

Head Start A to Z Communication Resources



THE NATIONAL CENTER ON
**Program Management
and Fiscal Operations**

Effective communication is the key to the success of a program in meeting the needs of children and families. There are many pieces to communication in the workplace and some have legal and cultural implications. This list of resources is not exhaustive. These resources are a starting point for delving deeper into a topic or piece of communication. Many are 1 to 2 page overviews, which can be found on the internet. As always, it is important that you check with your regional office, funders, state offices, and HR advisors to ensure that you are complying with expectations, regulations, and laws.

Communication Planning and Systems

Resource	Description	Source
Communicating Audits: How Effectively Are You Communicating	Summarizes the purpose of a communications audit, gives recommendations for how to initiate an audit, and lists important components, objectives, and strategies.	https://charityvillage.com/Content.aspx?topic=communications_audits_how_effectively_are_you_communicating Susan Scott, August 27, 2007
Internal Communications Toolkit	A comprehensive toolkit that takes you through the three stages of internal communications planning: the communications audit, establishing a plan and strategies, and evaluating your efforts. Includes sample surveys, planning templates, etc.	http://www.civicus.org/resources/toolkits/265-internal-communication-toolkit9 Hume, J., 2011 CIVICUS

Maximize the Value of Communications: Conducting a Communications Audit/Assessment	Recommends customizable procedures to be included in a communications assessment.	http://www.jrsconsulting.net/free_articles_1.html Jenny Schade, 2008 JRS Consulting, Inc.
Network Patterns and Analysis: Underused Resources to Improve Communication Effectiveness	Describes the most common communication networks (or communication flow).	http://www.nationalforum.com/Electronic%20Journal%20Volumes/Lunenburg.%20Fred%20C%20Network%20Patterns%20and%20Analysis%20NFEASJ%20V28%20N4%202011.pdf National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal Volume 28, Number 4, 2011
Strategic Communications Audits	Provides detailed tools for one approach to conducting a comprehensive communications audit.	http://www.ccmc.org/sites/default/files/WorkingPaper1.pdf Julia Coffman, October 2004
Ten Steps for Conducting a Communications Audit	A step-by-step plan for organizing a communications audit, including questions to consider and methods of analysis.	http://www.urbanwordsgroup.com/tensteps.pdf Kaitlin Smith UrbanWords Group
Tips for Establishing an Effective Communication System	Lists suggested methods for directors and staff to communicate with different groups (e.g. families, governing bodies, etc.)	http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/ta-system/operations/mgmt-admin/communication/comm-sys/manage_fts_00023a_052006.html HHS/ACF/ACYF/HSB, 2006

Communication Skills and Tips

We have many modes for communicating, e.g. email, texting, voicemail, etc. What we are often missing is the time and focus to connect and really listen. How and when to use a particular mode is important. In addition, effective listening builds relationships, resolves conflict, ensures accuracy, improves efficiency, and decreases stress.

Resource	Description	Source
“Are You Really Listening?” “Effective Communication Strategies”	Two posters, for the Stress poster packets from the Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, providing tips and strategies for effective communication.	http://www.ecmhc.org/documents/CECMHC_GrafittiPosters.pdf
How to Improve Internal Communication: Guidelines for Nonprofit Managers	Provides guidelines on what managers need to do, symptoms of internal communication breakdown, and how to use internal media or modes of communication effectively.	Larry Lauer, May/June 1994 Nonprofit World Vol. 12, No.3
The Discipline of Listening	Tips for leaders on becoming a more empathetic and effective listener.	http://blogs.hbr.org/2012/06/the-discipline-of-listening/ Ram Charan, June 21, 2012 HBR Blog Network
10 Steps To Effective Listening	Ten tips to help you develop effective listening skills.	http://www.forbes.com/sites/womensmedia/2012/11/09/10-steps-to-effective-listening/ Schilling, D., November 9, 2012 ForbesWoman
10 Common Communication Mistakes: Avoiding Communication Blunders and Misunderstandings	Common communication mistakes to avoid. Includes the tip that bad news should be delivered in person and never via email or text.	http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/common-communication-mistakes.htm Mind Tools

Conflict: Being Proactive and Resolution

Conflict in the workplace is inevitable. How it is addressed is what matters.

