

A blurred background image showing three business professionals in a meeting. A man in a suit is on the left, looking towards two women on the right. The image is semi-transparent and serves as a header for the course title.

COM510

BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

ASSIGNMENT 1

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Due Week 4, worth 150 points

The ability to effectively communicate is one of the most in demand and sought after skills in today's workforce. As a business professional, you will be expected to not only communicate in a clear and concise way, but to do so strategically. These communication skills are necessary to manage personnel effectively and to drive your organization toward its strategic goals and outcomes. Effective communication starts with planning. By developing a strategic communications plan you will be more intentional in your messages and the actions you ask of your audience. **This plan is the foundation for Assignments 2 and 3.**

INSTRUCTIONS

Create a written strategic communications plan for the professional communication challenge or opportunity of your choice. Your plan should include the following components and may be written in a professional report format. See the formatting requirements for additional information.

1. Description

- a)** What is your challenge or opportunity?
- b)** Why is this professionally important to you?

2. Goal

- a)** What goal or outcome do you want to achieve with this communication?
 - i.** Is it clear, concise, and actionable?

3. Audience

- a)** Who is your target audience?
 - i.** What are the professional positions of the audience members?
 - ii.** What demographic characteristics will the audience comprise?
 - iii.** What is your relationship to the audience?
 - iv.** What background knowledge and expertise does the audience have?
 - v.** What does the audience know, feel about, and expect concerning this communication?
 - vi.** What preconceptions or biases do you possess that might prevent you from building rapport with your audience?
- b)** What information is available about your audience?
 - i.** What research/sources will you use to obtain information about the audience?
 - ii.** What conclusions have you been able to draw about the audience?
- c)** What tone will you use to convey your message?
 - i.** Is the setting casual or formal?
 - ii.** Is the communication personal or impersonal?

4. Key Message

- a) What is the primary message you must convey to your audience?
 - i. Is the message compelling and memorable?
 - ii. Is the message clear and concise?
 - iii. Is the message aligned with your audience's goals and needs?

5. Supporting Points

- a) What three to four points, reasons, or justifications support your message?
 - i. What research/sources will you use to obtain facts/data about your message?

6. Channel Selection

- a) What communication style will you employ (Tell/Sell or Consult/Join), and why?
- b) What channel(s) will you use to deliver your message, and why will they be the most effective?
- c) What purpose is served by each channel you have selected?

7. Action Request

- a) Is your call to action you are making to your audience clear, concise, and easily actionable?

Note: You may create and establish all necessary assumptions needed for the completion of this assignment. The scenario is yours to explain.

This course requires use of **Strayer Writing Standards (SWS)**. The format is different than other Strayer University courses. Please take a moment to review the SWS documentation for details.

| POINTS: 150 | ASSIGNMENT 1: STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN | | | |
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| Criteria | Unacceptable Below 70% F | Fair 70-79% C | Proficient 80-89% B | Exemplary 90-100% A |
| 1. Description Weight: 10% | Does not or incompletely describes challenge or opportunity and/or may not provide information on why this topic is professionally important/relevant. | Partially describes challenge or opportunity and/or provides some information on why this topic is professionally important/relevant. | Adequately describes challenge or opportunity and/or provides information on why this topic is professionally important/relevant. | Fully describes challenge or opportunity and provides information on why this topic is professionally important/relevant. |
| 2. Goal Weight: 5% | The communication goal is unclear or is not defined. | The communication goal is fairly defined. It is somewhat clear, and may need further refinement to be concise and clearly actionable. | The communication goal is satisfactorily defined. It is mostly clear, is actionable, but could be more concise. | The communication goal is exceptionally well-defined. It is clear, concise, and actionable. |

