

Effective Communications: Raising the profile of your archive service

Guidance on developing communications to promote your service

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Introduction

Purpose

This guidance has been developed to give you strategies, tools and examples to help you raise the profile of your archive service through your communications. It has been designed specifically for archive services of any size or context, although much of the content is useful for other situations. Its aim is to give you a useful framework for raising your profile, with practical advice and examples. This should allow you to take control of promoting your service without necessarily turning to professional marketing advice.

Structure

The guidance is divided into several sections:

Quickstart gives you a brief overview of how to produce effective communications either for a specific project or piece of work, or in your everyday work.

Why you should use this guidance explains why raising your service's profile is important. It also explains how good communications is a key theme in archives accreditation and outlines which aspects of accreditation require strong communications practice. This section also emphasises which parts of the guidance in particular will help with preparing for accreditation.

Introduction to effective communications explains why good communications are important for your service. It also outlines what makes an effective communicator in terms of their actions and their approach. How do you measure up?

How to create an effective message helps you think about what it is you actually want to say and whom you need to say it to. It guides you through analysing your audience and developing persuasive arguments. This section suggests approaches for shaping your message. It points you towards useful tools and evidence resources to back up your message.

Putting the message across gives you practical advice on how you should prepare and assesses different methods of communication. It also provides vital information on analysing who your audiences are and how you should communicate with them.

Resources contains lots of practical advice to develop communication actions. It includes advice on writing mission statements and communications strategies as well as helping you to understand the purpose of plans, policies and procedures. There are also lots of suggestions for actual types of communication with tips and case studies.

How to use this guidance

If you want to get on quickly go to the **Quickstart section** which will give you a very brief framework of steps for effective communication and point you towards relevant sections. If you have a particular area you need to work on, simply go to the section to find the help you need. If you want to develop in-depth understanding and a more detailed approach, work through each of the sections in turn. The sections are concise and full of practical tips and examples. The resources at the end provide advice on specific areas of communication, with examples and detail to help you develop practical solutions for raising your profile.

Quickstart

To help you get started, this section lays out what to do to start communicating effectively right away. It points you to other sections in this guidance where you can learn more.

If you are planning specific work or a project

Step	Action	Advice	Section in guidance
1	Identify your goal	Be as specific as you can	<u>How to write a mission statement</u>
2	Identify who is involved in achieving this goal	Think through all the possible people or groups who may be affected or have an interest in you working towards this	<u>How to identify and communicate with stakeholders</u>
3	Decide what you must discuss with each person or group	What do you want from your audience?	<u>How to create an effective message</u>
4	Develop a message that is relevant and understandable for the target person or group	The message should appeal to the audience's own interests	<u>How to create an effective message</u> <u>Case studies</u>
5	Decide how you want to discuss your message	Will it be: Formal or informal Written or oral Targeted individually or as a group	<u>Communication methods</u> <u>Tips for engagement</u> <u>Case studies</u> <u>How to write a communications strategy</u>
6	Start communicating	Be confident and take the initiative	<u>Preparing for communication</u>
7	Listen to the response and have a constructive dialogue	How do you plan to listen and to respond	<u>What makes a good communicator</u>
8	Evaluate the impact of your communication	Do you need to adapt or change the content or approach	<u>Evaluating your communication</u>

In your everyday work

Step	Action	Advice	Section in guidance
1	Articulate your mission	Know your service's purpose, aspirations and core values	<u>How to write a mission statement</u>
2	Prepare your core message(s)	Have key messages or themes which you can adapt 'on the spot'	<u>How to create an effective message</u>
3	Develop the habits of a good communicator	Be confident and proactive in communications	<u>What makes a good communicator</u>
4	Help others to develop good communication skills	Help staff and volunteers through training and projects to develop these	<u>How do you achieve effective communication</u>

Why you should use this guidance

Why raising your service's profile is important

When you run an archive service you are communicating all the time. You are constantly sending out messages about what the service does, the effectiveness of the service, your aspirations and your approach. Communication extends from the way that a user experiences a service, the annual report to senior managers, and the big funding bid, to the chance conversation in the lift. These are all opportunities when you can accurately inform others about the purpose and role of your service, articulate needs, demonstrate competency and explain your aspirations.

Good communication ensures that you are being heard. You can then influence your environment according to your own goals and requirements. If you do not get your message across effectively, others will not know or understand your needs. The **case studies** show the outcomes possible from good communication.

In general, effective communication achieves the following:

- positive influence on decision-making by presenting a strong point of view and developing mutual understanding
- delivers efficient decisions and solutions by providing accurate, timely and relevant information
- enables mutually beneficial solutions
- builds healthy relationships by encouraging trust and understanding

Taking control of the communication process avoids missed opportunities and prevents sending out messages that undermine your service or create misunderstanding. To raise the profile of your service you need to clearly communicate its nature and purpose; presenting a defined aspiration and a clearly evidenced track record in a way that is relevant to the audience you are talking to. Good communication ensures that all service staff are sending out the same messages. This avoids confusion and creates a clear overall message.

But good communication does not have to be a daunting task. It's about having a clear vision and robust evidence that you can then adapt for different audiences. Sometimes this will be done in a very formal way, such as reporting into a departmental body. But on many occasions the communication can be informal and unexpected but just as important, such as a chance meeting in a corridor or at a social function. Every time you interact with someone else you have the opportunity to raise awareness of your service. Realising this you can also create opportunities for communication - taking control of the communication process e.g. inviting key stakeholders to a private viewing of your collections. By using the tools in this guidance you will be prepared to take advantage of these chance opportunities.

Within the archive environment effective communication will serve different purposes for different audiences.

Between your service and users

Aim: users fully understand what is being offered to them and what they can get out of using your service. This is particularly important for audiences that might be unfamiliar with archive services or if you are introducing a new activity. Communication is also vital for ensuring the service understands what users require - this is why accreditation talks about understanding users' needs. The Public Service Quality Group's surveys for physical and virtual users are an effective way of understanding users' needs.

Between your service and depositors

Aim: depositors are kept informed as to how their collections are being used and why they are valued. This generates trust and supports long-term relationships as well as new offers of material. It also provides an important route for gathering collection information. Potential depositors may be more likely to offer material if there is a clear communications process which encourages depositor involvement beyond the point of accession.

Between your service and its community

Aim: the community is kept informed of the service's activities, which reduces misunderstandings, and enhances support.

The community is also able to explain its own needs, which can then be incorporated into the service's work where possible. This all results in strong long-term relationships, which are vital if the service is to thrive. Look in the case studies section to see how records management has been promoted within Unilever.

Between your service and funders

Aim: good communication creates an understanding of the service's aspirations and needs which hopefully results in new investment.

For existing funders, being kept informed and expressing gratitude will encourage them to keep investing. Communication is also critical in understanding and explaining the funder's criteria. Then the service can shape its approach accordingly or seek out a more appropriate funder. Finally, transparent reporting about finance encourages confidence and fulfils moral and legal obligations to explain financial activity.

Between your service and other partner services

Aim: dialogue provides the environment in which to develop partnerships.

This allows the service and other parties to pursue mutually beneficial projects as well as flagging up opportunities which the archive on its own might not have been aware of or able to take up. For example, Archives and Records Council Wales (ARCW) provides vital support and dialogue across the archive services of Wales which encourages partnership working.

Between your service and directors or trustees

Aim: those at the top of the organisation are made fully aware of the archive's work and its (potential) contribution to the wider organisation's success.