Resource	Description	Source
Conflict Resolution: Resolving Conflict Rationally and Effectively	Describes two theories for effective conflict resolution: the Thomas–Kilman conflict resolution styles and the “Interest-Based Relational Approach.” By understanding how people react to conflict and establishing some foundational understandings, one can move towards a 5-step process for resolving a conflict in the workplace.	http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_81.htm Mind Tools
Resolving Team Conflict: Building Stronger Teams by Facing Your Differences	The author states that “Healthy and constructive conflict is a component of high-functioning teams.” What follows are some steps and tips on resolving and preventing team conflict.	http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM_79.htm Mind Tools
Want Collaboration? Accept—And Actively Manage—Conflict	Discusses the process for and the necessity of establishing an integrated conflict resolution process for your organization.	Weiss, J. and Jonathan Hughes, March 2005 Harvard Business Review

Head Start Specific Resources

Resource	Description	Source
45 CFR 1304.51 (b-f) Communications	Head Start standard that applies to the communication management system. Head Start programs are required to establish and implement systems to ensure that timely and accurate information is provided to parents, policy groups, staff, and the general community.	http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/ta-system/operations/mgmt-admin/communication/comm-sys/manage_fts_00023a1_052006.html

Communication on ECLKC	Link to the communication sections on PMFO's website on ECLKC.	http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/ta-system/operations/mgmt-admin/communication
Head Start Acronyms	A list of acronyms often used in Head Start.	http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/ta-system/operations/mgmt-admin/hr/staff-dev/HeadStartAcrony.htm
Revisiting and Updating the Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs Serving Children Ages Birth to Five	Provides recent research and perspectives on key multicultural principles and offers guidance to HS staff on how to implement these principles in their programs.	http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/ta-system/operations/mgmt-admin/diversity/multiculturalism/revisiting.htm
Tips for Establishing an Effective Communication System	Program staff can use this tip sheet to identify strategies for establishing an effective communication system.	http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/ta-system/operations/mgmt-admin/communication/comm-sys/manage_fts_00023a_052006.html HHS/ACF/ACYF/HSB, 2006

Marketing

Nonprofit marketing is the use of for-profit marketing strategies to reach out to the community and garner involvement and support. Its focus is usually fundraising, but it can extend to much more than that—for example, recruiting families and volunteers, connecting with potential partners, and celebrating successes in order to strengthen your program.

Resource	Description	Source
Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die	Sharing successful and unsuccessful real-life examples of messaging to identify and explain six traits for effectively communicating winning ideas.	Heath, C. and Dan Heath, 2007

Robin Hood Marketing: Stealing Corporate Savvy to Sell Just Causes	Provides examples and steps for ethically and effectively marketing good causes.	Andresen, K., 2006 John Wiley & Sons
Suffering from Information Overload? Help your product, service or issue stand out	In this age of information overload, tips on making your message stand out.	http://clearlanguageatwork.com/documents/Drowning_In_Information.pdf

Plain Language

Plain language is focused on the reader and clear communication. It is about writing so the reader is able to receive, understand, and act on the information being given. It is not about making it so simple that you talk down to your reader, instead it is about being inclusive.

Resource	Description	Source
Center for Plain Language	The resources page for the Center for Plain Language provides tips and resources on getting started using plain language. Includes a definition and guidelines of plain language.	http://centerforplainlanguage.org/resources/
Clear Language at Work, Inc.	Information and resources to ensure that your internal and external communications are clear.	http://clearlanguageatwork.com/
Plain Language.Gov	Tips and tools from the federal government's website on plain language.	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/index.cfm

Social Media

Social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.), computers, and smartphones have made communication among individuals and groups easier and more fluid. These tools can produce both positive and negative impacts on your organization. The positive impacts may include an increase in donors, volunteers, and enrollment. The negative may end up tarnishing your program's reputation and could even have legal ramifications. It is strongly recommended that all organizations develop a social media policy as it pertains to marketing and human resources (HR). As with other HR related policies, it is important to get legal advice to ensure that your organization is in compliance with pertinent labor laws and/or union contracts.

