



OAKS Communications Management Plan

Prepared for

The State of Ohio

OAKS Project

Prepared By

Accenture

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1 Introduction

The Ohio Administrative Knowledge System (OAKS) Project brings significant change to the State of Ohio. The components of these changes (process redesign, system design, technical infrastructure, job and role changes, etc.) will only be as effective as the state's ability to handle them. These changes must be carefully managed and delivered across state agencies in order to realize the project objective of transforming the way the State of Ohio does business.

Over time, each state OAKS user will go through predictable stages of commitment as they become familiar with the changes brought about by the deployment of OAKS.

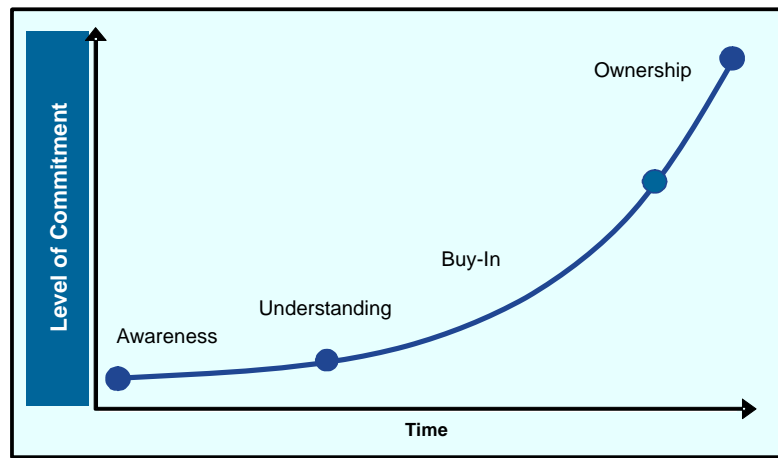


Figure 1 - Change Management Commitment Curve

At any point in the project, there is a risk of key personnel “falling off” the commitment curve; thereby resisting the changes. The OAKS Communications Plan is designed to help monitor and facilitate the appropriate movement of every employee through the commitment curve to minimize this risk.

The OAKS Communications Management Plan discusses the approach for delivering key messages to affected employees at appropriate times and collecting feedback to address concerns.

2 OAKS Project Communication Overview

Experience has shown that the design and implementation of an effective communication program is critical to the success of transforming an organization. This document outlines the focus and intent of the overall communications efforts, as well as those efforts unique to each individual agency.

A separate Communications Plan will be created to provide a detailed description of the planned communications for OAKS Project by audience, vehicle, timing, key messages. This



Communications Plan will be used to manage the priorities of OAKS communications activities and will be updated regularly to reflect progress and priority changes.

Mutual commitment to a communication program by the OAKS leadership team will promote a stabilizing environment and ultimately influence the degree of confidence state employees have in the OAKS changes.

2.1 Assumptions

The OAKS Communications Management Plan is based on the assumptions outlined below:

- There is a strong executive sponsorship initiative in place, to help accomplish the following objectives:
 - Obtain commitment to the changes within the state brought about by the OAKS Project
 - Secure involvement of users early and continuously during the project
 - Generate commitment from management to implement the plan
 - Integrate OAKS Project changes across multiple business areas and agencies
 - Enable quick removal of barriers and resolution of issues
- The OAKS PMO Change Management Team will work proactively with OAKS PMO Executive Leadership to strategically plan and disseminate all project communications, presentations and data gathering activities

The OAKS PMO Extranet will be the primary repository for OAKS documentation and user support tools.

2.2 Objectives

The overall OAKS Project communication efforts will act as a channel for the consistent and congruent communication of key events and information. The OAKS Project communication objectives are listed below:

- Create and disseminate communications that are timely, accurate and relevant
- Promote the OAKS vision within each of the state agencies
- Generate excitement and support for the OAKS changes
- Minimize the 'rumor mill'
- Monitor employees' reactions and morale through sustained personal contact
- Provide messages that are consistent in content, appearance and style
- Build and maintain confidence of affected personnel
- Customize communications to meet stakeholders' unique perspectives and specific needs
- Generate and demonstrate leadership support for OAKS
- Promote key sponsors as champions of OAKS
- Promote regular, open and honest, two-way communication

2.3 Evaluation Criteria

Communication objectives can be measured by the evaluation criteria listed in the following table. These criteria are based on research which identifies the common expectations people



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have of the communication they receive, and are dependent upon the objectives of specific communication used in the OAKS Communication Plan. It is important to note that, in certain instances, only some of these criteria apply. For example, when evaluating information about an upcoming change, timeliness is critical. Yet, when evaluating a reference binder, timeliness is much less important.

