



P-310 Unit 7: Communication and Planning

Unit Objectives:

- Demonstrate the importance of effective communication.
- Explain the role of the information officer on a fire prevention education team.
- Develop a communication plan.

Unit at a Glance:

Topics	Method	Duration
Communication Duties	Presentation	20 Minutes
Role of the PIO	Presentation	20 Minutes
Communication Networking and Strategy	Presentation	20 Minutes
The Communication Plan	Presentation	20 minutes
Develop a Communication Plan	Exercise	40 minutes + 5 minutes per group presentation
Total Unit Duration		2 Hours 30 Minutes

Materials:

For each participant materials are available at: <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/training-courses/p-310/course-materials>.

- Unit 7-HO1-Sample Communication Plan.
- Unit 7-SR1-Communication Plan Template.
- *Wildfire Prevention Strategies Guide*, PMS 455, <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/455>.

Classroom

- Ability to display images and video on large screen.
- White board or easel access for group breakout.

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Guides and Key

The presentations and instructor guides include notes to aid facilitators in instruction.

Key

- Indicates an action for the instructor to take.
 - Indicates topics and information for the facilitator to use as they see fit.

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Slide 2

Unit Objectives

- **Demonstrate the importance of effective communication.**
- **Explain the role of the information officer on a fire prevention education team.**
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- Review objectives with students.

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Communication Duties

- **FPETs will be required to provide effective communications to and for the host agency.**
 - Provide a link to the media
 - Develop communication strategies
 - Implement the team's communication objectives



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The Importance of Communication

- **Communication planning is a critical part of a fire prevention program.**
 - It is a major means to accomplish fire prevention.
 - It is not a matter of “when do we bring communication into the process?” The process is communication!

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The Purpose of Communication

- To convey the right message
 - To the right people
 - In the most effective manner



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The Role of the Public Information Officer

- Provide communication strategies
- Enhance interagency coordination
- Provide assistance and support
- Follow the accepted protocol of the host agencies

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- The PIO may take the lead in developing the communication plan. However, this must be coordinated with the local personnel. Everything the Team does will reflect on the requesting agency. Be flexible. The local unit's satisfaction with your performance is important.
- The PIO must document activities and provide transitional continuity.

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PIO Coordination with Multiple Agencies

- Federal
- State
- Local
- Tribal
- Stakeholders



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Note to Instructor

- Ask students for other examples of entities you might coordinate with, e.g., media. Have students brainstorm examples of various types of stakeholders.
- Explain the difference between Key Contacts vs. Stakeholders.

Slide 8

Reasons to Build a Network

- Gathering background information
- Social concerns
- Environmental/cultural concerns
- Best way to communicate



The slide contains two photographs. The left photograph shows an indoor meeting room with several people seated around tables, engaged in a discussion. The right photograph shows three people standing outdoors in a field, with a white van and a mountain range in the background.

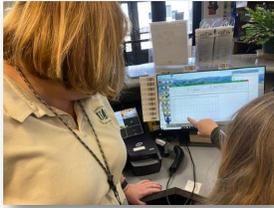
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- Follow the accepted protocol of the agency that ordered the team.
- Make sure local personnel are informed of who is on the team and why the team is there.

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Provide Information Assistance and Support

- Fire prevention specialist
- Graphic artist/webmaster
- Local public affairs/information officers
- Tribal Councils/archeologists



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- Support could include such things as news releases, media packets, and/or campaigns.

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Develop a Prevention Strategy

- How a message is going to be delivered?
- Where it will be delivered?
- And with what methods?
- This is different than the Communication Plan.



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- The *Wildfire Prevention Strategies Guide*, PMS-455, <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/455>, is a valuable resource that identifies the most successful strategies for addressing each type of common fire causes.

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Strategy Categories

- Engineering
- Enforcement
- Education
- Administration



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Note to Instructor

- Give an example for each category on the bullet list.

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Develop a Communication Plan

- Tie everything together.
- Focus communication, so it will be more effective.
- Analyze the situation.
- Determine what needs to be done, the people to reach, and what to tell them.
- Describe how it will get done, who will do it and when will it be done.