Resource	Description	Source
Creating A Social Media Policy	A description of components and considerations when developing a social media policy.	http://www.techsoup.org/support/articles-and-how-tos/creating-a-social-media-policy# Berry, A. and Ben Stuart, 2012 Idealware
NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment	NAEYC's position statement on ethics when it comes to children, families, work colleagues, and the community. You may want to use it as a foundation and reasoning for your social media policy.	http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSETH05.pdf National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2011
Nonprofit Social Media Policy Workbook	In depth guide for developing and establishing a social media policy. Includes templates and worksheets.	http://www.idealware.org/sites/idealware.org/files/sm_policy_full_web_version.pdf Idealware, 2012
Social Media Policies: What They Are and Why Your Organization Should Have One	A clear, concise explanation on why a social media policy is needed and considerations and general guidelines for a policy.	http://www.probonopartner.org/FileLib/Documents/socialmediapolicies.pdf Pro Bono Partnership, 2013

Labor Laws and Regulations

There are federal laws, particularly those having to do with discrimination, that impact communication in the workplace (for example, sexual harassment laws). It is your legal and ethical responsibility, as an employer, to ensure that all laws are complied with. Your state labor office may have additional laws that you need to be aware of to ensure a non-hostile work environment.

Resource	Description	Source
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)	Enforces statutes that insure non-discrimination in the workplace.	A list of the laws enforced by the EEOC http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/index.cfm
Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA):	A division of the Department of Labor. Its mission is “to assure safe and healthful workplaces by setting and enforcing standards, and by providing training, outreach, education and assistance.”	A list of health and safety laws and regulations overseen by OSHA https://www.osha.gov/law-regs.html
State Laws and Regulations	In addition to federal laws and regulations, each state and possibly your county and/or city may have additional requirements for employers.	The Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division (WHD): has an updated list of state labor offices. http://www.dol.gov/whd/state/state.htm

Other Related Topics

Resource	Description	Source
Emotional Intelligence Developing Strong "People Skills"	An overview of emotional intelligence, the ability to recognize your emotions and how they affect people around you, and your perception and understanding of other's emotions. Cites Daniel Goleman's five elements of emotional intelligence.	http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newCDV_59.htm Podmoroff, D.
Why Knowledge Management Is Important To The Success Of Your Company	The author cites three reasons for why knowledge management is important for an organization's success: "1.) Facilitates decision-making capabilities, 2.) Builds learning organizations by making learning routine, and, 3.) Stimulates cultural change and innovation."	http://www.forbes.com/sites/lisaquast/2012/08/20/why-knowledge-management-is-important-to-the-success-of-your-company/ Quast, L. (8/20/2012) Forbes
The Learning Organization: Principles, Theory and Practice	Effective communication is essential when it comes to team learning and having a shared vision (two of the disciplines Peter Senge cites as essential for becoming a <i>learning organization</i>). <i>The Learning Organization: Principles, Theory and Practice</i> is an overview of the theory, principles, and definitions of the <i>learning organization</i> . It includes a resource list to help you get started in making yours a learning organization.	http://www.infed.org/biblio/learning-organization.htm . Smith, M. K., 2001 The Encyclopedia of Informal Education
Mixing and Managing Four Generations of Employees	Examines generational divides in the workplace in terms of motivation, work ethic, communications style, etc. Gives ideas for addressing conflicts that result from these differences.	http://www.fdu.edu/newspubs/magazine/05ws/generations.htm Hammill, G., Winter/Spring 2005 EduMagazine Online