

Tool: Planning your communication project



What can I do with this tool?

Planning the organization of your communication interventions is a smart thing to do. The Designing phase will help you to divide tasks and responsibilities for you, your team and partners. It defines who does what and when. It will also help you to gain insight in feasibility of your ambition to reach the first doable sub goal. For whom is this tool meant?

For professionals who help implement international agreements on biodiversity, climate change and sustainable development

What knowledge is presumed for using this tool?

To effectively use this tool, it is required to understand Key subjects 1, 2, and 3 of the [course Strategic communication](#) on [Frogleaps.org](#).

When can I use it?

You need to look at the overall planning at the Understanding phase, more concrete planning in the designing phase once you have defined the first doable sub goal. And you need to do really detailed planning at the start of the executing phase.

How can I plan my communication project?

Your strategic communication project starts with planning. You have a picture of what you want to accomplish. You need a rough outline of the timing of the Understanding, the Designing and the Executing phase.

However, you don't know yet on which sub goal your project focuses, before analyzing and redefining the issue. You don't know yet which role your partners will play, until you accomplished the Understanding phase. And you don't know yet what the project's objectives are and which means and media you will use, until you realized the Designing phase.

So in most cases, you will repeat planning & organizing several times during your strategic communication project:

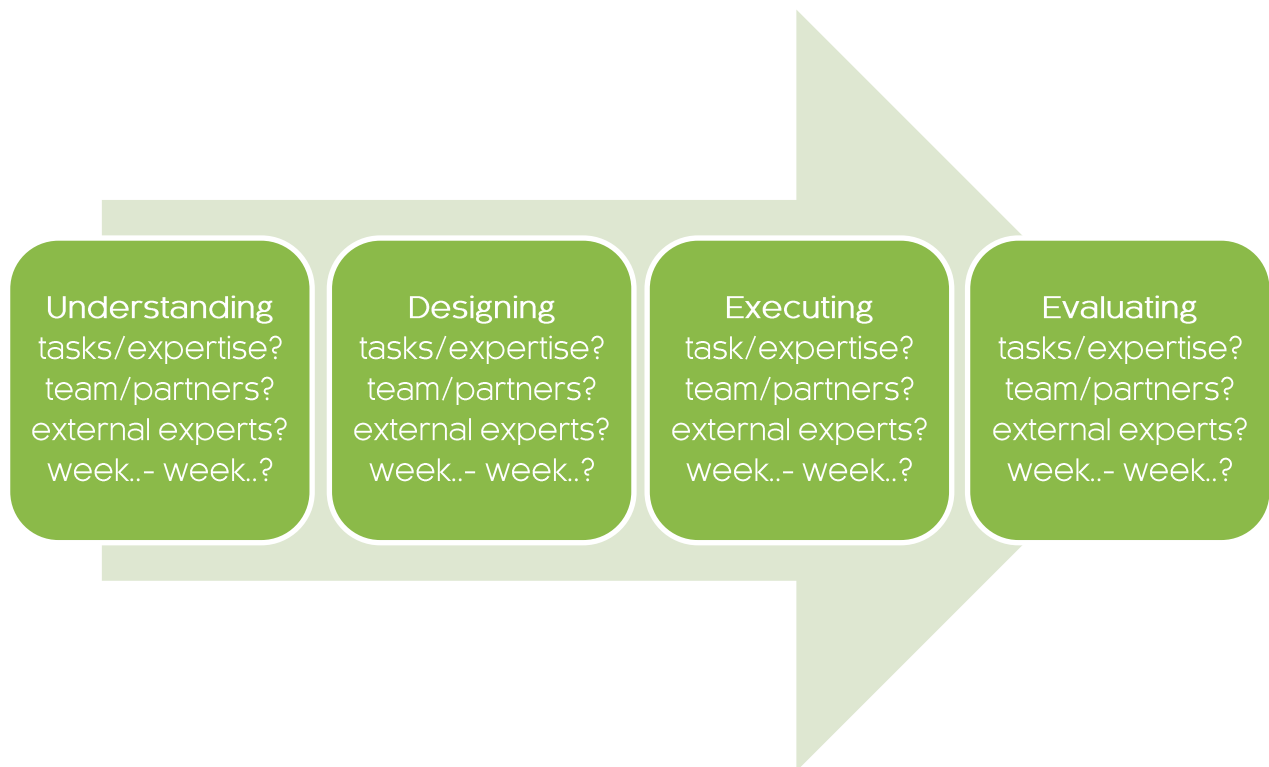
- You start with a rough outline of the Understanding, Designing, Executing and Evaluating phase. You form a project team with members of your organization, divide tasks and responsibilities and you set milestones for the main phases.
- Then you make a detailed organizing & planning of the Understanding phase.
- After the Understanding phase, you can plan & organize the Designing phase.
- When you know which concrete objectives and actions are needed, you can organize & plan the Executing phase.
- You can plan & organize the Evaluation phase at the same time and fine tune the plan after the Executing phase.

