

14. CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

14.1. What is a communication campaign?

A communication campaign is defined as “a connected series of operations designed to bring about a particular result” (Kendall, 1992). A campaign can further be defined within the context of the project management cycle because it:

- has a specific start and end
- changes to the way things happen (behaviour, attitudes and perceptions)
- requires a new system or organisational arrangement
- terminates once the objective is met
- draws experience and expertise from various people
- requires teams to meet the necessities of various stages of the project
- has a specific budget.

Project management is the science and art of assembling necessary ingredients in a project to ensure that a project is successfully implemented from initiation to closure.

All of these basic characteristics of a campaign are clearly articulated in the project plan, which is a road map towards achieving project objectives, from a cost, scope and budget point of view.

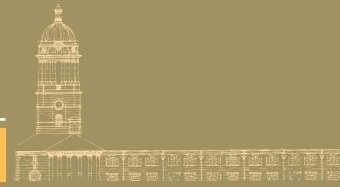
Communication campaigns vary from political, product or service, ideological or issue- or cause-orientated, advertising and public relations. The objectives of carrying out a campaign can also range from public awareness, information and education and seeking to reinforce, change or modify the behaviour and attitude of the targeted public.

14.2. Campaign development

Campaign development and management include both systematic and creative elements. There is a step-by-step process throughout a project life cycle through which a campaign will evolve:

- Step one: Initiation
- Step two: Planning
- Step three: Implementation
- Step four: Closure.

CHAPTER 12



Initiation

During this phase, it is recognised that a campaign should start and a commitment is made.

Formal recognition of the need for a campaign requires a clear understanding of the problem/policy background. This phase requires a feasibility study and research (formal or informal). Once certain, the scope (refer to the work that must be done) of the campaign must be determined.

In determining the scope, the following questions must be answered:

- define the problem/broad description of what the campaign is all about
- objectives
- main tasks to be executed, output and timelines or target delivery date
- budget determination
- project risks and constraints
- project's start and completion date.

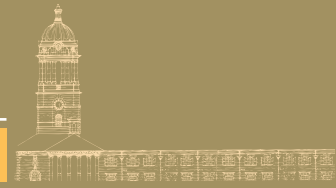
The Campaign Scope Document entails a detailed description of the amount of work to be carried out in a project and its expected end results or deliverables. It is also concerned with a detailed description of the broad time frames for the project. In other words, it defines parameters within which a project should be implemented.

Effective scope management is one of the key factors determining project success. Failure to accurately interpret the clients' needs or problems will produce a misleading definition (scope of work). If this causes rework and additional effort, there may be project costs and time implications.

Planning

A plan is then compiled to meet the objectives of the project. The necessary measures are taken because the project is now officially starting. As a matter of principle, the plan should consist of key activities, deadlines, people responsible for implementation and budget. For government, which is largely involved in the business of social marketing, the GCIS has developed standard design guidelines for communication strategy development consisting of nine steps to ensure an effective campaign.

The communication strategy of a campaign becomes an input to a detailed project plan for effective implementation. Usually, a team meeting is required to achieve this collective input.



Elements of a detailed campaign plan include:

- tasks/activities and timelines
- input required for each task
- quality guidelines per task
- task allocations and responsibilities
- task scheduling or timelines using time tables: which day, week or month.

Planning can be done with any of the computer software such as Microsoft Word, Excel or Project in a form of a table, outlining the elements above. The advantage of using MS Project is that it provides for systematic task scheduling, work breakdown and easy overview of the campaign's tasks and subtasks.

Quality refers to the desired standard that the campaign wants to achieve.

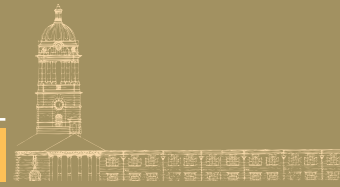
For a project to start, there should be resources allocated. Resources can be in the form of project team members, facilities, equipment, etc.

Milestones are important; they are more like a deliverable achieved as a result of the implementation of certain tasks/activities. As task activities are implemented, they culminate in the achievement of a milestone.

Once a plan has been developed, it becomes the basis for implementation. It should be noted that some elements of the project plan might be required within a short space of time given the agile nature of the environment within which we work.