Strong communication can bring understanding of archive collections and their potential for involvement in the broader work of the organisation. It is also vital that the service listens to the goals of its parent organisation. The History Wall provides a striking example of how an organisation's history can illustrate and promote its values and achievements.

Between co-workers in the service either paid or volunteer

Aim: to create a strong understanding of organisational and personal goals, understand progress and build strong working relationships.

This results in a more effective workforce. This is particularly important as workforces are reduced in size and more collaborative working is required across different professions and skillsets.

Between managers and employees

Aim: a clear understanding of goals that need to be met, the processes that have to be undertaken to meet those goals and the barriers and driving forces that affect progress.

This ensures goals are met effectively and efficiently. Good communication generates a strong sense of involvement, which encourages employee buy-in to the organisation or project and informs work with their own perspective and knowledge. Finally strong communication links mean that participants can flag up potential problems early on so that they can be avoided or minimized.

Archive accreditation and effective communication

Using effective communications to raise the profile of your service is at the heart of Archive Service Accreditation. Profile is identified as one of the 'seven Ps', which underpin the Accreditation Standard. Accreditation requires a coherent set of policies, plans and procedures that together support an enhanced profile. Effective consultation will be essential to ensure that your service develops these appropriately. Once they are in place they will then need to be shared with the right audiences in a way that is relevant to each audience.

Looking at the accreditation standard in detail there are numerous areas where a service must work to raise its profile and undertake good communication generally. These areas are detailed below:

Organisational health	A clear mission statement
	Management formally recognise and support the purpose of the archive service
	lines of authority and decision-making responsibilities between the governing body and service managers are transparent and effective.
	Planning which understands and responded to the organisational and wider context in which the service operates
	Terms of occupancy exist for all buildings and premises housing archive services.
	Arrangements allow for effective forward planning including the future expansion of collections
	Sufficient funds have been identified to enable the archive service to deliver
	Procedures are in place to support competent professional and volunteer performance and ongoing workforce development

Collections	A co-ordinated approach to collections management
	Approval of policies by top management or an appropriate delegated authority
Stakeholders and their experiences	A clear policy on access and engagement which specifies how access is provided and enhanced for all stakeholders
	The archive service has a good understanding of the needs and interests of the community it is established for serve.
	The archive service provides access to its holdings and a variety of methods to access and engage with the collections
	The service communicates clear, practical information on how to access services and collections

Each one of these areas requires the service not simply to state its own case but to understand the requirements and perspectives of other groups or individuals (its 'stakeholders'). It requires the service to work with them to create effective plans and actions that will benefit stakeholders and in turn the service. This guidance helps you work towards accreditation. The following sections are of particular use:

- **How to write a mission statement**
- **Understanding plans, policies and procedures**
- **How to create an effective message**
- **How to identify and communicate with stakeholders**

Remember that to achieve accreditation, a service must make a credible application and, where necessary host an validation visit. This is a prime opportunity to put effective communications into practice.

Introduction to effective communication

How do you achieve effective communication?

Effective communication happens when a complete message is sent and fully received and understood by an audience. Good communication is about getting the right message to the right person in the right medium at the right time. Depending on the nature of the message and audience, the audience may then have the opportunity to engage in a productive discussion of the message.

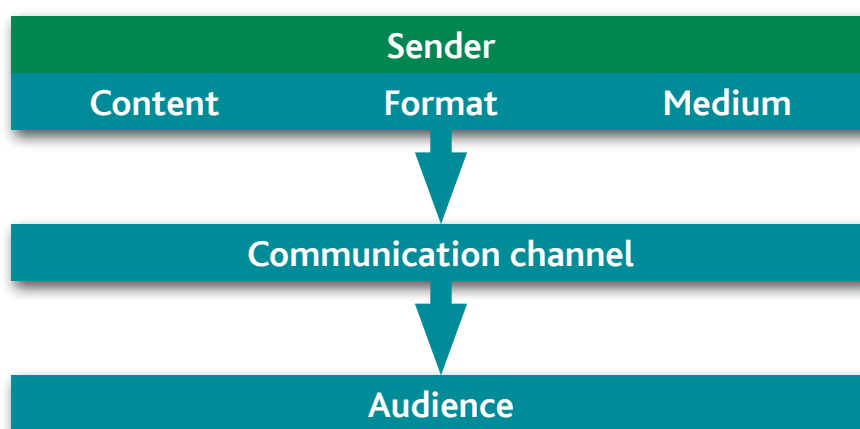
The content and timing of effective communication

There are several vital elements:

- KISS - keep it short and simple. The message must be clear, concise and complete. Be sure that the audience has the full message particularly as you may only have one opportunity to put over your message
- The content of the message must be factually accurate
- The message can be a mix of factual and psychological aspects to give the message its full impact; rather than just dry facts or overly emotional in style
- The message should be relevant to the concerns of the audience
- The language should be appropriate to the audience and communication medium. Avoid technical jargon unless talking to another professional
- It should be positive and focused on solutions rather than listing problems
- The language should invite participation and engagement where appropriate
- Using the right medium for the intended audience, the context and the desired response. For example when reporting to a portfolio holder would you send a formal report or a text?
- Pick the right person/stakeholder to send out the message – for example the chief executive will have more impact on trustees than a junior member of staff
- The message is sent at the right time to enable the audience to have time to understand and act on the message

The stages of communication

There are several components in communication as the diagram below shows.



The sender develops the content of the message. In the process the sender decides on the medium (written or spoken) and the format (such as email, letter, leaflet, meeting, talk, press release, presentation, podcast.). The sender then transmits the communication by the relevant communication channel (such as presenting at a meeting of the heads of department, producing printed material, announcing on a website or in the press). The message then reaches the audience.

The audience will then decide whether to respond and if so how. The audience response will have a particular content and format through their chosen communication channel. This may not be the same as the one the sender used to transmit the message (such as an email after a meeting where the sender gave their presentation).

What makes a good communicator?

A powerful message needs to be delivered convincingly. There are three stages to think about.

The three stages of communication

Firstly, prepare well and understand what you want to communicate. Next, when you are communicating your message be confident, to the point and focused on solutions. Finally, let the person or group you are communicating with have the opportunity to respond and listen to what they are telling you.

How a good communicator puts their message across

Before communicating

- Well prepared message and arguments
- Has full knowledge of the message
- Has full understanding of the message

Delivering the message

- Confident including positive body language and communicating with energy
- Uses facts and well founded opinion, not rumour; is honest
- Concise
- Articulate and/or uses persuasive writing skills
- Focused on solutions not problems

Responding to the recipient

- Understands the recipients' point of view
- Actively listens to the response
- Confidently defends the message
- Is prepared to ask for clarification
- Is flexible in developing a solution - collaborative, not competitive

Listening is vital part of communication

Listening skills are just as important as communication skills in delivering your message. This allows full understanding of the other party and what their response is to your point of view. Good listening is vital for building strong relationships. To be a good listener means to fully understand and constructively respond to what the other party is communicating.

Bear in mind that sometimes people seem to be giving one answer when they actual mean another; or wanting to say something else but feel unable to do so. This can occur in any communication scenario - face-to-face or remote, instant or over a longer time period, with one person or a group.

