

Leadership Southern Maryland *Connections*



A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN FOR



Created by
Laura Boonchaisri, Tony Jones, and Robbie Loker
Economic and Workforce Development Team
Leadership Southern Maryland Class of 2016
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In the Beginning



Communication (from Latin *commūnicāre*, meaning "to share") is the act of conveying intended meaning to another entity through the use of mutually understood signs and semiotic rules. The basic steps of communication are the forming of communicative intent, message composition, message encoding, transmission of signal, reception of signal, message decoding and finally interpretation of the message by the recipient.

(source: Wikipedia)

Summary of Findings



Client: Southern Maryland JobSource

- ❖ **Provides a wide array of services for jobseekers and businesses**
- ❖ **Charged with providing a strong workforce delivery system**
- ❖ **Service provided at four locations by a staff of 31**
- ❖ **Among “popular” programs & services provided are workforce solutions for businesses, preparation of job seekers, Job Match Re-Employment Project, etc. via Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WOIA)**

Summary of Findings



Challenges:

- ❖ **How to effectively “get the word out” about the services they provide communicate to their targeted populations**
- ❖ **Determine best ways to promote their success stories and events taking place at the American Job Centers without utilizing advertising dollars**
- ❖ **Devise a strategy to engage employees to submit content**

The Plan



Development Phase

LSM Economic and Workforce Development team met with JobSource's Ruthy Davis to determine needs.

Team collaborated to develop an easy to use Communications Plan for JobSource for their communications and marketing efforts. Idea is to use employees at the center to provide content for releases.

The final plan was developed into three sections ... **Media Contacts, Media Outreach, and Social Media.**

The Plan



Media Contacts

- ❖ **Robbie Loker** researched and developed an inclusive list of media contacts throughout Southern Maryland which have resources that JobSource can utilize to get the word out about services, success stories, or other pertinent information to the public.
- ❖ Rationale: when JobSource has a great story, such as the receipt of a new grant, the start of a new service, a major new employer has found great employees through their work, or they've assisted someone land a job they are thrilled about, they can let the media know!
- ❖ Often, if a story is sent as a simple release with information, media outlets will run it in either print or online versions of their publications. If the story is truly compelling, you might even get a full story. They should include photos if possible.

The Plan



Media Outreach

- ❖ **Tony Jones** designed the essential tools for “traditional” media outreach
- ❖ Tools include print templates for a media advisory, and news release template for events (such as an American Job Center ribbon cutting) and success stories.
- ❖ These can be used to create relationships with media and key stakeholders across Southern Maryland.
- ❖ The goal: keep the stories simple and informative. They are urged to start with the most important information first, include quotes, extra information (or less important information) for later in the release.

The Plan



Social Media

- ❖ **Laura Boonchaisri** crafted the Social Media section
- ❖ Describes and discusses the use of free social media platforms (i.e. Facebook) and how to increase impact and knowledge of services
- ❖ The goal: build authentic relationships with customers and potential customers throughout Southern Maryland.

The Plan



Facebook

- ❖ Suggest posting 1 to 2 times each day ... or at least 3 times a week.
- ❖ Keep posts to not more than 250 characters
- ❖ Shorter posts get read more often while long posts often get cut off
- ❖ Always include a photo or short video
- ❖ Posts can be scheduled in advance
- ❖ Utilize Insights to determine how their posts are doing: how many people saw it (reach), how many people interacted with it (engagement) and it was published.

The Plan



Instagram

- ❖ More focused on media such as photos and video.
- ❖ Great way to build relationships, but not as strong as Facebook for getting information out.
- ❖ Very popular with teens and young adults.
- ❖ Facebook and Instagram accounts can be linked to allow for duplicate posting ... together, or they can keep them separate.
- ❖ Since Instagram is a completely mobile posts can not be generated from a computer.

The Plan



LinkedIn

- ❖ Discussed how to create a business page.
- ❖ Once the page is set up, advised to update it at least quarterly.
- ❖ Post news releases, new programs or services, or great articles/blogs/books that are found to be helpful for both job seekers and businesses.
- ❖ LinkedIn has both JobSource targets: businesses and job seekers.
- ❖ Suggest to keep it informational and professional. Facebook and Instagram are more touchy feely whereas LinkedIn is more professional and informational.

The Plan



Content Suggestions

- ❖ Post about a success story, business partnership or great new connection
- ❖ Post about a staff member – when they attend or put on training, when something really significant happens (like you get a new staff member, or someone hits a big milestone like 10 years, etc.) and have staff members post information as well
- ❖ Post about great books or websites that can help job seekers either enhance or learn new skills or become better qualified for the jobs they want
- ❖ Post about new grants or new location openings
- ❖ Post about classes that you offer or special training
- ❖ Post about services that have helped someone

Potential Red Flags



Photographic Content Guidelines

- ❖ Advised to remain vigilant issues of client confidentiality and privacy concerns
- ❖ Some agencies use photo release forms while others have "opt-out" policies (if someone does not want information or photos shared, they are responsible for letting an employee/staff member know.
- ❖ Sample language provided regarding privacy and use of photos:
Please note that library staff may be taking photos of any or all events to use for future library publications. Program participants' photos may be used without notification or compensation. If you do not feel comfortable having your photo taken, please inform library staff when you arrive to a program.
An alternative is to have photo release forms – you can find information on those here: <https://asmp.org/tutorials/forms.html#.Vwa2R08rK70>
(source: St. Mary's County Library)

Projected Outcome



If JobSource can implement the basic, minimum plan, they can expect to see their engagement (and visibility) increase

This plan should allow for the biggest bang for the buck while not spending any money at all

Understanding that JobSource staff are quite busy, this plan allows for staff participation without great interruption to their normal work routine and schedule

The plan will work best when information is shared on several platforms by lots of people

Conclusion



QUESTIONS