Evaluation Criteria	OAKS Objective(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The appropriate messages are being communicated to help OAKS stakeholders understand, support and produce business results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the OAKS vision within each of the state agencies Generate excitement and support for the OAKS changes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most credible person is delivering the message to the appropriate audience(s) and the message has been approved through the appropriate people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate and demonstrate leadership support for OAKS Promote key sponsors as champions of OAKS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information is shared in time for the recipient to react as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and disseminate communications that are timely, accurate and relevant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information shared is relevant, meaningful and at a useful level of detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimize the “rumor mill” Build and maintain confidence of affected personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is made clear to the recipient from where the information originated and what action is expected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor employees’ reactions and morale through sustained, personal contact Promote regular, open and honest, two-way communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The information is shared in a form that is efficient, understandable and easily accessible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide messages that are consistent in content, appearance and style Customize communications to meet stakeholders’ unique perspectives and specific needs

The OAKS Project communications program is dependent on a close link between the OAKS Project Change Management Team, the OAKS Project HCM, FIN and Technical Teams, individual state agency liaisons and implementation teams, and the OAKS business owners and executive sponsors.

2.4 Risk/Success Factors

Several risks have been identified which could have a significant impact on the successful development and implementation of the OAKS Communication Plan. In order to deliver effective communication on schedule and within budget, the risks highlighted below will need to be managed. Corresponding success factors have been identified to assist in managing these risks.

Risk	Success Factor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication may not reach all individuals in all organizational levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify all relevant audiences Use multiple channels/vehicles to



	communicate messages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication may contain inaccuracies or politically sensitive information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update subject matter expert, OAKS project management, and executive sponsor review and sign-off procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rumors and inaccurate information may spread throughout the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage Communication Plan centrally within the OAKS PMO Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication efforts may not meet the needs of each audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedback mechanisms for each message sent.

3 High-Level Communication Timing

In order to drive each of the state agencies through this change process, different communication events will be strategically executed at various times. Each level of commitment will be indicated by certain behaviors exhibited by key stakeholders.

Level of Commitment	Sample Communication Events	Key Behaviors
Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletters • Project Updates to key user groups • Informal Communications • Press Releases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledges that OAKS process and technology changes will have an impact on current operations • Realizes that the change is imminent • Articulates what the OAKS Project is at a high level
Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Briefing Sessions • Agency Meetings • Informal Communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States the benefits of the OAKS • Asks questions to clarify concepts • Has accurate expectations about what OAKS will deliver
Buy-In	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific Training • Coaching • Q&A Sessions • One-on-One Discussions • Agency Implementation Team All Hands Meetings • FAQs • State Project Website and Discussion Boards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulates how the program will provide a competitive advantage for the state and/or agency • Demonstrates positive support and endorsement • Willing to test out new processes and provide feedback • Expresses commitment to the goals of the changes



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Level of Commitment	Sample Communication Events	Key Behaviors
Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefings by State Project Leads Performance Support Publicize "Success Stories" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporates the new processes as the normal way of doing business Articulates personal ownership of the change Demonstrates involvement Identifies the negative impacts if process improvement initiatives are not implemented Independently and proactively communicates the benefits of the program
Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OAKS PMO Status Reports Agency Readiness Reports OAKS Project Internet/Extranet End User Evaluation Analyses Elevator Speeches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates authoritative ownership of the change Acknowledges acceptance of OAKS Actively seeks out information and tools related to OAKS implementation

Table 1 - High Level Communication Timing

When gaps in commitment exist, changes to planned activities will be developed and executed to obtain the desired levels of commitment. Bearing in mind that commitment may take different forms, in general target audiences should:

- Be involved in understanding the new business capabilities
- Seek information about their role in the new environment
- Demonstrate a willingness to accept the change

4 Key Audiences

Stakeholders will be the key audiences for OAKS communication activities. The following Stakeholder Analysis outlines the estimated impact of the OAKS project on agency and state stakeholders.