Core listening skills

- Giving the other party your full attention. If you are in their presence look at them directly, don't do other activities such as doodling. Try to understand their body language
- Encouraging them to speak. Ask open-ended questions
- Showing that you are genuinely listening by nodding, repeating back what they have said but in your own words
- Acknowledging their feelings – 'It must have been really difficult for you when...'
- Asking for clarification when you do not understand
- Not judging - trying to understand their point of view, rather than immediately applying your own preconceptions about the respondent
- Not interrupting - letting the other party put over their response fully before you react. Giving them time to express their point of view
- Being cautious in expressing your opinion. If it is clearly not appropriate don't express it
- Being timely in your reaction to the other party's responses to your messages - this is particularly true with communication that is not verbal

How to create an effective message

Know your audience

In creating your message you need to think carefully about each audience or 'stakeholder' and how they fit into your goal. Firstly clearly define your goal (you might want to look at the sections on How to write a mission statement, and Understanding plans, policies and procedures). Next identify the stakeholders that are affected by working towards the goal and using stakeholder mapping. Then identify how important their support is to the success of your project.

Once you know who you are communicating to and what level of support you are seeking from them, you need to consider their perspective. Assess their current attitude towards the goal. This can be classified as the following:

- advocate - actively promotes your goal to others
- supporter - works to forward your goal
- neutral - has no opinion and does not proactively work for or against the goal
- critic - has concerns about the goal
- blocker - seeks to prevent the goal being achieved

Try to assess the stakeholder's own sphere of influence, interests, concerns and timetables, for example financial control, personnel management, marketing to a particular group.

From this contextual information about the stakeholder you can then decide what action you want them to take as a result of the communication and therefore the message you need to get through.

Which stage of the discussion are you at?

You also need to decide what stage in the discussion you are with the stakeholder and their level of knowledge. If you are beginning a discussion the stakeholder may have very little knowledge and require a clear introduction to the context and purpose. At this point the information may be quite general but engaging. As the discussion develops you will need to give more specific detail about the goal and its context as well as what you need from the stakeholder. If you are nearing the end of the discussion you need to bring the communication round to what happens next.

Building blocks for creating your message

You need to send out clear messages to communicate effectively. To help you start thinking about this, the case studies in this guidance include the messages used. You can see from these examples that different stakeholders require different messages. To create a compelling message you might include some or all of the following elements:

'The Burning Platform' - this approach looks at what will happen if the goal is not achieved. The aim is to create a perspective that encourages a compelling understanding of why change is important and should be supported. In this type of argument you are presenting the 'opportunity cost' of an action. For example, the possibility that The National Archives might remove public records from custody has encouraged some Councils to improve storage conditions. Likewise the risks of failing to comply with Data Protection or Freedom of Information legislation has enabled services to gain support from senior management.

'The benefits for you are...' - for key stakeholders in particular you need to be considering what the benefits and returns will be for them. If there are no benefits for the stakeholder they are unlikely to get actively involved. For example, one business archive was able to successfully obtain funding for capital investment, as it demonstrated that the savings of the necessary refurbishment of a company property could be offset against the costs of creating the archive in that building instead.

'This aligns with corporate goals because...' - if you cannot demonstrate how a goal is going to support the organisation's overall aims you are unlikely to be successful. Always describe your communication in line with your organisation's own goals. For example, business archives thrive where they have demonstrated their contribution to marketing and brand management or cost reduction. The Guinness Archive is located within Guinness Storehouse - Ireland's number one international visitor attraction that celebrates the story and heritage of Guinness. The archive contributes to global marketing initiatives and brand profile as well as providing expertise on the heritage of the brand to inform all new exhibits within the visitor experience. The Network Rail corporate archive provides current infrastructure projects with historical information, both to inform engineering work and to support project communication.

'This is what success looks like' - show the stakeholder real life examples, from either inside or outside of the organisation, so that they have tangible proof of the impact and benefits of the action you are recommending. This can make stakeholders feel more comfortable about a recommendation. Websites of bodies such as the Business Archive Council and the Group for Literary Archives and Manuscripts are one way of finding examples through case studies, news articles and minutes of meetings.

Comparator examples - demonstrating what comparator organisations are working on can be useful. It can show that the proposed goal can be implemented effectively or it can urge an organisation into action to keep up with the competition. Looking at comparators may also demonstrate how your organisation could be an innovator by being the first to undertake a course of action. Statistics from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and Public Service Quality Group Visitor Surveys are ways of obtaining comparative information. Joining networking groups such as the Major Archive Projects Learning Exchange will introduce you to others in the archive sector give you the opportunity to learn about their experiences.

Independent verification - evidence or verification of success from an authoritative external organisation provides confidence that a proposed goal is the right one. For example the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council produced research showing appropriate action to increase attendance and participation and on the effective use of volunteers - available online on the Arts Council website.

Financial arguments - it can be difficult to make a financial case for an archive project. If you are using financial issues try to be sophisticated. Rather than presenting purely the cost of the project think about the returns such as lower net revenue cost per user, depreciating the cost over the life of the project (this can be very long - an archive building might last for 50 years or more), opportunities for income generation, higher development costs at a later date if the proposal is not accepted now. You may wish to take professional financial advice to help you shape your communication. Look at resources that show relevant costs such as the **Joint Information Systems Committee** research into the cost of Freedom of Information enquiries.

Style check

An effective message needs to be

- concise
- clear from the audience's perspective
- relevant both to the audience and to your goal

It's a good idea to check out your message with a third party for an independent opinion before you send it off. The Plain English Campaign provides advice, online guidance on writing clearly and a seal of approval called **Crystalmark** .

Be prepared

Try to prepare your key messages so that you can adapt them whenever you need them. This is particularly useful if you want to communicate within a very short-timescale or in an unexpected situation for example a meeting with the CEO at short notice or making a funding bid with a short deadline.