Step 1. First rough planning

When you start your first phase of your Communication project, you can only plan in detail the understanding phase. However it is useful to already think of the other phases and make a first assessment what you may need in terms of time and expertise. This will help you make a first estimate of the overall budget of time you may need to spend on the whole project.

To have such an first estimate is an important issue to get the buy in from you manager of superior. It also helps you formulate tasks and identify the needed expertise. Here you have to reflect honestly whether you can do everything yourself or whether you need help from your colleagues or external expertise.

You will see that in the other phases, especially in the executing phase you will be able to plan more in detail. Here you see the different phases and the main questions you have to ask yourself for planning and organization purposes.



Where do I start? Planning the understanding phase

It is advisable to plan as much as possible with your team and partners. Here an example is given how you can structure such a brainstorm. In the example a first idea is given of possible tasks and expertise. It is important not to forget internal communication in your planning.

What	Tasks	Expertise	Who	When
Goal & first doable step	Team brainstorm on issue	Strategic planning		Week 1
Stakeholder analysis	Visits, interviews, focus groups, etc.	Listening, interviewing, Relationship building		Week 2-4
Entering into partnership	Round table discussions	Facilitation multi-stakeholder dialogues		Week 6
Understanding audiences	Round table, surveys, interviews	Analysis of knowledge, attitudes and behavior		Week 7 - 8
Role of Communication	Strategic analysis	Strategic communication		Week 9 - 10
Need other instruments?	Strategic analysis	Strategic communication		Week 9 - 10
Internal communication	Report to line manager Staff meetings, internal mail	Writing and reporting skills		Week 1 - 10

Example of planning the designing phase

It is advisable to plan as much as possible with your team and partners. Here an example is given how you can structure such a brainstorm. In the example a first idea is given of possible tasks and expertise. It is important not to forget internal communication in your planning.

What	Tasks	Expertise	Who	When
<i>Change strategy</i>	Round table, team brainstorm meeting	Facilitation multi-stakeholder dialogues Project management		Week 11
<i>Objectives (knowledge, attitudes, behavior)</i>	Round table, team brainstorm meeting	Facilitation multi-stakeholder dialogues Strategic communication		Week 12
<i>Communication messages</i>	Round table, team brainstorm meeting	Facilitation multi-stakeholder dialogues Strategic communication		Week 12
<i>Communication means</i>	Round table, team brainstorm meeting	Facilitation multi-stakeholder dialogues Strategic communication		Week 13
<i>Evaluation methodology (criteria to measure success)</i>	Round table, team brainstorm meeting	Facilitation multi-stakeholder dialogues Project management		Week 14
<i>Internal communication</i>	Report to line manager Staff meetings, internal mail	Writing and reporting skills		Week 11-14

Example of planning the executing phase

It is advisable to plan as much as possible with your team and partners. Here an example is given how you can structure such a brainstorm. In the example a first idea is given of possible tasks and expertise. It is important not to forget internal and external communication in your planning.

What	Tasks	Expertise	Who	When
Planning	Round table, team brainstorm meeting	Facilitation multi-stakeholder dialogues Project management		Week ..
Budgeting	Round table, team brainstorm meeting	Facilitation multi-stakeholder dialogues Project management		Week ..
Briefing	Round table, team brainstorm meeting, face to face meetings with partners	Project management		Week ..
Communicating	Round table, team brainstorm meeting	Facilitation multi-stakeholder dialogues Project management		Week ..

Example of planning the executing phase

It is advisable to plan as much as possible with your team and partners. Here an example is given how you can structure such a brainstorm. In the example a first idea is given of possible tasks and expertise. It is important not to forget internal and external communication in your planning.

Planning the executing phase

It is advisable to plan as much as possible with your team and partners. Here an example is given how you can structure such a brainstorm. In the example a first idea is given of possible tasks and expertise. It is important not to forget internal communication in your planning. For this phase much more detailed planning is possible and needed. It is best to see this as a project and use project management tools you can download for free from internet.

What	Tasks	Expertise	Who	When
Planning	Round table, team brainstorm meeting	Facilitation multi-stakeholder dialogues Project management		Week:
Budgeting	Round table, team brainstorm meeting	Facilitation multi-stakeholder dialogues Project management		Week:
Briefing	Round table, team brainstorm meeting, face to face meetings with partners	Project management		Week:
Communicating	Round table, team brainstorm meeting	Facilitation multi-stakeholder dialogues Project management		Week:

Planning the evaluating phase

It is advisable to plan as much as possible with your team and partners. Here an example is given how you can structure such a brainstorm. In the example a first idea is given of possible tasks and expertise. It is important not to forget internal and external communication in your planning.

What	Tasks	Expertise	Who	When
Check deliverables	Desk research, photos, newspaper articles	Project management		Week:
Impact on stakeholders	Interviews, surveys, joint evaluation session			Week:
Identify learning	Interviews, surveys, joint evaluation session			Week:
Internal communication	Report to line manager Staff meetings, internal mail	Writing and reporting skills		Week:
External communication	External report, video with testimonials, exhibition	Writing, reporting and audio-visual skills		Week: