

# New ABC Programme Communications Coordination Plan

December 1997

*Situation: IBM Consulting Group was engaged to assist a Mid-sized insurance company to manage a programme of 11 projects consuming 500 FTE resourcing at peak.*

*One of the elements of programme management is communications coordination.*

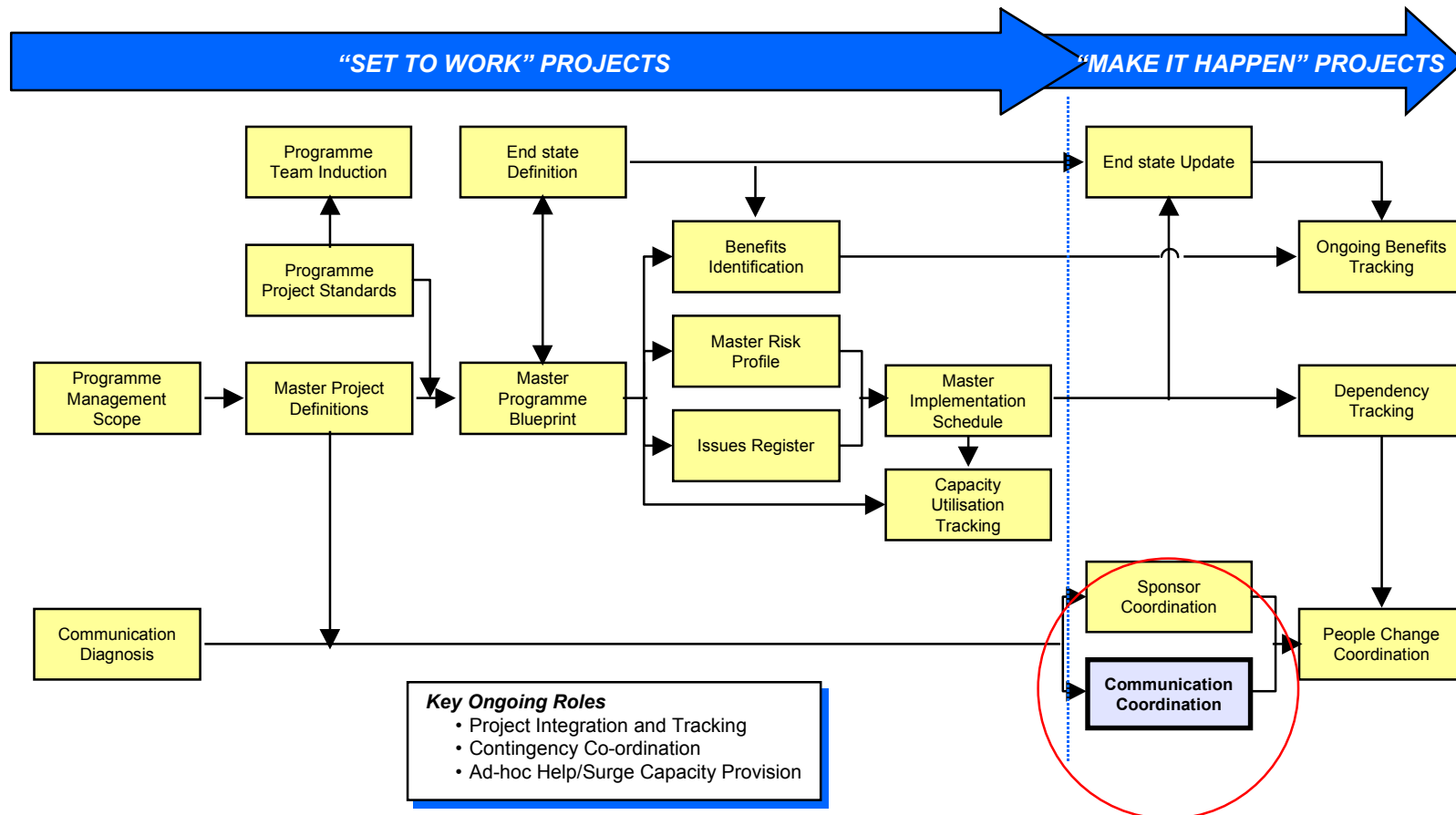
*This is that plan...*

*Russell Hoore  
May 1998*

# Where it fits

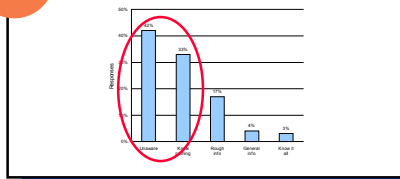
*I've attempted to submit more details on this to the Project Management competency.*  
*Russell Hoore*

## Communications Coordination a key part of the New ABC Programme Team workplan



# Approach

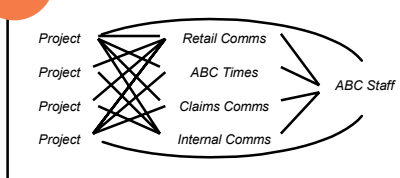
## 1 – Understand



### *Understand the problem* by...

- Surveying ABC staff on awareness, understanding and attitude towards the New ABC Programme