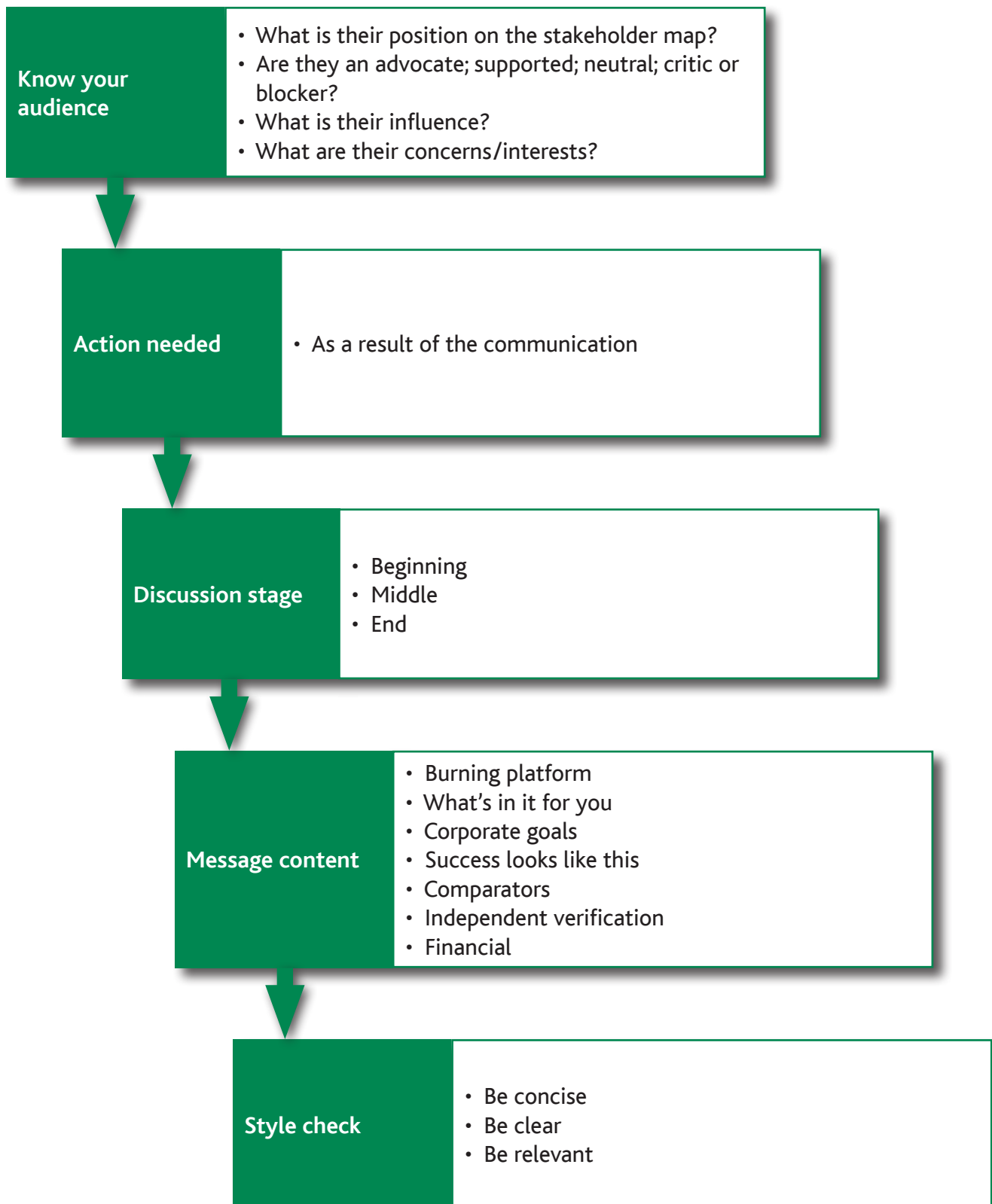
Useful evidence and tools to support your message

When you are making a case it is important to have strong evidence to support your point of view. Below are a few key resources to help you develop that evidence base.

<u>International declaration on archives</u>	Published by the International Council on Archives, this document 'is a powerful, succinct statement of the relevance of archives in modern society.' It is supported by an International Archives Day each year
<u>Outcomes framework for Culture and Sport, Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association and the Local Government Association</u>	This provides a model for measuring and evidencing the contribution of cultural and leisure services to organisational goals, the value of such services to the organisation and partners and creating evidence for investment
<u>Volunteering in archives</u> (Louise Ray, National Council on Archives, 2009)	This identifies the nature and benefits of volunteer activity in the archives sector
<u>The Public Services Quality Group</u>	The Group hosts an annual forum and the long-standing visitor surveys for archive users, which provide useful information for individual Services, across the archives sector and across a long time frame
<u>Business archive case studies, The Business Archives Council</u>	This provides numerous examples of how and why a range of businesses have invested in their archives. It is useful to all types of archives beyond just business archives
<u>The benefits of capital investment in archives</u> (Elizabeth Oxborrow-Cowan, The Archives and Records Association, 2012)	This brings together national research identifying the numerous benefits arising from capital investment in archive services

<p><u>Generating income</u>, The National Archives</p>	<p>This provides broad guidance on the areas in which archives can generate income</p>
<p><u>The digitisation costs calculator, Collections Link</u> (part of the Collections Trust)</p>	<p>Calculator enables you to calculate the cost of digitising your collections</p>
<p><u>The costs of Freedom of Information Requests in Universities</u>, JISC</p>	<p>This research identifies the cost of answering Freedom of Information Requests in Universities</p>
<p><u>The Community Infrastructure Levy</u>, Arts Council England</p>	<p>The Infrastructure Levy outlines the importance of culture and explains how museums and archives can be included in the Levy</p>
<p><u>The Culture and Sport planning toolkit</u></p>	<p>The toolkit provides a five-stage process for delivering sport and culture</p>
<p><u>The benefits of culture</u></p>	<p>In 2012 the Arts Council England began a research programme to look at how publicly funded cultural provision relates to the creative economy and the wider economy – read more on their website</p>
<p><u>Visit England</u></p>	<p>Visit England provides useful research about the nature of UK tourist markets including heritage tourism.</p>
<p><u>The Memory of the World UK Register</u></p>	<p>The Register highlights the cultural value of specific heritage collections. Any Service can apply and the process is free.</p>
<p><u>Heritage Lottery Fund</u></p>	<p>The Heritage Lottery Fund has undertaken a variety of research into the impact of its investment.</p>

Summary of steps required to create an effective message



Putting the message across

Preparing for communication

Good preparation is a key to successful communications. How much you prepare depends on the scale of the communication but below are some key areas to consider.

- Decide what you want from each stakeholder
- Develop the message that you need to send
- Develop a communications plan
- Create up-to-date contact and distribution lists
- Create templates for standard communication documents
- Have a clear project plan including when you will be communicating with particular stakeholders and how
- Schedule the resources you will need well in advance e.g. room hire, printing, conference call slots, AV hire
- If there is a team involved in delivering communications ensure they all have access to all the up-to-date information e.g. a shared project calendar
- Map processes for how standard communication flows will be managed
- Organise how information arising from communications will be gathered, organized and access
- Establish clear lines of reporting
- Establish communications standards e.g. response times, layout formats, approvals for outward communications
- Consider whether you need a mechanism for communicating in an emergency

Communication methods

Obviously there are many ways of communication, though they tend to fall into three categories: oral, written and implied. Furthermore, each of these three types can be formal (planned and part of an official process) or informal (by chance and often outside of official business). Below are outlined communication methods and their uses. Also look at the Case Studies to see what methods were used in particular situations.

Oral Communication

In oral communication it is important to ensure the audience clearly understands what is being said so it requires strong speaking and listening skills of the communicator. Oral communication is the most effective method of enabling two-way communication and dialogue.

	Meetings	Workshops	Telephone calls	Presentations	Tele/video conferences	Podcast/webcast
Imparts information effectively	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Can support a complex message	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Enables effective two way communication	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Suitable audience size	1-20	Up to 20	1 (or 2 to 4 for a conference call)	Up to several hundred	1-15	Limitless
Preparation time	Minimal to high	High	Nothing to high	Medium to high	Nothing to high	Medium to high
Suitable for external/internal stakeholder	Both	Both	Both	✓	✓	Both

Can accommodate a mix of stakeholders	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Quality of feedback on message	High	High	Good (no visual feedback)	Good	Medium	None
Formal/informal method	Both	Formal	Both	Formal	Formal	Formal
Resource requirements	Meeting room	Meeting room AV equipment	Telephone	Possible AV equipment	Conference equipment	Recording and broadcast equipment/software

Written Communication

Writing is used when you need to provide detailed information such as figures and facts, even during face-to-face methods. Examples of this might be provided written figures whilst giving a presentation, when the communication has to be formal or when stakeholders need time to consider information such as providing reports for a management meeting. It is also generally used to send documents and other important material to stakeholders, which can then be stored for later use. Written information can be referred to easily as it is recorded. Other important documents such as contracts, memos, and minutes of meetings are also provided in written form for this purpose.

