

Communication Planning

Internal Communication Plan

This document is meant to help your design team review current internal communications processes, identify new opportunities to engage with internal stakeholders at your institution and build out a timeline for implementing these strategies. It is essential that your campus community be informed and encouraged to ask questions/share feedback about your micro-pathways as this design process aims to help your institution build an innovation muscle that will continue to drive transformation beyond this project.

Step 1: Identify Internal Stakeholders + Current Communication Strategies

1. **List your internal stakeholder groups.** If you completed the Ecosystem mapping activity, you may refer to that document for ideas about who to include in your internal stakeholder list.
2. Once you've identified the internal stakeholders, **list how these groups are currently communicated with regarding the development of new programs** including the frequency of these communications and the responsible individual/s.

Pro-Tips for Communication Planning:

- Be specific about the internal group you are targeting in communication practices.
- Describe in depth- your current communication practices. Include HOW you are communicating and HOW OFTEN you are communicating.
- Identify the individual who is responsible for this communication practice. This will allow you to assign responsibility and ensure consistency and accountability in this process.
- Take clear notes to communicate back to your internal ecosystem. It is important to have a regular cadence of communication with internal stakeholder groups and then regular opportunities to report back to the individuals most proximate to this conversation.
- Consider what is going well with your current communication plan & where there are opportunities for improvement.

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Step 2: Update Communication Strategies

Work with your design team to **consider new strategies to communicate effectively** with these internal stakeholders throughout the micro-pathway design process. Be sure to include the frequency of these communications and who is responsible.

Pro-Tips for Updating Communication Planning:

- Consider what is going well with your current communication plan & where there are opportunities for improvement.
 - *NOTE: You may certainly want to continue using your current communication practices. This exercise is to help you identify additional opportunities to engage with internal stakeholders throughout the design process.*
- Copy and paste the information from the chart above relevant to your re-design of communication structures at your institution.
- Reconsider the goals of collaboration & communication with each internal stakeholder group. Make necessary changes to ensure that your communication practices are in line with these goals & objectives.
- Consider new & innovative ways to communicate with your stakeholders.
 - Examples include but are not limited to [memos](#), emails, in-person meetings, etc.
- Use [Canva](#) free account to create eye-catching memos & images to share updates of your work.
- Keep track of your communication cadence, documentation & notes. This will allow for consistency, transparency and accountability with all internal stakeholders.

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Step 3: Develop an Internal Communications Timeline

Using the stakeholder groups and communication strategies identified above, **determine which strategies you'd like to implement for this project**, and **build a timeline** below.

Pro-Tips for Developing an Internal Communications Timeline

- Consider including opportunities that are already on your institution's calendar and provide an opportunity for sharing information about new projects and initiatives, such as an end-of-year college-wide meeting.
- Consider strategies that engage multiple stakeholder groups at once, such as an email campaign or presenting at a department luncheon.
- Keep track of your communication cadence, documentation & notes. This will allow for consistency, transparency and accountability with all internal stakeholders.
- Copy and paste the information from the chart above relevant to your re-design of communication structures at your institution.
- Organize the chart below to be reflective of each internal stakeholder group. For example, list the internal stakeholder group and then add multiple rows for planned communication efforts. Add rows as necessary.

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External Communication Plan

This document is meant to help your design team review current external communications processes, identify new opportunities to engage with external stakeholders for purposes of this project, and build out a timeline for implementing these strategies. It is essential that your external stakeholders be informed and encouraged to ask questions/share feedback about your micro-pathways as this design process aims to help your institution cultivate meaningful long-term relationships with these groups that will serve you well into the future.

Step 1: Identify Employer Stakeholders + Points of Contact

1. **List the industry or sector alignment** of each employer that you are interested in connecting with.
2. **List the specific employer or company name.** Please add a new row for each employer. Consider the purpose of this project and the industries/ occupations your micro-pathways will be focused on.
3. Add the name of a **specific contact at that employer** that your institution has a connection with. If this is an aspirational relationship, note that there is no contact yet.
4. Include the **specific contact's email address.** If this is an aspirational relationship, please leave the box blank for now.
5. **Identify an individual at your institution** who currently has a relationship with the company or individual. If this is an aspirational relationship, note that there is no contact yet.