- Running selected focus groups to understand the reasons behind some of the attitudes

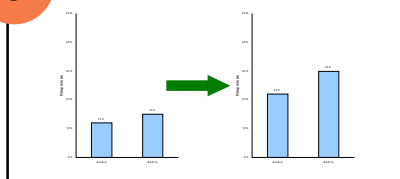
## 2 – Generate



### *Generate the preferred solution* by...

- Working with Projects to identify and prioritise the gaps that need to be closed
- Identifying the key messages needed to close the gaps
- Developing principles for communication
- Brainstorming innovative ideas to communicate the messages

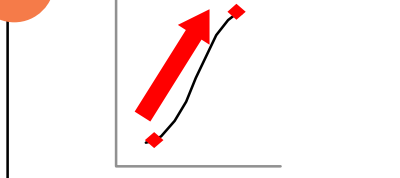
## 3 – Sell



### *Sell the preferred solution* by...

- Executing the solution on the most critical gap
- Measuring staff awareness, understanding and attitude towards the programme
- Noting the difference between the “before” and “after” measurements

## 4 – Implement



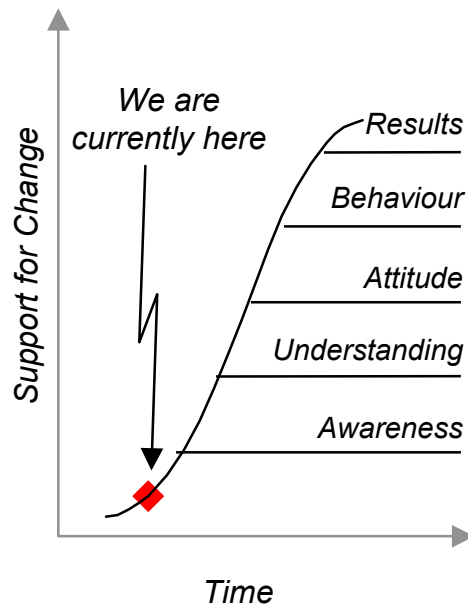
### *Implement the preferred solution* by...

- Working on the next most critical gap as above
- Turning this into a process which