	Letters	Reports	Minutes	Email	Newsletter	Surveys	Texts/ Twitter	Blogs
Imparts information effectively	✓	✓	Reasonable	Variable - misunderstanding can easily arise	✓	✓	✓	✓
Can support a complex message	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Enables effective two way communication	✓ (but slowly)	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓
Suitable audience size	Large	Limitless	Limitless	Limitless	Limitless	Large	Limitless	Limitless
Preparation time	Minimal to high	High	Medium	Minimal to medium	High	High	Minimal	Minimal to medium
Suitable for external/ internal stakeholder	Primarily external	Both	Both	Both	Both	Both	Both	Both
Can accommodate a mix of stakeholders	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Quality of feedback on message	Reasonable	No feedback	No feedback	High	None	High	High	High
Formal/ informal method	Formal	Formal	Formal	Both	Formal	Formal	Both	Both
Resource requirements	Minimal	Staff and equipment to compile and distribute	Minimal	Email technology	Compilation, printing and distribution technology	Low to high (using market analysts/ in house)	Mobile phone	Internet access, website and blogging systems

Implied messages

We send out messages that are neither oral nor written yet can be equally, or in some cases more, persuasive. When communicating consider what implied messages you are sending out. Areas to consider are your attitude, your body language, branding and presentation.

Attitude

Your attitude has a major impact on how your message is interpreted. A shy or bored attitude will take away the impact of your message and could even contradict the importance you feel it deserves. A positive, enthusiastic and energetic attitude will reinforce your message. Your attitude should be pro-active, focused on solutions and considerate of the views of others, whilst always sticking to the message you need to get across. It also helps if you believe that you have the right to present your messages and share them with others.

Body language

Ensure your body language reinforces your message when you are involved in face-to-face communication. Essential aspects include:

- making eye contact
- talking to and making visual contact with all stakeholders present, not just one or two
- smiling when appropriate
- having a confident, open, but not aggressive posture
- looking engaged and interested, particularly when others are speaking

Branding and presentation

The look and feel of how the message is delivered is as influential as the message itself. A formal identity can be created through branding - a defined public image created through a colour scheme, logo, strap line, font and overall look and feel. Branding is a complex process that needs to be properly thought through, possibly with the help of a marketing company. Good branding reflects the organisation's values and has a long-term usability and impact. It may be useful to give an individual branding to a particular project. For example, for a very large cataloguing project you might consider giving it a dedicated name and logo which can work as a short hand for referring to the project with others and gives the project a clear identity.

In this context presentation means how the message looks and feels. This may require a consistent use of branding or layout. It may require adhering to particular production standards or formats. Whatever the branding components used, ensure that your presentation is always high quality to show that you and your organisation are professional and working to high standards.

How to identify and communicate with stakeholders

Choosing the communication method depends on the role of the individual or group in your project or work. This role will have two elements - the level of influence that the stakeholder has on the success of the project and the level of relevance that the project has to the stakeholder's own interests. The levels of influence and relevance can be plotted on a graph like the one below. This process is often called 'Stakeholder mapping' and can be used for any purpose where you want to identify and assess relevant organisations or individuals.

For example, if an archive service was contemplating a cataloguing project it might well map its stakeholders in the following way:

Stakeholder map for an archiving catalogue project

Relevance of the outcome to stakeholder	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic researchers • Depositors • Private and commercial researchers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archive service staff • Educational users • Interest groups • Current or potential partner organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior managers • Freedom of Information officer • Trustees
	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archive sector bodies • Neighbouring archive services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal legal services • Marketing department • Archive sector bodies • Neighbouring archive services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community groups • Archive cabinet portfolio holder
	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The general public 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance director • Other portfolio holders
		Low	Medium	High
		Ability of stakeholder to affect outcome		

Looking at this graph we can consider several of the stakeholders. For archive service staff, catalogued collections would be vital to their work but that they might not be in the most influential group with regards to making a decision. If the organisation had a strong educational remit then, educational users might have a reasonable influence on the decision and of course the project would be of value to them. Depositors might have very little influence on the decision but of course would be very interested in having their collections made available. Meanwhile the finance director might well be uninterested in the cataloguing project overall but would have a strong influence over the decision, as they would control financial expenditure. Finally, the general public would have little interest in catalogued collections and, assuming this did not include target audiences, may be viewed as having little interest in the project.

For communications purposes the value of stakeholder mapping is that it shows the nature of the communication needed for each identified stakeholder group. Looking at the general layout of the stakeholder map there are layers or 'strata' of communication needs.

High

These stakeholders have a high level of interest and/or influence. They could undermine or stop the project and/or would be noticeably affected by it. It might be vital that they are seen to be involved and promote the proposal. These stakeholders need to wholeheartedly support the proposal. So they need to understand why the project is important and what it is seeking to achieve as well as their role in the process.

This group needs to be regularly consulted during the whole project. There needs to be a dialogue so that they can both understand the project and feel they can shape the project or understand when their opinions are not incorporated into the work. For this group of stakeholders messages need to be tailored to the perspective of the individual stakeholder. Face to face communication will be particularly important, as will gathering and responding to feedback.

Medium

These stakeholders have a noticeable but not critical level of interest in or influence over a project or situation. It will affect them but not extensively. They have a medium though noticeable level of interest or influence over a project. Whilst their support is important, it is not vital and often that support can be passive rather than active. So regular two-way communication is still important but can be on a less frequent level than the 'High' groups and with less extensive consultation.

Low

These stakeholders do not have a direct contribution to make to the project and experience low levels of impact arising from it. Withdrawal of either their contribution or their support is not a major risk. Communication does not need to be face-to-face - written communications is more likely. There may well be no need to consult with this level, simply keep them informed with relevant information.

Stakeholder commitment level

The type of communication required can change as the stakeholder commitment changes.

There are several levels to stakeholder commitment:

- contact - the first point of hearing about the goal
- awareness - knowing what the goal is
- understanding - recognising the impact of the goal
- engagement - positive interaction with the goal
- acceptance - accepting the goal into their view of the situation
- commitment - positive support for the goal
- internalisation - the goal becomes an inherent element in the stakeholder's decision-making

Your communication should move the stakeholder up through these commitment levels. Poor communication could damage or lower stakeholder commitment.

Communication structures

The communication method will also depend on the structure through which information will be shared:

- There may be a strict hierarchy in which information can only flow up and down through one route - for example information to trustees can only be sent through the chief executive. You must ensure that those elsewhere in the route who are critical for passing on your message understand your message, do pass it on to the next stage in the communications route and pass on the correct message
- You may sit at the centre of a hub of communication networks from which you can directly communicate to each stakeholder in a targeted way
- You may have the mix of the two where you feed messages into different chains of communication for those within those chains to then pass your message along

Context

The communication method is also dependent on the general context within which the message is being sent. For example, when a quick decision is needed, a phone call may be better than a written report. The preference of the individual is also important: some people prefer written information to oral and vice versa.

Conclusion

When planning your communication, consider what is going to be the most efficient and effective form of communication given:

- the likely level of interest of the stakeholder in the message
- the ability of the stakeholder to influence the underlying goal
- the time available
- the complexity of the message and the communication hierarchy through which the message must travel
- the communication preference of the stakeholders well as the most accessible method from the perspective of the stakeholder.
- confidentiality
- legal requirements
- level of formality required
- the size of the audience
- the quality of your current relationship with the intended audience and the type of relationship you want to have with the audience

Some points to remember

- Just because people have heard a message once does not mean that they have correctly or fully understood it, or remembered it. Always consider whether you need to reinforce your message.
- Give people as much warning as you can about likely problems in advance. This gives them time to consider and deal with the implications of an issue.
- Get feedback on whether your message is getting through. On the basis of this feedback you can then decide whether to change your approach or message.