Pro-Tips for Identifying Employer Stakeholders

- If you completed the ecosystem mapping activity, leverage the employers identified in that process as a part of this step.
- If you completed the occupation selection activity, leverage the third-party organizations identified from the occupation analysis tool.
- Leverage existing relationships with employer partners. These partnerships might be located in non-credit and credit programs of your institution, on steering committees, board of trustees, board of governors, etc.
- If you utilize real-time labor market data, you can use this resource to identify potential employers in your ecosystem that are aligned with your prospective micro-pathway.
- You can also leverage third-party partnerships (see step 2) to obtain assistance in identifying potential employer partners.

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Step 2: Identify Third-Party Organizations Most Proximate to Your Design

A third-party organization is an external entity separate from the college itself that interacts with and influences the college's operations, decisions, or stakeholders, often providing services, partnerships, or support. In this section, list the third-party organizations that are not associated with specific industry alignment.

1. **List the third-party affiliation** of each potential partner. Examples include but are not limited to community-based organizations, religious groups, workforce boards, public schools, chambers of commerce, economic development corporations, etc.
2. **List the specific organization name.** Please add a new row for each third-party organization. Consider the purpose of this project and the industries/ occupations your micro-pathways will be focused on.
3. Add the name of a **specific contact** that your institution has a connection with. If this is an aspirational relationship, note that there is no contact yet.
4. Include the **specific contact's email address.** If this is an aspirational relationship, please leave the box blank for now.
5. **Identify an individual at your institution** who currently has a relationship with the organization or third-party affiliation. If this is an aspirational relationship, note that there is no contact yet.

Pro-Tips for Identifying Third-Party Stakeholders

- If you completed the ecosystem mapping activity, leverage the third-party organizations identified in that process as a part of this step.
- If you completed the occupation selection activity, leverage the third-party organizations identified from the initiative alignment tool.
- Leverage existing relationships with third-party organizations. Similar to employers, partnerships might be located in non-credit and credit programs of your institution, on steering committees, board of trustees, board of governors, etc.

Step 3: Identify College Communication Practices with External Stakeholders

Work with your design team to **consider new strategies to communicate effectively** with external stakeholders throughout the micro-pathway design process. Be sure to include the frequency of these communications and who is responsible.

Pro-Tips for Updating Communication Planning:

- Consider what is going well with your current communication plan & where there are opportunities for improvement.
 - *NOTE: You may want to continue using your current communication practices. This exercise is to help you identify additional opportunities to engage with external stakeholders throughout the design process.*

PLUS: When considering current partnerships and communication practices, **what is going well?**

DELTA: When considering current partnerships and communication practices, **what is in need of improvement?**

- Reconsider the goals of collaboration & communication with each external stakeholder group. Make necessary changes to ensure that your communication practices are in line with these goals & objectives.
- Consider new & innovative ways to communicate with your stakeholders.
 - Examples include but are not limited to micro-pathway design checkpoints, programmatic updates, program timelines, interview & job fair opportunities, round-table discussions, annual updates, etc.
- Keep track of your communication cadence, documentation & notes. This will allow for consistency, transparency, and accountability with all stakeholders.

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Step 4: Develop an External Communications Timeline

Using the stakeholder groups and communication strategies identified above, **determine which strategies you'd like to implement for this project**, and **build a timeline** below.

Pro-Tips for Developing an External Communications Timeline

- Consider including leveraging meetings, newsletters, and other opportunities that already exist with external stakeholders.
- Consider strategies that invite stakeholders to participate in your micro-pathway design at specific checkpoints in the design journey.
- A great starting point is to send out the [Employer Value Proposition](#) to the industry groups and invite them to be active participants in the design process.
- Consider where else throughout the process the influence of these stakeholders can be leveraged and what information is pertinent to assisting them in meeting their goals.

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