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# Understanding the problem

**The success of the New ABC Programme depends on staff buy-in, yet staff are unaware and confused**



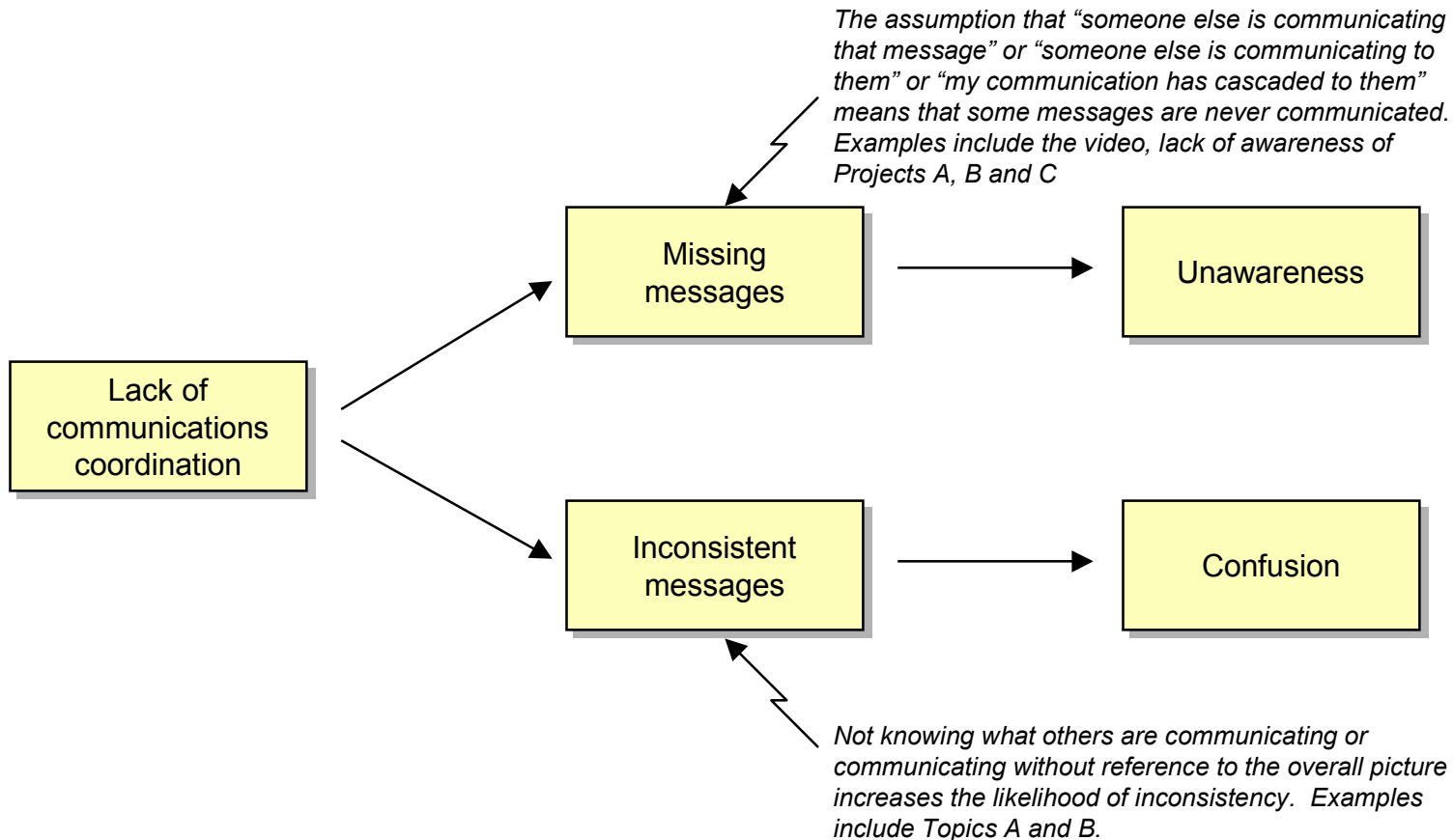
- **Overall Programme awareness is low.** In a survey carried out on 2 December 1997:
  - Over 40% of respondents were not aware of Project A, B, C
  - Three quarters of respondents had no real understanding of Project A, B, C (more staff knew about Marketing Campaign X than these)
  - Half the respondents had no real understanding of Project D, E, F
  - One third of respondents have no real understanding of The New ABC
- **Staff attitude towards the change is confused**
  - Half the respondents did not have enough information to understand how their job would be impacted
  - A recurring concern expressed was over job security

