**Question to Consider: What is effective communication?**

Communication between two or more people wherein the intended message is successfully **delivered**, **received** and **understood**.

| **8 Steps for an Effective Communication Plan** | | | |
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| 1. Start with the purpose/goal | | **What are you trying to accomplish with your communication strategy?**   * + Educate the public about the issue your organization addresses.   + Rally supporters or the general public to action for your cause.   + Announce an event. | |
| 2. Identify your audience. | | **Questions to ask:**   * + Who are you trying to reach?   + What are their needs?   + Who needs to know what, first? | |
| 3. Create the message. | | **Tailor to the intended audience.**   * + What do you want to convey?   + Why should the audience care about the subject matter?   + What do you want your audience to do with this information?   + Does your language match your audience?   + Where does your audience get its news? | |
| 4. Identify available resources. | | * Who can help create and manage the communication plan? * How much staff time is available to devote to this activity? * What communication vehicles are available to your school/district? | |
| 5. Anticipate obstacles | | **What could possibly go wrong?**   * Identify potential issues. * Create a plan to deal with each.   + Who takes responsibility for what?   + What will be the protocol followed?     - Isolate the issue.     - Talking points for staff     - Media outreach. | |
| 6. Engage the media and others. | | * Identify all media outlets in your area.   + Traditional media: newspapers, radio, TV * Identify influential organizations   + Local chambers of commerce   + Civic organizations   + Faith communities   + Special Education Cooperative * How can they be a partner?   + Invite to learn and tour.   + Send regular updates.   + Provide materials to distribute to their stakeholders | |
| 7. Create an action plan. | |  | |
| 8. Measure your effectiveness. | | * How well did you carry out your plan? * How well did your efforts work?   + Did you achieve your intended purpose/goal? * What adjustments need to be made? | |
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