# Diploma of Community Services

## CHCCOM003 – Develop Workplace Communication Strategies

**Session Two**

# Acknowledgment of Country

I would like acknowledge and pay respects to past, present; and future Elders and Traditional Custodians of the land country on which we are meeting today.
I also extend these respects to custodians & elders from other communities who may be here with us today.

Chisholm

## Content:

- Identify internal and external information needs

- Identify competing or conflicting interests

- Develop a range of communication strategies to meet organisation needs and goals

- Develop a communication plan

# Identifying internal and external information

## Internal information

Internal organisational information includes any information that staff and management require to provide effective services and interact with stakeholders. Information needs to be current and accurate and easy to access for all staff. This information could be policies and procedures, case management documentation, or internal emails and newsletters.

## External information

External information refers to any information that is available to stakeholders outside of the organisation. This information could be about services and programs the organisation delivers, fact sheets and web pages on various issues relevant to the organisation, annual reports or funding reports.

# Stakeholders:

There are various groups of people that need to receive information at particular times.

These groups include:

- internal stakeholders such as employees or team members
- Volunteers
- management personnel or senior staff and Board members
- external stakeholders such as people receiving services, government agencies, businesses and groups the organisation has dealings with
- funding bodies
- other community services organisations
- the general public

**Activity**

1. Name two types of external information needs.

2. Who are two internal stakeholders within an organisation?

# Competing or conflicting interests

At times both within an organisation and between stakeholders there may be competing or conflicting interests. You may need to identify any possible conflicts of interest and have clear organisational policies regarding disclosure of competing interests by staff and management.

Competing interests or conflicts refer to any situation where a staff member or organisation's primary interest may be influenced by a secondary interest.

- E.g. financial gain from selling the organisation case management software..

OR

- personal validation from speaking to the media

# Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest can be defined as a situation in which someone who is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made as part of their work role.

This may mean someone developing a communication strategy that will benefit themselves or someone they have a close relationship with.

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# Competing interest

Competing interests are defined as those potential influences that may undermine the objectivity or integrity of an individual or organisation.

Often competing interests can be identified through their financial component.

This means that there is a financial benefit to a person or organisation that may influence their decisions.

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# Activity

1. What are two circumstances in which you may see competing or conflicting interests?


2. What is a conflict of interest?

# Communication strategies

Communication strategies are designed to help the organisation communicate effectively and meet the organisation's objectives.
These can be done by:

- clear communication
- contingency plans for communication breakdowns
- range of strategies at various times to meet the needs of clients
- communication plans for when a crisis occurs

Different strategies are required to work effectively with different individuals and in different situations.

You will need to decide on the best strategy to communicate effectively with staff, with external stakeholders and with people receiving services.

All strategies should be a good fit with the vision and values of the organisation and strive for consistency and accuracy in sharing information.

# Range of communication strategies

1. Oral communication strategies

2. Written communication strategies

3. Minutes

4. Case notes

5. Reports

6. Proposals and submissions

7. Policies and procedures

**Activity**

Can you think of some alternative communication strategies that could assist in making information accessible to clients?

# Develop communication strategies and plans

Part of your role may include developing appropriate communication strategies and plans for your team or organisation.

A communication strategy or plan should reflect your organisation's overall strategic plan and its vision and objectives.

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You will need to consider how effective communication practices will help to achieve these objectives.

You will also need to consider who your organisation is competing with to provide services and how your communication strategies will promote your organisation ahead of the competition

# Strategic Plan

A strategic plan is an organisation's documented outline of its goals or direction and how it will achieve these goals.

It may include the organisation's vision and values, organisational goals, actions required to achieve these goals and the priorities of the organisation.

It should include communication objectives like promoting the organisation or information provision.

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# Business plan

A business plan is an organisation's business goals or objectives. It identifies the organisation's target market and outlines financial aims or issues.

As the community services sector becomes more competitive, business plans indicating funding opportunities, partnership goals and financial management are increasingly important.