*“Real understanding” means having heard about the project and being able to answer the question “What are they working on?” with at least one correct topic area*

Source: Telephone survey of a random sample of 65 ABC staff, 2/12/97

# Understanding the cause

**Staff are unaware and confused because of lack of communications coordination**



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# Generate the preferred solution

We propose to coordinate New ABC Programme communications

## Options

	No intervention	Coordination	Control
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low effort</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buy-in from communicators</li> <li>• More easily “sold”</li> <li>• Consistent and timely messages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fast</li> <li>• Consistent and timely messages</li> </ul>
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not solve problem</li> <li>• Situation worsens as the Programme requires more from staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potentially slow</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don’t want to be a “censor”</li> <li>• Lack of credibility</li> <li>• Communication will route around control anyway</li> </ul>

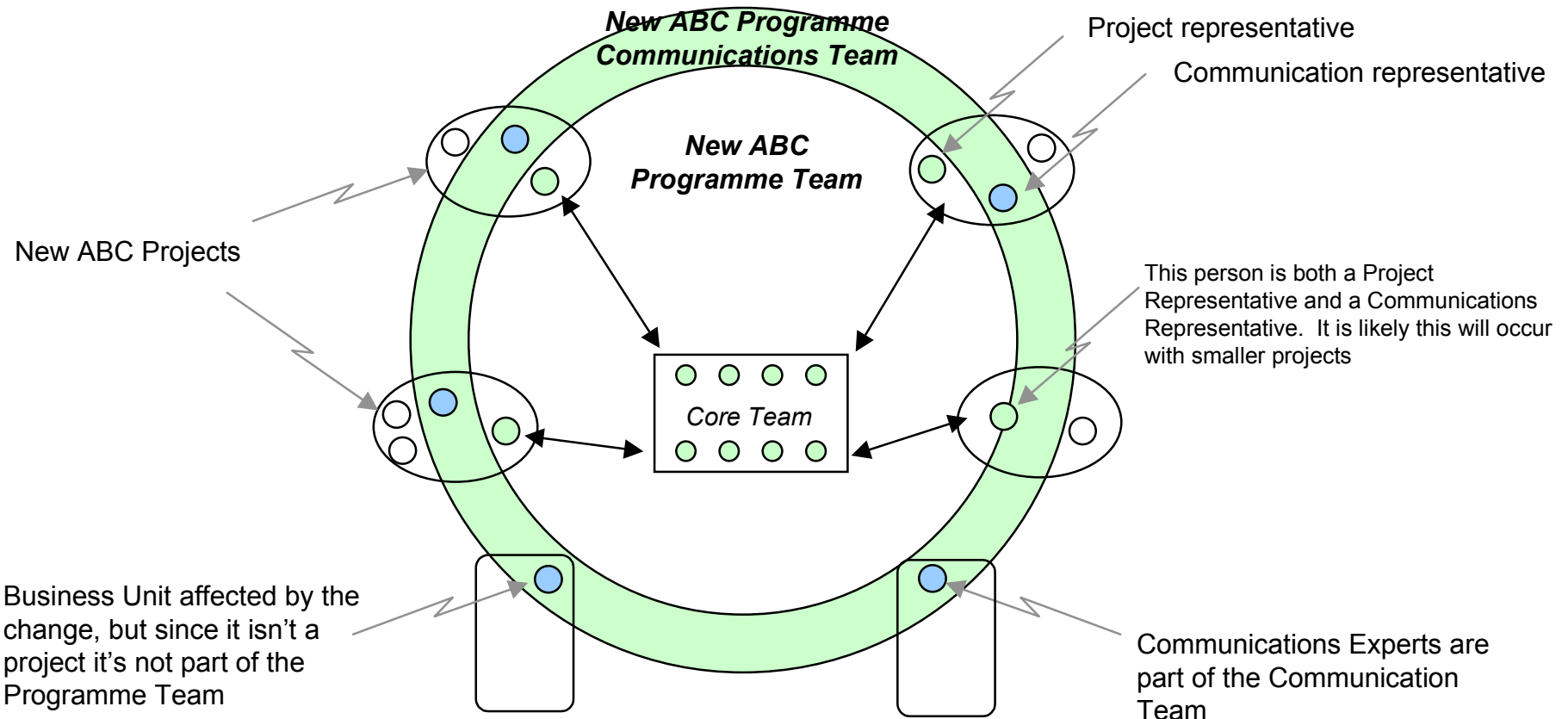


PREFERRED SOLUTION

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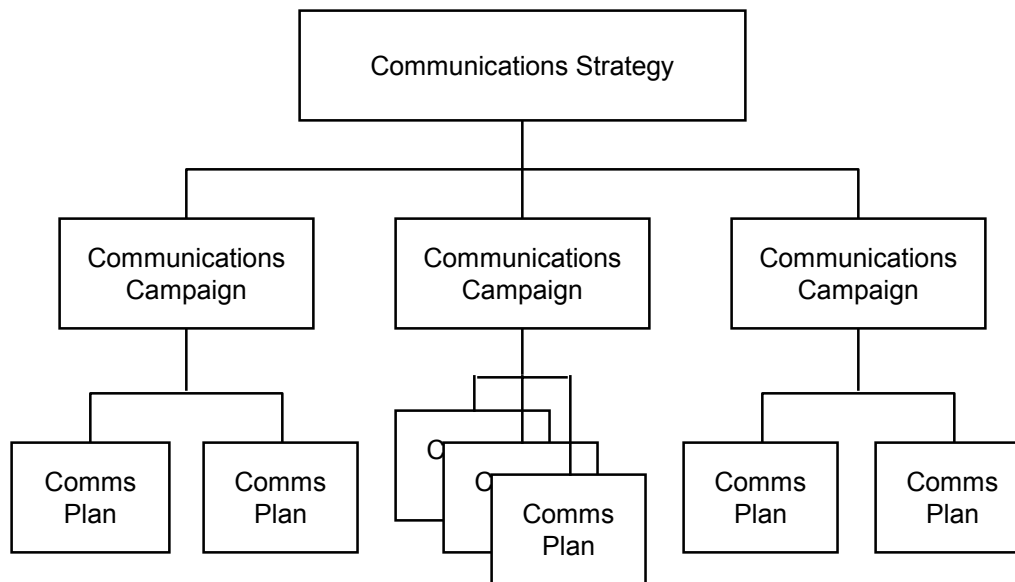
## Sell the preferred solution

A key part of the preferred solution is to involve communicators and business units in the communication by setting up a Communications Team in conjunction with the Programme Team



# Strategy

**The preferred solution will consist of strategy, campaigns and detailed plans**



*The overall approach in terms of principles and approaches that will be used in the Communications Coordination Project.*

*Defines the campaigns to be used in the Communications Coordination Project. Key components include definitions and objectives for each campaign, identification of the information requirements for each audience, and development of the key messages to be delivered in the campaign. Campaigns may overlap over time.*

*Defines the workplan and other details for accomplishing the communications.*



# Principles

**Our strategy can be summed up in a set of principles which will ensure consistency and effectiveness in the communications as it is being carried out by multiple people**

