	How will you know when you're successful?

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Resources and Tools:

1. **Public Awareness Campaign** http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/redesigned_tools/Critical_Components_of_a_Public_Awareness_Campaign.pdf

2. **10 Tips for an Effective Communication Approach** http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/Tools_Resources_july2015/ACS_Ten_Tips_for_an_Effective_Communication_Approach.pdf

3. **Network mapping** http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/tools_and_resources_2016/ACS_Network_Mapping-designed-2.pdf

4. **Media guide** http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/tool_and_resources_2015/ACS_Media_Guide-1.pdf

5. **Social media** http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/tools_and_resources_2016/ACS_Leveraging_Social_Media-final.pdf

6. **Giving jargon the boot** http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/tools_and_resources_2016/ACS_Giving_Jargon_the_Boot_2-1-3.pdf

7. **Message creation checklist** http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/tools_and_resources_2016/ACS_Message_Creation_Checklist_16.pdf

8. **Assess your collaboration** http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/tools_and_resources_2016/ACS_Assess_Your_Collaboration-75.pdf

9. **Measuring your communication impact** http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/tools_and_resources_2016/ACS_Measuring_Communication_Impact-2-1.pdf

10. **Assessing your collaboration** http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/tools_and_resources_2016/ACS_Assess_Your_Collaboration-75.pdf

11. **Five rules for policymaker engagement** http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/tools_and_resources_2016/Five_Rules_for_Poliymaker_Engagement.pdf

12. **Tips and best practices for engaging your community** http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/tools_and_resources_2016/ACS_Engaging_Community_new_bluereverse.pdf

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