The plan should include the role of communication strategies to meet these objectives.

**Activity**

What are some ways that you can gather information about what your competitors may be doing?

Think about how you can gather information or knowledge about them…

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**Organisational communication channels**

Communication channels are pathways along which information, ideas, questions, problem-solving, teamwork and creativity can all flow.

If these channels are open, then information flows with ease and communication can occur in both directions.

However, if the channels become blocked, then communication can deteriorate or even stop completely.

Organisations have sets of formal and informal protocols, and acceptable etiquette for communication.

These protocols provide guidance of what is considered acceptable communication behaviour in the organisation.

Protocols and etiquette guide:
- how staff communicate with each other
- how staff and management communicate
- how staff and the people who engage with the organisation's programs communicate

This may include ensuring that communication is respectful, that appropriate methods are used, and that the other person's culture is considered.

You also need to consider the communication channels between media including the use of digital media.

Another area to be mindful of are clients with special needs:

- Communication disabilities
- Language differences
- Cultural concerns related to gender, age, social expectations or body language

# Develop a communication plan

A communication plan is a road map for how your organisation will share information with internal and external stakeholders.

Organisations need a clear communication plan to guide communication practices.

This plan may be part of a larger business or strategic plan and should reflect the objectives and values of the organisation and needs to explore how the organisation communicates with all stakeholders both internally and externally.

# Aspects of a communication plan

1. Method of communication

2. Organisational protocols

3. Time frames

4. Identified staff

5. Organisational standards to be used

6. Identified stakeholders

# SWOT analysis

(Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

- a useful tool that is used to understand the organisation's communication strengths and weaknesses. It also allows you to identify the opportunities and threats that the organisation faces

# What to include in a communication plan

1. Methods

2. Responsibility

3. Monitoring

4. Law and ethics

# Methods

- for disseminating information include emails, SMS/text messaging, newsletters, formal reports, brochures, leaflets, posters, face-to-face contact, telephone calls, web pages and electronic devices.

- The plan should include communication strategies that continually promote the organisation and its achievements.

# Responsibility

- for disseminating information should be noted. Such tasks could be carried out by managers, team leaders or the communication officer.

- Strategies and resources for communicating with people who have English as an additional language or use assistive technologies need to be articulated.

## Monitoring

- the communication plan should outline the cycle of development, implementation, evaluation and review to ensure the strategies remain effective and meet the needs of the organisation and the individuals who work within it.

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## Law and ethics

The communication plan should take into account legislative and ethical requirements for equality and non-discrimination, as set out in:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth),
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth),
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)

# Barriers to, restraints and difficulties of communication plan

- Linguistic

- Cultural

- Physical

- Psychological

- Environmental

- Listening barriers

**Activity**

1.  Identify and list some barriers to communication.

2.  What actions you could take to address them?

# Crisis communication plans

A plan to protect the organisation's reputation and to prevent any negative threats.

If a situation or event threatens the expectations of stakeholders and can impact the organisation's performance or may lead to negative outcomes, then a crisis communication plan should be implemented.

A crisis is a serious situation and the plan should be developed to manage these rare situations.

# Strategies for crisis communication

1.  Researching information on risks specific to your organisation prior to developing the plan

2.  Having clear procedures for crisis communication, including who will make decisions and who will handle different aspects of communication

3.  Planning and preparing templates or information to release to the media or use on digital media forums

4.  Planning for how information will be disseminated in a crisis to internal and external stakeholders

5.  Evaluating the effectiveness of the plan post-crisis and make any relevant changes to the plan

# Summary

1. You need to identify the information needs of both internal and external stakeholders.

2. Communication strategies and plans need to identify competing or conflicting interests within the organisation.

3. Organisations need to develop a range of communication strategies to meet needs and goals.

4. Organisations need to consider a range of factors when developing a communication plan.

5. Organisations must consider barriers and financial implications to a communication plan.

CHASE YOUR CALLING.
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# Any questions?