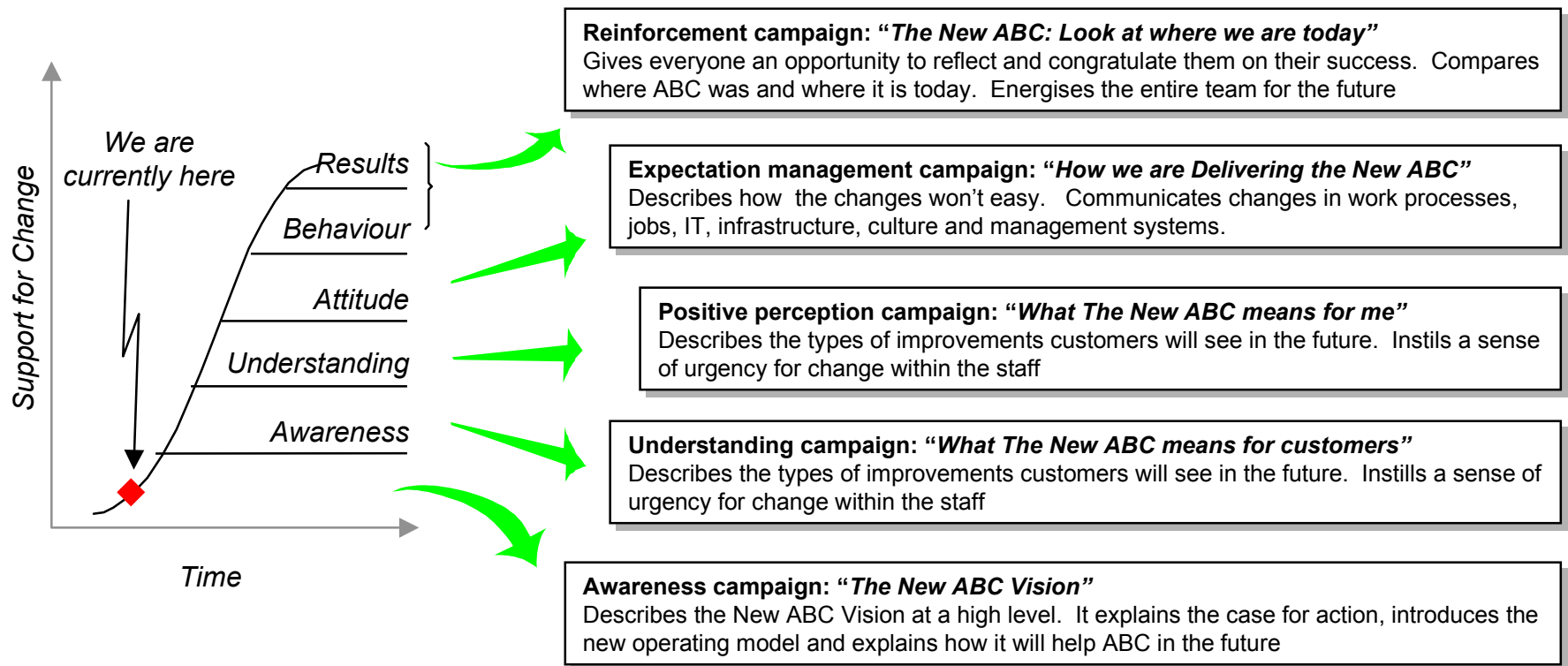
- ✓ We will present a single face of communication to ABC staff
- ✓ Each campaign will have a specific audience and objectives. At the end of each campaign, these objectives will be evaluated and appropriate follow-up measures will be taken if these objectives have not been adequately achieved
- ✓ Each campaign will focus on delivering a relatively small number of general messages multiple times through multiple communications media
- ✓ Each key message will be part of a campaign
- ✓ No key message will be delivered to any audience less than three times
- ✓ Communication delivery will be done by the most credible sources for that message
- ✓ Feedback will be designed into every communication
- ✓ All feedback will be acknowledged, reviewed and if appropriate, actioned
- ✓ The campaign messages will be written to accurately and honestly portray important information, even if it will be viewed negatively

