

Action Steps for Creating a Communication Plan

This plan ensures clear communication about issues important to everyone. Use the six steps in this document with teams when an outcome is to include others in knowing what is being accomplished and why.

1. Take one new idea that the school would like to work on. This is typically about an effort that will impact the entire school. These ideas might have emerged from goal setting exercises or school or team meetings.
 - Establish a solid rationale for why the school wants to try it. One question to ask is, “What data do we have to support this action?”
 - Make clear any changes that will occur.
2. Think about whom the decision will impact.
 - List all stakeholder groups and whether the impact will be small or large. Rate the impact: 1 is no impact or very small impact, 2 is small impact, 3 is medium impact, and 4 is large impact.
 - Discuss with the team the key messages to communicate with each stakeholder group.
3. Teams gather feedback from others, especially the groups who will experience a medium or large impact.
 - Use the “Communication Plan” worksheet to specify who needs what communication and other details.
 - Use the “Our Way of Communicating” worksheet to create a visual representation that includes all stakeholders.
 - Share with key stakeholders and get their opinions.
 - Debrief as a leadership team to consider all perspectives, and anticipate challenges to the implementation.
4. Establish periodic meeting times for the group to come back together and report on progress. Also, use this time to address any concerns or voice any positives that have occurred.
 - Gather feedback from multiple stakeholder groups regarding the implementation.
 - List the positives and negatives associated with people’s perception of the change.
5. After implementing the change, return to the chart. Are there any gaps in the communication plan? Use this information to plan for the next time.

6. With your leadership team, the team that is a conduit for all other teams, decide how to publicly celebrate individual or group successes. The leadership team might choose to get ideas from the other teams they represent. You could use faculty meetings, newsletters, staff updates, or bulletin boards as a time or place. Consider using the “Our School’s Strengths” or the “Sharing and Celebrating Our Work” worksheets.
 - a. Early in the process of promoting collaborative leadership, ask others for their input on what should be recognized in order to show growth in the process.
 - b. Use the “Leading a Celebration” worksheet to list no more than seven items on which you wish to focus and celebrate growth this year. Decide how often—weekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly—you are going to recognize achievement on each item.
 - c. During an established time, such as a faculty meeting, go through the “Leading a Celebration” worksheet and mark each item with *B* for beginning, *I* for implementing, or *S* for sustaining.
 - d. Use the worksheet and “Here’s to You” to guide your focus prior to the next meeting.
 - e. At the end of the year, celebrate the growth that has occurred and is documented on the chart.
 - f. Ask others what the celebration should be—such as treats in the lounge, gifts for the teachers, recognition in a parent newsletter, and so on.