

## Communications Plans' Best Practices Checklist

- Must be sponsored by the leader
- Must support the unit's missions and goals, be dynamic and promote accountability, and focus on outcomes
- Describes who the main audiences are and identifies the messages that need to be communicated
- Strategically considers the desired reputation and relationships throughout the process and beyond
- Should link to the unit's annual plan, provide built-in metrics to determine success of the communication effort
- Includes research on the current situation, the organization, and audience members
- Is informed by a SWOT analysis to target areas of strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats
- Aligns to SMART goals (specific, measurable, accountable, realistic, and time-bound)
- Identifies a mix of media to ensure successful delivery of messages (web, email, video, print, face-to-face, group, 1-1)
- Begins with the end in mind – anticipates how results will be evaluated by the strategic team leading the change

Elements include:

- Title page
- Executive summary
- Explains the benefits of the communication plan
- Articulates the current situation
- Recommends proposed communication actions and plans
- Includes an evaluation plan for measuring the success of the communication plan