PENALTY FOR BREACH: DOUGHNUTS AND STICKY BUNS



# Communication campaigns

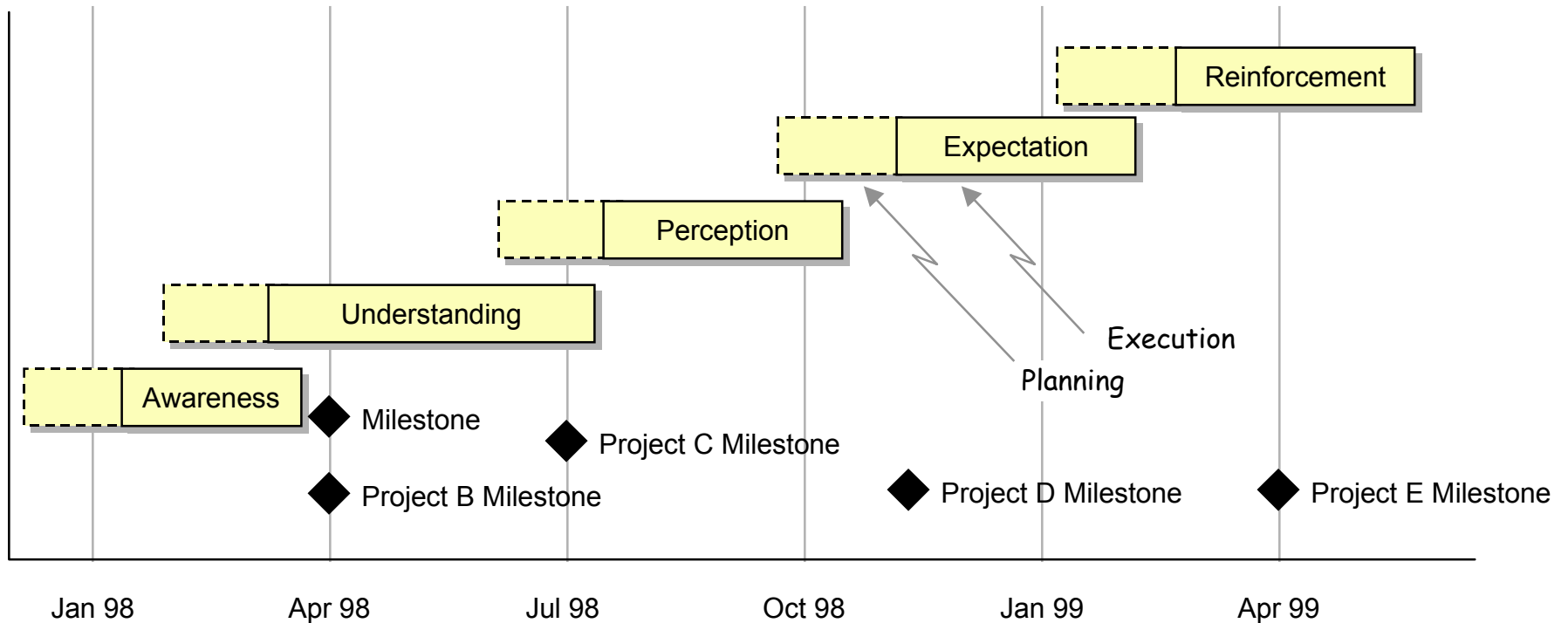
Our aim is to coordinate communications into a series of communication campaigns designed to move staff to the next level of support for the change



# Communication campaign roadmap

Illustrative

We anticipate that the communications campaigns will be rolled out over the next X months



Example timeframes only: we need to synchronise with the master project plan

# Communication campaigns

Illustrative

Each communication campaign will focus on delivering a relatively small number of key messages

## Campaign Definition Topics

### Campaign name

### Campaign objectives

The criteria for measuring the success of the communication campaign

### Audience requirements

Considers the specific communication needs of each of audience group involved

### Message definition

**WHO** the message is for

**WHAT** the message is

**HOW** it will be communicated

**WHEN** it will be communicated (frequency and timing)

**WHERE** it will be communicated

## Examples

(based on a possible *Awareness Campaign*)