Some key aspects of campaign planning to consider:

- objectives of the campaign
- approach used for the development of the campaign strategy
- how synergy was established with the national Government Communication Strategy
- briefing process to agencies
- criteria used to select the service-provider/agency
- budget and time frames of the campaign.



Implementation

This phase is progress-orientated and characterised by ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the developed campaign plan. The challenge here is to ensure that the plan is used as the basis for implementation, becoming also a monitoring tool.

The details of the work to be done are defined and coordinated. Work is assigned for execution. Implementation involves:

- the actual execution of tasks listed in the plan line with deadlines
- monitoring of the implementation of tasks and deadlines
- evaluation of task implementation, quality of deliverables and potential risks.

Tools for monitoring campaign execution include:

- campaign plans (task description, deliverables and deadlines, responsibilities)
- checklists and progress reports (tasks, start-and-finish timelines, responsibilities, progress status and remarks)
- review meetings (this relates to such basic techniques as organising a meeting, drafting an agenda, drafting the minutes of a meeting, developing an action plan arising from the meeting, etc.).

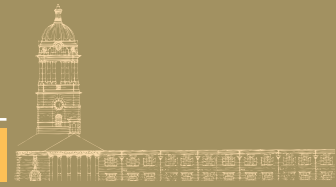
One of the most important elements of managing a campaign is to ensure that it is completed within the estimated time. For a campaign to be completed on time, all activities must be defined, put in a sequence, duration estimated, a schedule developed and controlled.

During project communication, information is gathered and distributed to the relevant project team members and stakeholders. Project communication can be both formal and informal. Formal communication is pre-planned and conducted in a standard format in accordance with an established schedule. Informal communication occurs as people think of information they want to share. Project information can be collected, processed and reported.

Risks are present in all projects, whatever their size or complexity and whatever industry or business sector. As a result, they constantly need to be identified, assessed and managed.

Risk management is a formal approach to the process as opposed to an intuitive approach.

There are both external and internal risks. A plan to mitigate these risks should then be developed and implemented to ensure project success.



Procurement management: For most projects to be successfully implemented, there is a need for the team to acquire services or products from external providers. It is imperative that services or products to be acquired from external providers be identified and listed in advance to allow the team to properly negotiate their acquisition within the context of the applicable procurement guidelines and policies of the organisation.

Some key aspects of campaign implementation to consider:

- the roles/responsibilities of the department (client) and the service-provider (agency) with regard to the implementation of the campaign
- mechanisms used to monitor the implementation of the campaign
- quality control during the implementation phase
- handling of conflict with the service-provider and/or changes to the scope of the campaign and sign-off at the various milestones during implementation.

Closure

One characteristic that distinguishes a project from other work assignments is that it has a distinct end, a point in time at which all associated work is done and results are achieved. It is around this time that the extent to which the desired outcomes were achieved can be gauged.

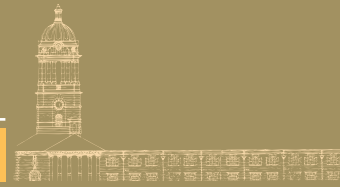
This will enable determining whether the campaign was well conceived, well planned or well performed. Closure is information, which is captured throughout the life of the project, and it is important to capture it while still fresh in the participants' minds.

Project team members must now ensure that all the work is completed in a timely and efficient manner. The purpose of the project is now reflected upon to check if it has been within time, cost and specifications. After the campaign is completed, it has to be evaluated. Evaluation focuses on the performance of the campaign and the extent to which the campaign has met its objectives.

Setting up of a campaign evaluation session to develop an exit report: After a project has been closed, an exit report is prepared to officially close the project. The exit report outlines whether the campaign has achieved what it set out to achieve or not.

The team needs to ask itself difficult questions:

- did the campaign deliver the objectives as set out in the plan?



- what were the campaign's constraints?
- were the stipulated deadlines and timelines as stated in the plan satisfactorily met?
- have we learnt from our experiences and how will we apply those lessons and best practices to improve in future?

Lessons learnt: Lessons learnt during the project are documented and recommendations made. Lessons learnt form an integral part of the project closure phase.

