

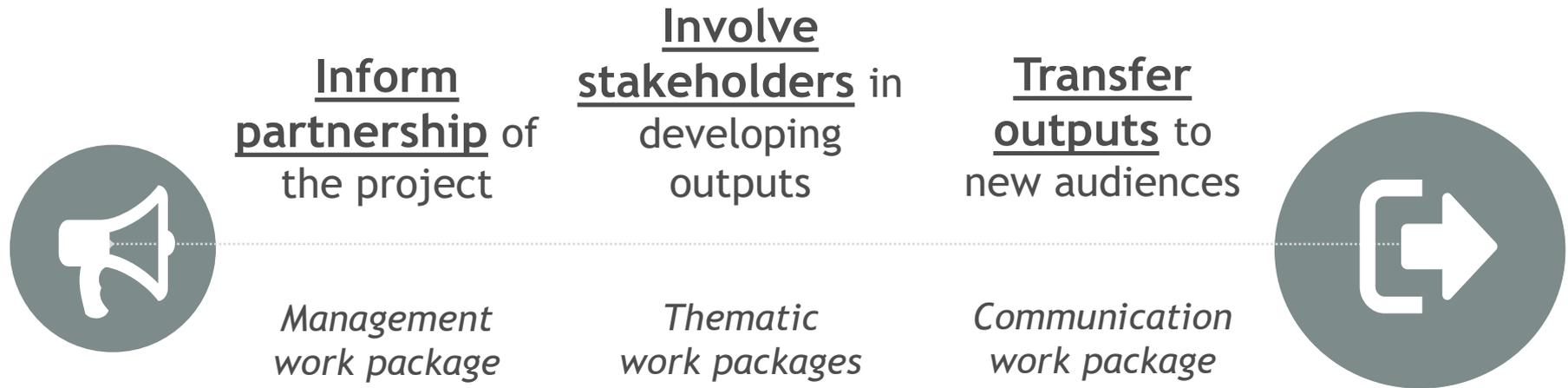
TAKING  
**COOPERATION**  
FORWARD

 Project Implementation Training  
Vienna | 19-20 Juni 2017

 **Communication: Strategy and Messages**

 Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE | Joint Secretariat

## Why projects communicate



## Strategy, message and story

Strategy lays out the easiest **path to achieving a goal**. It defines your objectives, your audiences, tactics and tools.

Messages are what you want your audience to **hear and remember**. Messages have to be adjusted to audience and context.

Stories **persuade people**. They embed concrete messages in a specific context that fits an audience. They are detailed, personal, and emotional.



## Key messages

Messages provide the spine of your strategy and ultimately of your future stories. To be heard and remembered, the messages should be:

**Targeted** – Tailored to an audience, Journalists know different things than experts

**Clear** – Free of jargon, devoid of technical language, and relevant

**Concise** – Short enough to be delivered in under 10 seconds

**Consistent** – Messages should be repeated if they are to sink in

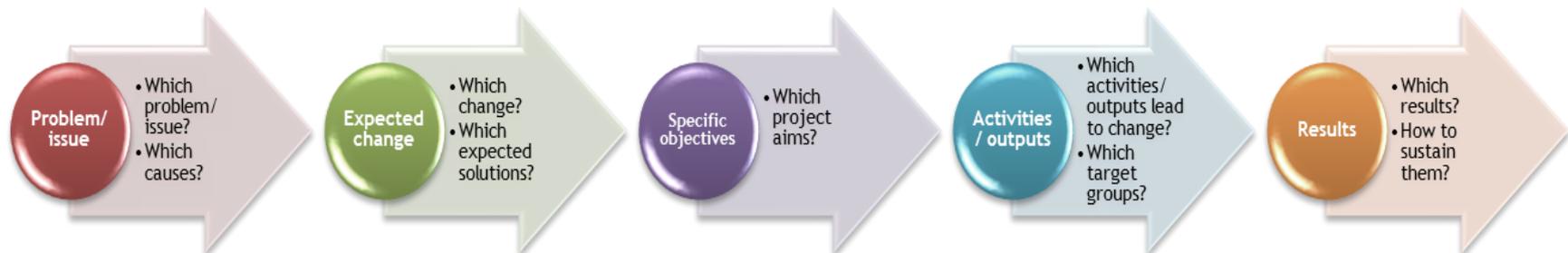
**True** – Messages must survive fact-checking, based on evidence

**REMEMBER:** Messages need to be defined for each key activity and output of your project. They need to be tailored to an audience and to your goal. This is reflected in the grid structure in the strategy template.



## Story

The most basic project story (e.g. elevator pitch) summarises your project intervention logic in just a few sentences:



### Example:

We cooperate in our project \_\_\_\_\_ (*insert your acronym here*) to find new solutions for \_\_\_\_\_ (*the concrete problem with which the listener can identify*). **We develop/test/implement** \_\_\_\_\_ (*what you concretely do*) **for** \_\_\_\_\_ (*who directly profits*). As a result, we will improve \_\_\_\_\_ (*the change you aim for and the listener can relate to*) **for** \_\_\_\_\_ (*who finally profits, the end-beneficiary*).