- 80% of staff will be aware of the New ABC Programme
- The majority of managers will be able to explain the The New ABC Programme in their own words
- Managers require an overview of the project with goals and timings, their personal and departmental responsibilities, impacts and timings of their positions, departments and personnel, who to contact for answers
- Union delegates require which positions will be impacted and ways they will be involved
- The message is for all staff
- The message is “The New ABC means that ABC operations will be centred on our customers through processes of **A**, **B** and **C** to produce offerings in X, Y and Z, enabled by technology.”
- It will be communicated through ABC Times, Ambassadors and innovative use of screen savers

# Communication plans

Illustrative

Each communication plan will focus on directing the actual preparation and delivery of communication materials

### Communication Topics

**Communication name**

**Communication delivery plan**  
Builds on the detail developed in the Message definition. Identifies the communication media, timing, applicable messages and audiences to be targeted. Identifies feedback mechanisms

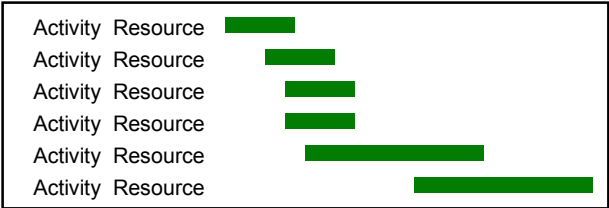
**Workplan**  
Contains detailed communication activities, preparation and delivery responsibilities and accountabilities  
Completion dates

**Budget**  
**Resource costs and cash expenses**



### Examples (based on a possible Awareness Campaign)

- Memo, 12/97, GMs, messages #1, #3, #4
- Email, 12/97, Retail Managers, messages #1, #4, #5
- ABC Times, 1/98, All Staff, messages #1 and #2



- 3 people for 4 weeks
- Video production and duplication costs of \$30,000
- Printing costs

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# Implement the preferred solution

**We will focus on executing the awareness campaign in context of an overall strategy**

1. Form the Communications Team 19/12/97
2. Communications Team Kickoff 25/12/97
  - Agree the need for coordinated communications
  - Agree on a communications strategy
  - Assign a taskforce to define the first communications plan, eg Awareness
3. Awareness Campaign 15/1/98
  - Awareness taskforce to develop Awareness Campaign plan
  - Communications Team signs off plan
  - Communications Team assigns development of Communication Plans
  - Communications Team executes Communication Plans
4. Repeat for other campaigns

# Appendix: Communications Representative Status

**We do not have representatives for many communications stakeholders**

## *New ABC Projects*

**Project A:** No communications resource. No plan at present.

**Project B:** Sue Jones is full-time responsible for communication of Commit

**Project C:** No communications resource. No plan at present.

**Project D:** Tony Sarno will be responsible for communications (neither he nor Ron knows yet)

**Project E:** No communications resource. No plan at present.

**Project F:** Mark Jones is responsible for communications full time. Unsure whether he has a plan.

**Project G:** No communications resource, though it's probably Noel Smith. No plan at present

**Project H:** No communications resource, though it's likely to be Andrew Mason. No plan at present

**Project I:** No communications resource specified. There are some high-level plans

**Project J:** No communications resource, though it's probably Jonathon Smith. No plan at present

## *Business Units*

**Internal Communications:** Internal Communications is Marnie Jones and Jonathon Smith. They are responsible for coordinating internal communications. They have input into the content of *ABC Times*

**Publications:** The publications department has about 25 people and is responsible for coordinating all publications, including *Open Road* and *ABC Times*. Fran Hernon is the manager and is.

**Retail:** Grant Samuel of Operations Support is coordinating Retail communications, including *A*.

**Claims:** Fiona Fargo from Claims OSD is communications manager. Unsure whether there is a plan

**Interstate:** Victoria has Angela Brown but she is not linked in to any formal communications plan. Queensland has Anna Green who is responsible for the staff magazine, *Northern Exposure*

**Area A:** Elisabeth Shanley has responsibility for communications as part of her HR management role. No plan.

**Area B:** No communications representative known.