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Note to Instructor

- Instructor may choose to print and hand out the Communication Plan sample provided.
 - Unit 7-HO1-Sample Communication Plan
- *Wildfire Prevention Strategies Guide*, PMS-455, <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/455>
- Unit 7-SR1-Communication Plan Template

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Purpose of the Communication Plan

- The plan identifies what to do
- The plan provides accountability by setting schedules, timeframes, and naming responsible individuals.



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- Effective communication is the bottom line of the team's efforts.
- Developing a communication plan is not just to produce a plan, but to bring results.
- It identifies what to do.
- A plan provides accountability by setting schedules, timeframes, and naming responsible individuals.
- Always work with your agency Public Affairs Officer when developing a plan.

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Elements of a Communication Plan

- Introduction
- Background
- SMART Objectives
- Strategy
- Audience
- Messages
- Evaluation
- Tactics



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Communication Plan-Introduction



- This is a short description of the project.
- Why the team is there?
- What led up to ordering a FPET?

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Communication Plan-Background

- **What's the situation?**
- **Why is the team doing this plan?**
- **What led to it?**
- **Has anything else been done?**
- **What's the attitude of the audience?**
- **Does it tie to some other plan?**
- **How does this plan support agency goals?**

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Communication Plan-Objectives

- **Must be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely. (SMART)**
- **What needs to be different as a result?**
- **What does the audience need to do?**
- **Every element in the plan needs to be related to the objectives.**

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- Does the target audience need to:
 - Become aware of something?
 - Change their attitude?
 - Change their behavior?

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Communication Plan-Strategy

- How are the objectives going to be met?
- Use clear, simple ideas.
- Where can the team put in the best effort?



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Communication Plan-Audience

- Determine focus by types and categories of people.
- What audiences are the greatest threat to the project?



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- The team can't possibly contact everybody
 - Focus on those with the most influence.
 - Where can the team be most effective?

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Communication Plan-Audience

- **Who offers the greatest opportunities?**
- **Who will take action?**
- **Who has influence to help accomplish the projects?**

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Communication Plan-Messages

- What does the audience need to know?
- KIS (Keep It Simple) - can they remember it?
- Use the three-by-three formula.
- Remember the 3-30-3 Rule



TAKE AIM
PREVENT WILDFIRES

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- Key messages need to be few and simple.
- The three by three formula is three headlines and three supporting statements for each headline.
- The 3-30-3 rule is three seconds to get attention, thirty seconds of focused view time, and the most involved people will consider the topic for up to three minutes.

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Communication Plan-Evaluation

- How effective were the communications?
- How was effectiveness measured?
- Have the objectives been met?
- Have you remained flexible enough to account for change?
- Continually update the host unit.

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- It is important to use a quantifiable method for evaluation and be realistic about your results so that you know if what you're doing is working.

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Communication Plan-Tactics

- **What's going to be done to meet the objectives?**
 - Tactics reinforce strategy.
 - Tactics flow from strategy.
 - Consider staff, budget, time, complexity, etc.
 - Include a timeline.
 - Include assigned responsibility.
 - Build in two-way communication.

- Are people available with the skills to do what needs to be done? Is there money? The time?

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Communication Plan-Tactics

- **Benefits of two-way communication**
 - Higher success rate
 - A way to measure effectiveness: people can express themselves and provide feedback, if necessary.
 - People can ask questions.
 - People can offer creative ideas.
 - Challenges can be addressed.

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Exercise - Develop a Communication Plan



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Exercise

Title: Develop a Communication Plan

Time: (40:00) plus 5 minutes per group presentation

- Divide into groups and make assignments (30 minutes for preparation, 5 minutes for each presentation, 10 minutes for discussion).
- Assign coaches to teams.
- Teams will use the scenario provided in Unit 2 to develop a Communication Plan. A sample of Communication templates can be provided by the cadre for the teams to look through and select; the Unit 7-HO1-Sample Communication Plan is just one such example.
- Groups go to break-out rooms and do assignment.
- Groups return to the main room and present their plans.
- Instructor to facilitate discussion around the process and plans that were presented.

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Review Unit Objectives

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- Review objectives with students.