Stakeholder	Incumbent/s	Level of Impact	Degree of Commitment Required	Comments (for future updates)
PROJECT AND LEADERSHIP TEAMS				
Business Owners and Executive Sponsors (<i>Sustaining Sponsors</i>)				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BOA Executive Sponsors CAG New group TBD 	High	Ownership	
OAKS Project Leadership (<i>Initiating Sponsors</i>)				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Executives 	High	Ownership	



Stakeholder	Incumbent/s	Level of Impact	Degree of Commitment Required	Comments (for future updates)
OAKS Project Staff (Change Agent)				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Project Team Leads 	High	Ownership	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Project Team Members 	High	Commitment	
STATE AGENCIES				
Change Agents				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency Liaisons 	High	Commitment	
Change Advocates				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AIT Members 	High	Commitment	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency Supervisors 	Medium	Buy-In	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency Informal Leaders 	Medium	Buy-In	
Targets				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OAKS End Users 	High	Understanding	

Check degree of commitment:

Table 2 - Stakeholder Analysis

5 Key Messages

Throughout the OAKS implementation, various key messages will need to be communicated at the right time. To assist in this process, the following matrix outlines the types of key messages expected for each phase of the project.

Design	Construct & Test	Implement	Ongoing Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project objectives Project timelines Business process impacts Existing system impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go live readiness criteria and status Preparation activities and checklists Training dates and schedules Near-term improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Success stories Set baseline for measuring actual business benefits achieved by new processes and tools Available resources to support affected personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New features / functions being implemented Upgrades to existing features / functions FAQs and tips for use of the system Measure actual business benefits achieved by new processes and tools

Table 3 - Communication Key Messages



Key messages will change and evolve as we gauge the feedback received from key audiences. The communications process is a continuous improvement process that reacts to feedback and assessments on going.

6 Communication Activities

The following Communication Activities Matrix is a sampling of the events that may occur throughout the OAKS Project. This matrix outlines the suggested communication activities, how often each will occur, the purpose of each activity and the affected audiences.

Activity	Vehicle	Frequency	Purpose	Audience	Sender
External Press Releases	Articles and OAKS Fact Sheets	As required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage OAKS image with general public • Showcase successes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Public 	DAS Communications w/input from OAKS CM Team
CAG Meetings	Executive Meetings	Bimonthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update OAKS sponsors on project scope, schedule and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Advisory Group 	OAKS Executive Program Manager
BOA Meetings	Executive Meetings	Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update OAKS sponsors on project scope, schedule and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Owners Advisory Group • Executive Sponsors 	OAKS Executive Program Manager
Maintain OAKS Project Website	OAKS Internet	Update as required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish regular OAKS Project updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Public • State Employees 	OAKS Communications Coordinator
Maintain OAKS Contact Database	OAKS Extranet	Update at least weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide current contact information for all OAKS project and agency staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OAKS Project Staff • Agency Liaisons • AIT Members • OAKS Sponsors 	OAKS Communications Coordinator
Agency Collaboration	OAKS Extranet	Update as required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide tools, templates and resources for agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency Liaisons • AIT Members 	OAKS Communications Coordinator
Key OAKS Messages	OAKS Extranet	Update as required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide content for key OAKS messages to produce consistent communications across agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency Liaisons • AIT Members 	OAKS Communications Coordinator



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Activity	Vehicle	Frequency	Purpose	Audience	Sender
Functional Kick-Offs or Information Meetings	Meetings	As needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather information from and/or present information to key functional stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCM Stakeholders FIN Stakeholders Tech Stakeholders 	OAKS CM Team w/input from OAKS Functional Managers
AIT Functional Training	Workshops	One per month, July – Oct 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide AIT members with early training in key OAKS implementation areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency Liaisons AIT Members 	OAKS CM Team
AIT All Hands Meetings	Meetings	One per quarter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide key project updates to agency liaisons and implementation teams Conduct just-in-time training for AIT members Generate and maintain agency commitment to the OAKS implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency Liaisons AIT Members 	OAKS Outreach Coordinator
OAKS User Wellness Checks	Focus Groups	As required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather feedback from agency users on a specific topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency end users 	OAKS CM Team
Transition Workshops	Workshops	One per module, beginning March 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide agencies with information and tools to help them address the business process, policy, staffing and technological impact of OAKS on their agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency Liaisons AIT Members 	OAKS Agency Readiness Team
OAKS Team Status Meetings	Meeting	Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide regular cross team status updates, issue resolution and activity coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OAKS Project Managers and Team Leads 	OAKS Executive Program Manager



Activity	Vehicle	Frequency	Purpose	Audience	Sender
Maintain Training Histories, Schedules and Enrollment	OAKS PS LMS	Real-time updates, based on user input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track OAKS end user training activity Produce reports as inputs to Agency Readiness Scorecards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OAKS Executive Project Management OAKS Business Owners and Sponsors Agency Liaisons OAKS Training Administrator 	OAKS Training Administrator
Training	Blended approach, including ILT, WBT, coaching, online help, etc.	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To build required skills to support new processes and tools 	Affected Agencies	OAKS Training Team