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| <p>3. Audience Weight: 20%</p> | <p>The communication does not include an audience analysis, draws irrelevant conclusions about the audience, or incompletely addresses the characteristics, motivations, and expertise of the audience. Does not identify the tone to be used to convey message.</p> | <p>The communication includes an analysis of the audience, but this is insufficient. The communication includes some relevant conclusions about the audience, the characteristics, motivations, and expertise of the audience. Identifies only one element of the tone to be used to convey message.</p> | <p>Audience analysis is sufficient to the task. The author thoughtfully considers most of the characteristics, motivations, and expertise of the audience, drawing mostly relevant conclusions. Identifies both elements of the tone to be used to convey message.</p> | <p>Audience analysis is thorough. The author thoughtfully considers the characteristics, motivations, and expertise of the audience, drawing highly relevant conclusions. Identifies both elements of the tone to be used to convey message.</p> |
| <p>4. Key Message Weight: 15%</p> | <p>The key message is unclear and/or is illogical. It does not align with the goals/needs of the audience.</p> | <p>The key message is fairly clear, concise, and logical. It may be somewhat compelling and memorable and aligns somewhat with the goals/needs of the audience.</p> | <p>The key message is mostly clear, concise, and logical. It is sufficiently compelling and memorable and is sufficiently aligned with the goals/needs of the audience.</p> | <p>The key message is completely clear, concise, and logical. It is exceptionally compelling and memorable. It is well-aligned with the goals/needs of the audience.</p> |

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| <p>5. Supporting Points Weight: 15%</p> | <p>The communication does not provide three or four points, reasons, or justifications to support the key message, and does not list sources to be used to support the message.</p> | <p>The communication provides three or four points, reasons, or justifications that support the key message to some degree, but this support is incomplete, and may not list relevant sources to be used to support the message.</p> | <p>The communication provides three or four points, reasons, or justifications that support the key message sufficiently, and lists mostly relevant sources to be used to support the message.</p> | <p>The communication provides three or four points, reasons, or justifications that clearly support the key message in a compelling manner, and lists entirely relevant sources to be used to support the message.</p> |
| <p>6. Channel Selection Weight: 10%</p> | <p>The communication does not identify or incompletely identifies the communication style and/or communication channel(s), while failing to provide sufficient rationale for the channel selection(s).</p> | <p>The communication identifies the communication style and communication channel(s), but to an insufficient degree. Rationale for the style and channel selection(s) explains the chosen method of delivery insufficiently.</p> | <p>The communication identifies the communication style and communication channel(s) sufficiently. Rationale for the style and channel selection(s) explains the chosen method of delivery adequately.</p> | <p>The communication style and communication channel(s) are thoughtfully chosen. Rationale for the style and channel selection(s) explains the chosen method of delivery in a compelling and thorough manner.</p> |

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| <p>7. Action Request Weight: 15%</p> | <p>The request made of the audience is unclear, or action cannot be taken based on the communication.</p> | <p>The request made of the audience is fairly clear, but may not be actionable.</p> | <p>The request made of the audience is sufficiently clear and is actionable.</p> | <p>The request made of the audience is thoroughly clear and easily actionable.</p> |
| <p>8. Write in a professional manner using proper grammar, mechanics, spelling, formatting, and citations. Weight: 10%</p> | <p>Writing does not meet minimal standards. Tone is not professional. Communication is wholly lacking in logic, clarity, and/or consistent formatting. Contains many spelling, mechanical, formatting, citation, and/or grammatical errors.</p> | <p>Writing is satisfactory. Professional tone is developing. Shows moderate logic, clarity, and/or consistent formatting. May contain more than a few spelling, grammar mechanical, formatting, or citation errors.</p> | <p>Writing could be improved, but meets acceptable standards. Tone is professional. Shows logic, clarity, and consistent formatting. May contain few or no spelling, mechanical, and/or grammatical errors. There may be a small formatting or citations errors.</p> | <p>Writing is excellent. Tone is professional and sophisticated. Shows logic, clarity, and consistent formatting. Contains no spelling, mechanical, or grammatical errors, and formatting and citations meet standards.</p> |