## Example: Airbnb

### **Message - informative, concise, consistent and true**

Through our services, we enhance people's lives. We help them to make great experiences through meeting with other people in their homes.

### **Story - detailed, personal, emotional, authentic**

Airbnb storytelling illustrates its key message in various ways. It focuses on people, both the ones who own homes and the travellers who are using them. They have a section of their website called [Airbnb.com/stories](https://www.airbnb.com/stories) and it is filled with videos and bios of hosts and guests. It's a great platform for the brand to tell story after story - delivering the message in the most authentic way.



## TEMPLATE

Project Communication Strategy Version 1  
07|2016

### A. Introduction

Keep it short and simple. Only after finalising the other chapter of this strategy document, write this introduction and answer each of the questions below in one paragraph:

- What is your project about?
- Which outputs are most relevant for transfer and why?
- What is the role of communication in your project?
- What will be the results of your communication?
- What are your main reference points for this strategy?
- Who is involved in planning and delivering your communication?

### B. Strategy

In this chapter, the strategic framework for the project shall be outlined in the following sub-chapters:

- B.1 Communication to ensure internal involvement of all partners (WP Management)
  - B.2 Communication to ensure external involvement in output development (Thematic WPs)
  - B.3 Communication to transfer outputs to new target audiences (WP Communication)
- Challenges and results, strategy, activities will then have to be

Who had a look at the NEW TEMPLATE already?

...ensure internal involvement of all partners  
...below...

**B.2 Communication to ensure external involvement in output development**  
Follow structure below...

**B.3 Communication to transfer outputs to new target audiences**

**Challenges and results**

1. Describe in this section the status quo and challenge for communication. What has to be done and why?  
E.g.: A new output has been developed and should be taken up by the municipalities...however, relevant audiences know very little about the output and their attitude is sceptical.
2. In a second paragraph, describe which audience will be targeted in view of which output and why.  
E.g.: Decision makers in relevant thematic departments of the municipalities in the project regions and mayors...
3. Last but not least, define what will be the expected result(s) after your communication.  
E.g.: Decision makers better understand the output and are convinced to use the output in their daily work routine, mayors are aware that the output is from the project.

**Strategy**

Choose up to 5 project outputs that are most relevant in the respective communication areas (i.e. external involvement or transfer) and create a grid for each of these outputs in the sub-chapter. For the internal arena (i.e. ensure internal involvement), there might be only one grid needed with "All outputs".

## Key sections of the strategy template (1)

### Introduction

- Describe what the project does.
- Explain which 5 key outputs are most relevant for your project and describe why
- Keep the introduction short (around 1 page)



## Key sections of the strategy template (2)

### Challenges and results

- Describe the status quo and challenge. What is the objective when you communicate about the main project outputs?
- Describe which audience will be targeted.
- List the communication channels and tools you will use for communicating with your target audience. In case of internal communication and communication for stakeholder involvement, exchange directly with other work package leaders.
- Define how you will measure your communication.



## Key sections of the strategy template (3)

### Audience/ message grid

To be defined  
for each of the  
key outputs

Audience	Communication objective	Status quo in 2016	Status quo aimed for in 2018	Key messages
Decision makers of municipal departments in all project regions	Increase knowledge	Do not know what is planned by the project	Have gained a deeper knowledge about the project output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our project output x helps municipalities to...</li> <li>...</li> </ul>
	Change attitude	Do not know what is planned by the project	Not only know about the output but are willing to use it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our project output x brings clear advantages in terms of...</li> <li>...</li> </ul>
Mayors in all project regions	Raise awareness	Do not know about this output of the project	Are aware about the output, yet without a deeper understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our project output x helps municipalities to...</li> </ul>
	Increase knowledge	...	...	...



## Key sections of the strategy template (4)

### Activity planning

#### C.1.1 Communication strategy

##### Key points

Project output in focus of activity: ---

Main target audiences: ---

Responsible partner for implementation: ---

Project partners to be involved: ---

Indicative timing of activity: ---

##### Description

Shortly describe in a few sentences what the activity is about and what is planned why, where, by whom for whom (the 5Ws). This description should build on information that was given in the application form but be more specific and provide more details already. Consider also to outline the main messages to be conveyed in each activity.

##### Monitoring

Describe how you are monitoring progress (in addition to project reporting. Use optionally the grid below.

Output indicator	Unit	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data	Reporting
Project communication strategy shared with all partners	Number	0	1	Monitoring	1st progress report



## Evaluation of activities

- For registrations to and the **feedback surveys** after project events we recommend to use: <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/home/about>
- **Web statistics** will be provided to the projects in time for reporting requirements



## Timing

The communication strategy has to be delivered with the 1st project progress report. It will then be reviewed.



## Exercise

### Step 1 (individual work, 10 minutes):

- Individually develop a project key message for following situation:  
*Someone you meet does not believe in the benefit of transnational cooperation. Develop a key message that will help the person (in this case: a journalist) to better understand and remember why it is beneficial to work together beyond borders.*

### Step 2 (group work, 30 minutes):

- Get together in groups of up to 5 people
- Present all developed messages to each other
- Vote for the best message to be presented to all

### Step 3 (group work, 20 minutes):

- Presentation of the best messages from the group and feedback discussion