To conclude

Evaluating your communication

It's important that where possible you check that your communication is working - is the right message getting through to the right person? How you evaluate varies. If the communication is very informal then probably your evaluation will be informal. For example, does a colleague get back to you about a related issue after a chance meeting in the corridor? More formal communication will require structured evaluation.

Evaluation can seek to measure a variety of elements including:

- raised awareness
- improved knowledge
- increased skills

Measurement needs to be tailored to your specific situation. Obvious ways of showing impact include:

- increased level of enquiries including visits to your website
- higher response rates
- increased number of invitations to participate in projects
- changes in behaviour
- increased media coverage

The Communications Network has produced a useful guide on evaluating communications entitled 'Are we there yet?'

Conclusion

Developing strong communication skills is important for anyone involved with an archive service. Working with archives brings you into contact with a wide range of people so it is important that you are sending out consistent and memorable messages about the value and needs of your collections.

But archive services can be easily overlooked. To help ensure the long-term survival and development of your service it is vital you are talking to decision-makers, supporters and partners - current and potential. Put across confident and pertinent messages that demonstrate the relevance and potential of your service. Don't be afraid to ask others to help you develop and communicate your message. Be self-assured, relevant and aspirational. Good luck!

Resources

How to write a mission statement

Purpose

The role of a mission statement is to summarise what an organisation does. It defines the purpose of an organisation, why it exists and what it offers to its users or customers. It will also outline any core values. It is the foundation on which an archive service should be built, which is why it is identified in the Archive Service Accreditation Standard as a key element in 'Organisational Health'.

The difference between a vision statement and mission statement

Vision and mission statements can be confused. A mission statement explains what an organisation is about whilst a vision statement identifies what an organisation wants to become. Implementing your mission statement moves your service towards its vision.

How to use the mission statement

Your mission statement should provide the underlying rationale for your service's work. It should be well known to staff and brought to the attention of those who interact with the service through presentations, branding and reporting. Share it widely with staff and volunteers and use it as the foundation for developing, explaining and implementing strategic decisions. Use it as a benchmark for objectives and actions – does a particular goal or activity implement the mission?

General content

The content of the mission statement is very simple:

- What is your purpose – what are the needs or opportunities that your work/organisation addresses?
- What does your work do to address those needs or opportunities?
- What are the core values that guide your work?

Characteristics of a powerful mission statement

A mission statement needs to be easily understood and remembered as well as relevant and motivating. It should be:

- timeless - relevant over a long period and able to accommodate change
- memorable - do your employees/volunteers remember it and use it to guide their work? If not then neither will other stakeholders
- aspirational but not impossible - the statements encourage an organisation to innovate and stretch itself to attain a demanding but realistic outcome
- specific - detailed and not generalised
- jargon-free - avoid jargon if the statement will be read by audiences that are not familiar with technical or professional terms and descriptions

How to create a mission statement

- Decide what the overriding purpose of the service is. What needs or opportunities is the service seeking to fulfil and which audiences are you addressing with your statement? Remember that this is not just about what the service currently does but what it aspires to achieve

- Decide how you will address those needs or opportunities. You might wish to survey users, staff, depositors and decision-makers to gain their perspective on how they value the service
- Identify the core values or standards to which your service aspires
- Take time to develop a robust and meaningful statement about the purpose of the service.
- Gather a variety of opinions before drawing up the statement and invite comments on a draft statement
- Consider using a professional writer or marketing adviser

Examples of mission statements

Addenbrooke's Hospital Archives	To locate, collect, preserve and list all historically important material and artefacts created and used by Addenbrooke's and the Rosie Hospital and its related organisations, and to provide access to them in compliance with national legislation and existing guidance.
The British Library	Advancing the world's knowledge
The Clan Cameron Archives	To offer unrestricted and open access to the electronically archived records of the Clan Cameron; celebrating the past, sharing in the present and conserving for the future.
Glamorgan Archives	Glamorgan Archives collects, preserves and makes accessible documents relating to the geographical area it serves, as detailed in its collection policy, and maintains the corporate memory of its constituent authorities
Igor I Sikorsky Historical Archives	The mission of the Igor I Sikorsky Historical Archives is to acquire, manage, protect and make accessible to qualified persons for research and educational purposes, historical documents and memorabilia associated with Igor I Sikorsky, his life and his careers in aviation, and the Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, as well as related predecessor companies. This includes the full history of aircraft design, manufacture, sales and operational use, as well as film and video materials, models, and other memorabilia relating to Igor I Sikorsky.
Institution of Civil Engineers Archive Panel	To promote understanding of the evolution of civil engineering through the preservation, study and interpretation of original documentation, records and contemporary publications and to fulfil the Institution's legal obligations and administrative requirements for its own records.
Ipswich Room Archives, Ipswich Public Library	To collect, preserve and make available to researchers printed, manuscript and visual materials concerning the history, people, institutions, government, businesses, built and natural environments of the Town of Ipswich, including those areas of the original Town which were incorporated as separate communities. These materials are arranged for use by researchers and, as far as possible, finding aids and electronic cataloguing information is provided to promote use of these collections.

The National Archives	Our 21st-century role is to collect and secure the future of the government record, both digital and physical, to preserve it for generations to come, and to make it as accessible and available as possible.
National Archives of Scotland (prior to the merger and the creation of the National Records of Scotland)	To preserve, protect and promote the nation's records; to provide the best possible inclusive and accessible archive that educates, informs and engages the people of Scotland and the world.
Perth and Kinross Council Archive	The aim of Perth and Kinross Council Archive is to select, preserve, and make available to the highest standards, the archives of Perth & Kinross Council, its predecessors, and the archives of local individuals, estates, businesses and organisations
UK Data Archive	The mission of the UK Data Archive is to support high quality research, teaching and learning in the social sciences and humanities by acquiring, developing and managing data and related digital resources, and by promoting and disseminating these resources as widely and effectively as possible.
The US National Archives and Records Administration Vision statement	<p>As the nation's record keeper, it is our vision that all Americans will understand the vital role records play in a democracy, and their own personal stake in the National Archives. Our holdings and diverse programs will be available to more people than ever before through modern technology and dynamic partnerships. The stories of our nation and our people are told in the records and artefacts cared for in NARA facilities around the country. We want all Americans to be inspired to explore the records of their country.</p> <p>mission statement</p> <p>The National Archives and Records Administration serves American democracy by safeguarding and preserving the records of our Government, ensuring that the people can discover, use, and learn from this documentary heritage. We ensure continuing access to the essential documentation of the rights of American citizens and the actions of their government. We support democracy, promote civic education, and facilitate historical understanding of our national experience.</p>

Writing a communications strategy

Much of the content of a communications strategy can be created from the advice given in this guidance. The purpose of a strategy is to provide a written plan against which communication actions can be developed, assigned to people and measured. There is also a range of online advice available for writing a communications strategy.