Other activities the plan should reference:

Table 4 - Communication Activities

7 Feedback

It is vital that the OAKS Project Change Management Team creates a two-way dialogue to address the questions and concerns of state employees in an accurate and timely manner. To achieve this, the OAKS Project Change Management Team will use one common OAKS Project feedback mailbox where all questions and comments can be sent (OAKS.webmaster@oaks.state.oh.us). Agency-specific questions will be forwarded to the appropriate agency liaison or AIT member to answer. Where appropriate, responses will also be posted to the general OAKS Extranet FAQs. All OAKS Project communications will contain a link to this mailbox so that any stakeholder can post questions and comments.

8 Communication Approach

8.1 Road Map

The communications approach will be delivered by implementing the following activities over the course of the implementation.

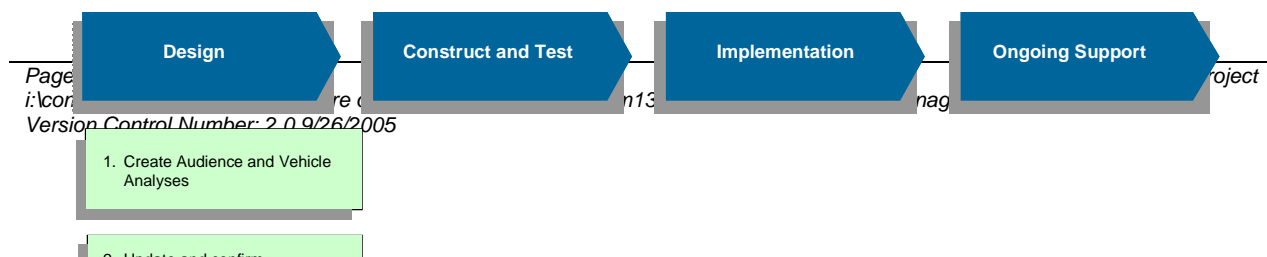




Figure 2 - Communications Road Map

8.2 Deliverables

The following deliverables and tasks will be completed at each stage in the process:

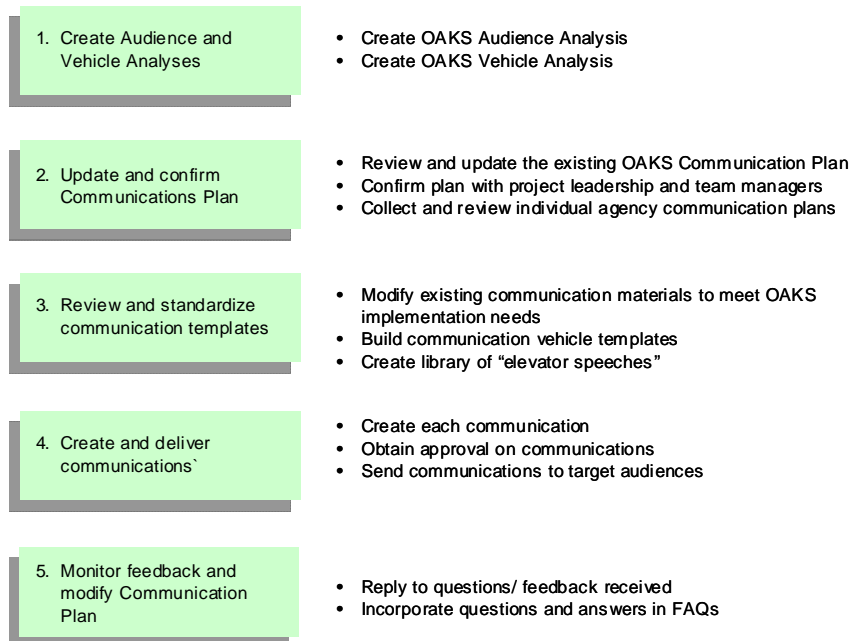


Figure 3 - Communications Deliverables



9 Conclusion

As stated in the original OAKS Communications Management Plan, “To be effective, communications must be relevant, timely and accurate. The OAKS Project seeks to provide a project culture in which the project stakeholders have the greatest possible understanding regarding respective roles, and common expectations regarding participation and processes. It is important for team members, including project managers and leaders, and other stakeholders to understand that mutual respect and teamwork are vital components for ultimate project success.”

This Communications Management Plan provides the framework to keep stakeholders engaged and informed about the project.

Some items I suggest incorporating include:

Critical success factors

Communication challenges

Critical success factors

Assumptions