



ACS Strategic Communication Framework

Strategic communication is purposeful, informed, deliverable, and measurable. 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.



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1. Goal	What is your goal?
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2. Assets/Internal Capacity	What are the 3 most significant strengths that will help you reach the goal?
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	What are the 3 most significant weaknesses that may hinder your goal?
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	How much time can your organization devote to this effort per week?
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3. Audience	Who is your audience(s)?
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4. Strategies	Write 1–2 strategies that will help meet your goal.
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5. Tactics	Write 1–2 tactics for each strategy.
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6. Data/Research	What data/research is available to help you meet your goal?
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7. Message	<p>What is your key message(s)?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
8. Messenger	<p>Who is the most appropriate messenger(s)?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
9. Timeline	<p>Keep in mind any major deadlines or decisions that would affect strategy. What is your timeline for completing the tactics?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
10. Cross-training	<p>Does anyone need training share the message?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
11. Materials	<p>Do you need any materials? Are those materials written with your target audience in mind?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
12. Evaluation	<p>How will you know when you're successful?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Resources and Tools:

- 1. Critical Components of a Public Awareness Campaign**
[www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS Critical Components of a Public Awareness Campaign 2022.pdf](http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS_Critical_Components_of_a_Public_Awareness_Campaign_2022.pdf)
- 2. Ten Tips for an Effective Communication Approach**
[www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS Ten Tips for an Effective Communication Approach 2022.pdf](http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS_Ten_Tips_for_an_Effective_Communication_Approach_2022.pdf)
- 3. Network Mapping Tool**
[www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS Network Mapping 2022.pdf](http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS_Network_Mapping_2022.pdf)
- 4. Media Guide**
[www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/ACS Media Guide 2022.pdf](http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/ACS_Media_Guide_2022.pdf)
- 5. Leveraging Social Media to Move Your Message, Engage Your Champions, and Grow Supporters**
[www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS Leveraging Social Media 2022.pdf](http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS_Leveraging_Social_Media_2022.pdf)
- 6. Messaging Boot Camp: How to Give Jargon the Boot**
[www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS Messaging Boot Camp.pdf](http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS_Messaging_Boot_Camp.pdf)
- 7. Message Creation Checklist**
[www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS Message Creation Checklist 2022.pdf](http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS_Message_Creation_Checklist_2022.pdf)
- 8. Assess Your Collaboration**
[www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS Assess Your Collaboration 2022.pdf](http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS_Assess_Your_Collaboration_2022.pdf)
- 9. Measuring Your Communication Impact**
[www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS Measuring Your Communication Impact 2022.pdf](http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS_Measuring_Your_Communication_Impact_2022.pdf)
- 10. Five Steps to Effective Policymaker Engagement**
[www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS Five Steps to Effective Policymaker Engagement.pdf](http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACS_Five_Steps_to_Effective_Policymaker_Engagement.pdf)
- 11. Engage Your Community Workbook**
[www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/ACS Community Engagement Workbook 2022.pdf](http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/ACS_Community_Engagement_Workbook_2022.pdf)