A communications strategy will include the following elements:

- an explanation of the aims and objectives of the plan based on good quality research and the objectives of the organisation
- a profile of the intended audiences – using stakeholder mapping to create this profile
- a clear description of the messages required to be delivered to each stakeholder
- identification of the channels that are to be used to deliver the messages to each stakeholder type
- a clear plan of action with actions, timetables, resources and responsibilities.
- a risk register which is kept up to date
- a clear process for evaluating the impact of communications

Online advice for creating communications strategies

- [The Overseas Development Institute](#)
- [Knowhow Nonprofit](#)

Understanding plans, policies and procedures

Plans, policies and procedures enable you to properly implement your work. They support how you achieve your mission statement through setting goals, working out a strategy and taking actions. It can be easy to get confused about how a mission statement, goals, strategy and actions all work together. Simply put one flows from another as the following diagram shows:



Your mission is the purpose of your organisation. The Goals are what you have to achieve to fulfil that mission. The strategy explains how you will approach achieving the goals and the actions are the tasks that need to be undertaken to implement the strategy. If you are considering applying for accreditation you will not only need to write a mission statement ([see How to write a mission statement](#)) but also a related set of plans, policies plans and procedures. The plans will layout your goals and how you will achieve them along with the suitable actions. The policies will be part of your strategy and the procedures will help inform how actions are undertaken.

For example, if part of your mission was to develop your collection you might identify which type of material you want to collect. You would then formally identify this goal in your collection development

policy. From that you would then develop a plan about how you will go about collecting this material. This plan would include a strategy about how you will go about identifying and collecting that material as well as a clear set of actions with a timetable and resources. You might also draw up particular procedures such as obtaining copyright clearance, good handling practice and guidance on working with depositors.

Your plans, policies and procedures are all part of effectively raising the profile of your service. Ensure they work as good communication tools by making them relevant, easy to understand, well informed and by sharing them with the right audiences.

Tips for engagement

This section highlights some imaginative approaches that archive services have taken to make connections with key audiences.

Invite yourself

- Request a seat on relevant decision-making committees
- Meet with new post-holders when they come into position

Be prepared

- Write an 'elevator pitch' – if you bumped into someone in the lift how would you leave them wanting to know more about your service? See <http://office.microsoft.com/en-gb/word-help/writing-an-elevator-pitch-HA010072350.aspx> for guidance and a template.
- You might not meet them in the 'elevator', though you will be prepared for an informal chance to communicate effectively

Use the technology effectively. This includes:

- blogs
- Twitter feeds
- social networking
- downloads and case studies
- e-zines
- placing information about the archives on the company's internal screen-saver
- recommendations on other websites

Pull people into your collections proactively. Consider providing:

- Behind the scenes tours for a whole range of audiences from users to key decision-makers. This is a very effective way of discussing a wide range of issues in a short period
- Introductory tours and workshops to show people how to work with collections
- Opportunities for a key stakeholder such as the Lord Mayor to become Honorary Keeper of the Records - a simple idea which can include 'perks' such as a private viewing of records once or twice a year and provision of interesting material for the Lord Mayor's functions
- Internships and volunteering opportunities
- Displays of material at key functions such as board meetings or staff training days
- Public art informed by the archives; e.g. the outside of John Lewis buildings or the interior of the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
- Opportunities for institutions to lend material
- Pecha-Kucha presentations (presenting 20 slides in 6 minutes/20 seconds per slide) to colleagues in related professions to create a high impact introduction to your work. You could organise your own Pecha-Kucha event with colleagues from different departments or related professions

Case Studies

Leveraging the value of awards - The Memory of the World Inscription and the Women's Royal Voluntary Service Archive

Goal: to develop collection access by securing additional funding (either internally or externally) for cataloguing the collections.

Situation: The WRVS Archive had been unable to access funding either internally due to its low profile within the organisation or externally because it found it difficult to meet funders' criteria. Inscription on the Memory of the World's (MOTW) UK Register (under the UNESCO umbrella) provided independent proof of the value of the WRVS collection. It was placed on the register alongside impressive items such as the Death Warrant for Charles I and the Wedgwood Museum Archive. Providing a clear benchmark for the outstanding value of the collection. This MOTW listing provided the basis for requesting internal funding.

Stakeholder communication

Chief Executive	
Message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The WRVS has a valuable history, which can be used to promote the present-day organisation.
Communications methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single email to the Executive Committee about the MOTW award Bi-annual newsletter about the archive highlighted the award Media briefings by the WRVS media team
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through a number of routes the Chief Executive became aware of the validation of the Archives' value and the potential for promoting the WRVS. This raised the Chief Executive's interest who then discussed the Archives with the WRVS Trustees

Trustees	
Message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The WRVS Archives have a wider, proven cultural importance that is of interest to the broader public. This provides significant promotional opportunities for the community, marketing and fundraising departments.
Communications methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with the Chief Executive who outlined the success of the Archives as a result of her own raised awareness from the MOTW award. A subsequent presentation by the Archivist
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness by the Trustees of the Archive and their realization that the Archive could be of practical use to the wider organisation. This, along with the Chief Executive's greater awareness enabled the Archivist to make a successful internal funding bid for cataloguing resources, something that would not have been possible before the MOTW award and internal recognition. The Trustees also commissioned the Archivist to write a small book on the history of the WRVS as a leaving present for the outgoing Chairman.

Conclusion

This message worked because of several elements. First, external validation from an international body identified the worth of the collections. Second, there was an effective chain of communication up through the organisation. The Chief Executive was made aware of this success and then informed Trustees of the award and its value. So the Trustees were informed by a key individual who had direct access to their discussions.

Raising internal awareness - The Unilever Records Management Service

Goal: to encourage Unilever staff at all levels to send their non-current records to the Records Management Centre when they move to a new site.

Situation: some of the staff on a Unilever site were to be moved to a new location where there would be much less space for physical records storage.

Stakeholder communication

Site workers	
Message prior to a site visit by the Records Management Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is not possible to take all your records to the new site. The Records Management Service can help you prepare for the move and store excess records.
Communication methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising to the individual teams of an impending Records Management Service site visit via a site-wide email Message booked on to the site-wide screen saver (this medium could be configured for individual Unilever sites) Appointment of one staff member from each site to inform people of the approaching visit by the Service
Message once the Records Management Service was on site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records Management understands the issues you face and here's how to deal with those issues
Communication methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On site discussion with each team and an information pack 'Advice slip' to sent each team following visit which summarise suggestions for disposals/retention
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Records Management Service received 200 boxes in the first four months of this targeted approach. A consistently higher delivery of boxes into and requests for advice from the Records Management Service since this site visit.

The 'On the Move Team'	
Message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is what the Records Management Service will be doing during this large site move
Communications methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular communication was required to keep the Move Team and the Records Management Service (who were not part of the Move Team) apprised of each other's work and status
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records were appropriately divided up between the new site, destruction and the Records Management Service

Conclusion

This case study shows the importance of understanding where the stakeholder is in the communication process and ensuring that the nature of the information conveyed and the channels through which it is conveyed account for the recipient's ability and need to understand the message. Office workers, who would have been completely unaware of the service's work, were initially made aware of the presence and general role of the Records Management Service in broad-brush messages in the pre-visit notices. Speaking to individual team representatives ensured the message was given through a trusted source who had the capacity and knowledge to communicate messages to their colleagues. Staff were then given detailed information on how to manage their records during the visit and follow-up actions. The visit provided face-to-face contact during which the Service could supply more detailed information and the recipient could discuss their concerns and fully understand the message.

The value of a strong advocate and dealing with poor communications - Creating an educational resource at Flintshire Record Office

Goal: to produce a resource for teachers to use in the classroom to bring history lessons to life using archive material held by the Record Office. In particular, to give examples of how the historical events prescribed in the National Curriculum impacted on their own localities.

