



Outreach Plan Guide

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Why is an outreach plan important?

- Establishes a relationship with the community.
- Helps you determine your target audience.
- It gives you structure (timelines, who is doing what, etc).
- A plan makes everything easier. If you spend some time planning at the beginning, you can save a great deal of time because you know what you should be doing at any point in the process.
- Gives you an opportunity to think strategically.

What to include in an outreach plan

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

A statement or definition of the issue or project provides the background necessary to create a solid outreach plan.

GOALS

Setting the goals for your outreach will help create a successful plan. Using the SMART goal template makes it easy.

What are you trying to accomplish? Here are some considerations:

- Create awareness about your organization, program, or service
- Provide education about a specific topic
- Recruit participants or volunteers
- Garn support from the public for a cause
- Make a special announcement
- Celebration
- Fundraising
- Trying to counter a mistake, argument, misinformation
- Crisis

- Call to action

TARGET AUDIENCES

Understanding your target audience makes it possible to plan tactics that are appropriate and relevant. You may need different messages for different groups and you'll need different methods to reach each of those groups. Here are some ways you can think about target audiences.

- Demographics (gender, age, ethnic and racial background, income, etc.)
- Geography
- Employment - You may want to focus on people in a specific line of work.
- Health situation
- Behavior (smokers, diabetes, high blood pressure, etc.)

The more specific you are, the better. For long term outreach efforts, I recommend developing personas or profiles of the type of person you are reaching. This information is important and helpful when you are developing your tactics.

MESSAGING

Creating messaging sounds easy but can be challenging. Typically, we complicate messages. Once you identify your goals and your audience, you are able to develop messaging that will make sense to your audience - not to you. Things to consider when developing messaging:

- Language - There's language as in English, Spanish, Arabic, etc. Then there is the style of language - informal, formal, simple, complex, etc. Words matter - choose wisely.
- Mood - consider emotions

RESOURCES

Resources can look different. The most obvious resource is a budget but don't forget about staff, volunteers, community partners, local organizations, schools and other assets. Develop a list of who can help your organization reach the community.

TACTICS

This is the fun part! A good way to kick off this section of the plan is to hold a brainstorming session with your team. Start by reviewing your goals, audiences and key messages. Share any information that would be helpful. Once your team understands who you are reaching and why, you can begin.

Different types of outreach:

- Door to door (canvassing, knocking on doors)
- Community events that you create or tag team with another organization that has an established reputation with the community
- PR Stunt
- Social media campaign

- Phone banks
- Tabling
- Public demonstrations/rallies
- Flash mobs
- Educational events
- Texting campaigns
- Campaign signs
- Chalk art
- Giveaways at locations that make sense
- Storytelling campaign
- Facebook party
- The list is endless!

COLLATERAL

You may or may not need outreach collateral. This will depend on your tactics. Here are some examples of collateral:

- Traditional (brochures, one pagers, flyers, postcards, posters, etc.)
- Yard signs
- Banners, flags, etc.
- Video
- Booth set up
- Promotional products
- Presentations
- Magnets

Again, keep in mind your audience and how they like to process and receive information.

TIMELINE

Use a timeline template you feel comfortable with. Here is a list of what you should include:

- Action
- Deadline
- Staffing
- Progress
- Status
- Budget

EVALUATION

This is a step that is often forgotten but it is so important. Use this part of the plan often. If something isn't working, it's time to change your tactics. This section of the plan should also document what worked and what didn't. You can use a SMART template to help you with evaluation. Develop metrics and make sure the entire team knows what success looks like.