



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

MIGRATION PLANNING GUIDANCE DELIVERABLES

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

May 23, 2008

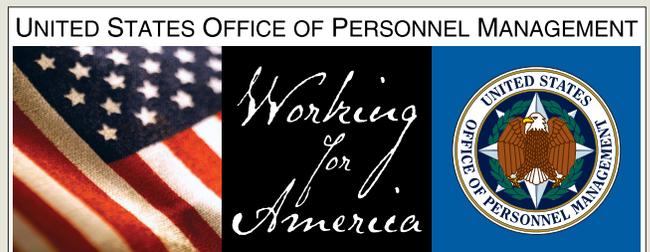


Table Of Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Building the Communications Plan	2
2.1 Communication Goals	2
2.2 Communication Strategy	3
2.3 The Environment and Key Stakeholders	3
2.4 Communication Tactics	3

1. Introduction

During periods of change, it is critical to have clear and frequent communication. Key Stakeholders are more likely to accept and be supportive of their migration to a Shared Service Center (SSC) if they understand what is happening; why it is happening; what to expect; how it will affect them; and how they will be supported throughout the implementation process. The best way to ensure a smooth migration for key stakeholders is through a communications plan. A communications plan aims to satisfy the issues and concerns of groups who can impact or be impacted by the changes resulting from project activities. It will ensure key stakeholders impacted by migration have the information they need to prepare for and manage migration of selected functions to a SSC environment. This document provides instructions and guidelines on how to complete an effective communications plan.

Each SSC should work with each migrating agency and its Public Affairs Office to develop a communications plan. The SSC working with the migrating agency will complete and submit the Communications Plan to the Human Resources Line of Business Project Management Office (HR LOB PMO).

2. Building the Communications Plan

A comprehensive communications plan includes the following steps:

1. Listing the primary goals – What do we want this communications effort to accomplish?
2. Creating a strategy – Who is the target audience and why do we want to reach them?
3. Understanding the environment – Who is impacted and who are we trying to reach?
4. Identifying Tactics – How do we achieve our goals?

Examples of each step are provided below.

2.1 Communication Goals

The first step in any communications plan is to define the primary goals. A goal is only valuable if its success can be measured.

In addition to the overall goal, there may be a need to develop specific goals for specific components of the effort. When developing goals, consider the extent to which the goal will reach the target audience.

Goals should ensure impact and must always be measurable and specific. If a goal is properly stated, meaning it is measurable and specific, then it will be easy to determine when the goal is met and to what degree.

2.2 Communication Strategy

The Communication Strategy defines who the target audience of the communications plan is and why. A strategy establishes a process to ensure that consistent, accurate, and clear information is being delivered. It will also ensure there are opportunities for feedback since one-way communication is not sufficient. There are two main parts to a communications strategy:

1. List the groups relevant to the communications plan
2. Create a message for each group as to why it should be motivated to accomplish the goals of the communication plan.

Specifically, the communications strategy for an agency migrating to a SSC should:

1. Build awareness of the importance of migration to a shared service center environment
2. Create understanding and acceptance among the stakeholders of the changes resulting from migration
3. Involve stakeholders by creating opportunities for dialogue and feedback

2.3 The Environment and Key Stakeholders

After the strategy for achieving the primary goals of the communications plan is decided, the next step is to document and understand the current environment and to list all the audiences that may be influenced or affected by the Communications Plan. This list may include the HR LOB initiative and its impact on the migrating agency as well as the environment at the agency that is being affected. Below are three examples of research methods that can be used to understand the current environment of a migrating agency.

- Issue research – understand the subject matter involved
- Internet research – use tools such as the Office of Personnel Management HR LOB and Office of Management and Budget E-Gov websites
- Environmental research – study the overall communications context in which communication will be conducted

2.4 Communication Tactics

Communication tactics are specific activities used to help reach the primary goals and objectives of the communications plan. They are the “How” and “When.” Timing and costs are often associated with communication tactics. Communication planners should use the most resource-efficient method to carry out a communication tactic. Key questions that drive the development of communications tactics include:

Communications Plan

1. How can we best communicate to each audience?
2. When must certain messages be delivered to allow time for assimilation of change? .

Since each of the stakeholder groups has unique information needs, key messages identified during the creation of the communication strategy should be mapped to each stakeholder group. The Shared Service Center should identify the tactics for communicating the key messages. Examples of key messages that should be used during a migration to a shared service center environment are provided below.

- Communicate HR LOB vision
- Communicate migration logistics
- Provide status information at key milestones
- Transfer knowledge related to processes, policy and systems to support ongoing operations
- Engage and maintain full involvement
- Build ownership for migration activities
- Support role as change leader



UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
1900 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20415