The beneficiary of every campaign is the target audience, who are normally a segment of the public. Therefore, the real measure of a campaign's success should be its impact on their lives, not just how well the individuals or teams performed their tasks or how much media coverage the campaign received.

Some key aspects of campaign closure to consider:

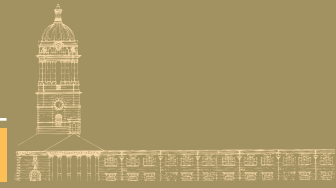
- how was the evaluation of the campaign handled?
- how was contract closure handled?
- what were the major successes achieved by the campaign?
- what were the major obstacles encountered during the campaign?
- what were the most valuable lessons learnt from managing the campaign?

14.3. Elements of a successful campaign

The following tips have been gathered from the GCIS' experience in planning a successful campaign:

• Project initiation

- Project scope: All the activities of the project team are guided by the approved campaign scope. Care should be taken to ensure that the team reflects the key areas in the scope brief, e.g. media liaison, research, community outreach and mobilisation, production, buying and placement (radio, video/television, design and layout, print, etc).
- Financial implications: For campaigns with huge financial implications (over R1 million budget for instance), a team member should be nominated from the Finance Section or someone within the team should be nominated to handle the project's budget, including monitoring of expenditure and budget reconciliation.
- Team members: The nomination of all team members should be preceded by a face-to-face briefing on the envisaged role of each one in the campaign and critical deadlines to be met.
- Previous reports: Before any campaign could be initiated, the communicator should ask himself/herself a simple question: Was the department ever involved in a similar project of this nature? If yes, the project's exit report should be sourced and read, with a view to presenting it in the first meeting of the project team



to ensure that the team is able to appreciate from the beginning possible project “blind spots” and plan around them.

• **Project coordination**

- All campaigns should have a project plan in addition to a communication strategy to outline key tasks and deadlines to be delivered by each team member. Once a strategy has been approved, it is advisable that such a plan be distilled from the strategy to guide implementation.
- Every project team meeting should have an agenda, checklist and communication strategy, and there should be prior discussion (telephonic and/or through email) with the supervisor to agree on the key issues to be discussed in the meeting.
- In coordinating interdepartmental projects, we should insist to clarify the roles/contributions of the department’s representative(s) in the project. There should also be agreement on the sign-off processes in the department and the key liaison contact point for the department.
- In coordinating a campaign, the communicator should ensure that he/she reads/studies and fully understands the policy or programme that has led to the campaign project he/she is coordinating. In instances where the coordinator does not understand the origin of the policy or programme he/she is working on, it becomes difficult for one to give strategic communication counsel or support to the project team and the department.

• **Use of project planning tools such as Microsoft Project**

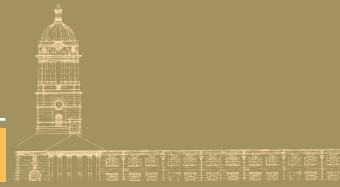
- Microsoft Project provides you with a systematic outline of project tasks and subtasks that must be performed to achieve campaign output-visibility. It is a defined format that assists you in scheduling tasks and resources consistently and effectively.
- Microsoft Project will help you develop quick project plans so that you can monitor the implementation of your campaign progress to be monitored.

14.4. Getting assistance for your project from the GCIS

Here is a brief outline of the process when requesting GCIS assistance:

- To ensure coordination and efficient tracking, clients need to log a written request.
- The PMO assesses its relevance and appropriateness to the GCP and GCS before logging it formally.
- After logging the request, the PMO will liaise with the client department to determine in detail the scope of the project. The PMO assesses the capacity and skills required for the implementation of the proposed project before confirming if the GCIS would be in a position to provide the required assistance.
- After checking GCIS capacity in this regard, the PMO will refer the request to a designated project team and subsequently inform the client department accordingly.
- An agreement will have to be entered into with the client department, detailing conditions under which

CHAPTER 12



services will be rendered by the GCIS to the client department. This agreement clarifies the roles of the client and the GCIS respectively and key target dates for delivery and other important deadlines. It must be signed by officials with the right level of authority, preferably accounting officers of the two departments.

The PMO is willing to share its knowledge in project management, which is specifically customised for communication campaigns. Enquiries can be directed to pmo@gcis.gov.za.