

Decision Communication Planner

Planning how to announce and explain your decision

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How to use this worksheet

Once a decision has been made, how it is communicated can matter as much as the decision itself. This planner helps you think through who needs to know, what they need to hear, when they should be told, and how to handle reactions. Use it alongside the Telling Others questions in Step 7 (Decide and Commit).

Think carefully about the order of communication. People who are most affected should hear directly from you, before they hear it from anyone else. Surprises - especially unwelcome ones - are harder to recover from than the decision itself.

PART 1 The Decision

Summarise the decision before you plan the communication.

The decision (in one sentence)

The key reason(s) for this decision

What this decision does NOT mean (if clarification is needed)

Effective from / date of implementation

PART 2 Audience Register

List everyone who needs to be told about this decision. Think about who needs the full explanation, who needs a summary, and who simply needs to be informed. Consider the order: who needs to hear first? Note anyone you should consult before acting, rather than simply inform, and anyone who should not be told yet, and why.

Audience	What they need to know	When	Channel	Who tells them

PART 3 Core Message

Draft the core message before you communicate. A clear, consistent message reduces misunderstanding.

The decision in the clearest possible terms (as you will say or write it)

The key reason(s), in plain language

What you want people to do or know as a result of this decision

PART 4 Anticipated Reactions

Think through who might react negatively, what they might say, and how you will respond. Preparing in advance makes for calmer, more constructive conversations.

Who	Expected reaction	How you will respond

PART 5 Communication Checklist

Before you begin communicating, work through the checklist below.

- ☐ All key stakeholders have been identified in the Audience Register
- ☐ The core message has been drafted and reviewed
- ☐ The announcement order is planned - nobody hears it secondhand first
- ☐ Any people most affected have been spoken to directly before wider announcement
- ☐ Anticipated questions and objections have been considered
- ☐ A plan is in place for what to do if the decision is challenged
- ☐ Any formal or written record of the decision has been prepared
- ☐ Anyone who should not be told yet has been identified, with the reason
- ☐ You have decided how much to share with each person, and what must stay confidential