Situation: initially the idea was to produce hard-copy packs, or perhaps CDs, to sell to schools, but after discussion with the Schools Humanities Adviser, the Record Office was determined to produce a resource online which could be accessed free of charge.

Stakeholder communication

Flintshire County Council's Schools Humanities Adviser	
Message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please help the Record Office create and communicate a relevant online resource to local teachers
Communications methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An initial face-to-face meeting was followed by regular telephone calls and emails
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Schools Humanities Adviser was the first port of call for this project and was tremendously useful. First, he was very enthusiastic about the project from the outset. Second, he had contacts amongst history teachers throughout the county and the means to encourage their involvement. As a former teacher, he could also give valuable opinions in his own right: 'He was right behind us all the way and we couldn't have done it without him'.

Teachers	
Message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether they would find useful a resource such as that proposed, whether the online format was the right one and what they would want such a resource to contain.
Communications methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face-to-face contact at a History teachers' inset day and at a forum for secondary school heads of history and geography, both of which were very productive. The Record Office attendance at both events was facilitated by the school's Humanities Adviser. The Record Office subsequently created a presence for itself on Moodle, the schools intranet, which aided communication
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teachers gave a very positive response to the proposal. A "twilight" session for teachers, held at the Record Office, was well received and it is hoped will be the first of many. Contact made in this way has resulted in teachers being more aware of the archives service and opened the door for schools visits.

The work required for this project prompted the Record Office to form links with two universities:

- University of Chester in various disciplines includes work placements in its degree courses. During the three years of the project the Record Office hosted six-week work placements for three students: the first worked on website design, the second on historical research to identify source material and the third was an art student who produced images on themes for which photographs or other pictorial evidence were lacking.
- Glyndŵr University in Wrexham required placements for its history students and several came to the Record Office to research a number of themes for the project and identify suitable documents to include.

Flintshire County Council's IT service

The Record Office wanted to put its resource onto the Record-Office pages of the County Council's website but had no experience of this process. It was very reliant on Council IT specialists. Despite face-to-face meetings to explain the aim and seek a solution this was not productive so the Record Office turned to NGfL Cymru.

NGfL Cymru

This body specialised in online educational resources and was an ideal partner to develop the online resource.

Communication methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NGfL made frequent visits in the early days and took on all the technical work as well as translation. Communication in person and by 'phone and e-mail worked very well.
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As time went on, however, NGfL's own position became precarious as future funding was uncertain. As a consequence, communication became more difficult resulting in certain elements of the resource not being as fully developed as hoped.• Nevertheless there has been some good feedback and work is continuing to develop the resource. Publicity has involved a press release, a link from the Record Office's own web pages and articles in its newsletter The Hourglass. The two members of Record Office staff who masterminded the project were given Personal Achievement awards in the Flintshire Excellence award scheme, which helped to raise awareness within the organisation.

Conclusion

The experience of Flintshire Record Office highlighted the impact of a strong advocate. The school's Humanities Adviser was well placed and enthusiastic to promote the resource to its key audience of teachers. The difficulties of communicating with the IT specialists show what a potentially devastating effect poor communication can have on a project. Conversely, the positive reaction that has been communicated back to the Record Office has encouraged it to continue working on and improving this resource.

Managing a wide range of stakeholders - Surveying holdings of steel archives across Wales by the Archives and Records Council Wales and Swansea University

Goal: to scope out records relating to the steel industry in Wales, with a view to initiating research and community engagement projects. The first step was a survey of archive material held at Tata Steel Records Centre. The 5 day survey was conducted at the end of January, with the permission of Tata Steel. The second step was to strengthen the findings of the Tata Steel Records Centre survey, by carrying out a scoping survey of records relating to the steel industry held by archives services across Wales.

Situation: one archivist reporting back to a number of stakeholders. This required balancing different interests, particularly those of a company with security and confidentiality issues, and busy archive services.

Stakeholder communication

Other archive services	
Message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is what the Project is seeking to achieve • For current participants: please describe your steel archive holdings • For potential future participants: up to date project information
Communications methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For survey respondents: a survey questionnaire with a covering email and follow up email communication. Information was required within a short time period so quick return was necessary so the deadline was very clear. Follow-up emails were used for clarification and to arrange visits. It was necessary to formulate contingency plans if there was a lack of responses • For potential partners: information even if they could not participate at that time to ensure that they could join in future if desired i.e. the opportunity was used to establish and nurture relationships that would be of long-term value
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nine Welsh archive services supplied full details of holdings and another two expressed an interest in future involvement

Tata Steel	
Message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a valuable project with which Tata Steel should engage
Communications methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project required co-operation from the records centre and the company as a whole. This necessitated developing productive relationships using face-to-face meetings to ensure two-way dialogue. Email correspondence was used to produce terms of agreement to address legal and confidentiality issues (to address routine but detailed procedures)
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access was granted to the records centre and progress was made in developing a partnership with the company

Survey Project Board	
Message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the progress of the Project and these are the issues we currently face
Communications methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular update reports for the project including teleconferences to involve project board members located in other geographic regions. Written reports were shared in advance for discussion at the meetings. Some partners chose to travel in order to cut down number of different teleconferencing sites. Funders were represented at these meetings
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project board was kept informed of the project and any issues were identified to prevent slippage in the project timetable

Conservators	
Message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop and agree a survey template, and carry out an appropriate survey of conservation needs
Communications methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial meeting as the conservators needed to be briefed about the project Email communication was used to enable multi-way input on the development of a shared survey template
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey template developed and implemented

Other groups	
Message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This survey is important, as it will produce useful information for you
Communications methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face-to-face meetings for a sense of engagement and to enable two-way communication , for example with academics on Swansea University Campus to discover interdisciplinary interests, Ebbw Vale Archival Trust
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New contacts were made with a number of different groups with a view to developing future projects

Conclusion

This was a complex communications scenario requiring different messages to a range of different stakeholders: some was to elicit action and involvement whereas other communication was to keep stakeholders informed and engaged. The use of appropriate methods that enabled discussion (where required) ensured an efficient and effective communication process.

Aligning a personal interest with organisational goals - Obtaining permission to work on Linked Data research at Cumbria Archive Service

Goal: involvement of a Cumbria Archives staff member in research into linked data alongside Kings College London and Axiell software company.

Situation: JISC (the Joint Information Systems Committee) was funding research into linked data and felt there would be added value for the archive sector if the research could feed into a practical application such as cataloguing software. Such a project would bring together higher education, local authorities and commercial organisations.

Stakeholder communication

Cumbria County Archivist	
Message	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cumbria Archives can be involved in a potentially very important technological development and at no cost as the research project will fund a replacement archivist
Communications methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A face-to-face meeting between the Archivist and County Archivist
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Archivist became an active member of the linked data research team

Conclusion

Cumbria Archive's case study was a classic 'win-win' situation. The Linked Data Project would include a team member who was a 'front-line' archivist and knowledgeable about practical professional requirements. The Record Office would get funding to obtain a replacement staff member. However, for the County Archivist an important factor was the opportunity for the Record Office to be directly involved in ground-breaking research in to linked data. This would promote the Record Office as an innovator, develop vital professional knowledge amongst staff, develop new partnerships for the Office and raise the profile of the Council. Without these non-financial benefits it is less likely that the Record Office's involvement would have been possible.