

The background of the page features three soldiers in camouflage uniforms standing in a field. They are holding rifles and looking in various directions. The setting appears to be a military base or training area with mountains in the distance and some buildings in the background. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

# How to promote Testing in Your Organization

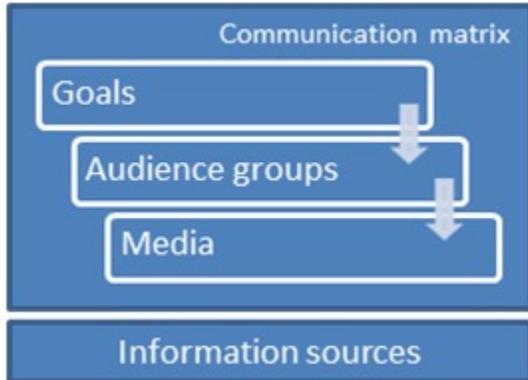
- Rob van Steenbergen

# Promotional testing tip: Create a communication strategy – Part 3

## Key messages, planning & evaluation

I've written a lot of articles now about promotion of testing and will conclude the series with some ideas about creating a communication plan

Until now we've discussed the goals, audience groups, media and information sources.



### Identify Key Messages, Announcements and/or Marketing Tools.

Defining your message is the basis of any successful campaign. But, you don't need a slick advertising campaign or a large marketing budget to make an imprint in your own community.

Number	Goal
1	Raising awareness about testing with other ICT disciplines

For goal 1 for example, the key messages could be

- Explain the basic principles about testing
- Traceability and quality measurement from design to product
- Quality and testing for non-testers

### Planning



Establish a timetable. Once objectives, goals, audiences, and tools have been identified, quantify the results in a calendar grid that outlines roughly what projects will be accomplished and when. Separate objectives into logical time periods (monthly, weekly, etc.).

Every communication plan needs a detailed timeline focusing on two important areas:

- Production timetable for communication materials
- Roll-out timetable for communication tactics

This is the example of the communication matrix I've used in the previous article.

Nr	Goal	Audience	Power Point	Poster	Magazine	Intranet article	Intranet video
1	1	Development teams	X	X	X	X	
2	1	Architect	X		X	X	

Microsoft Project, Excel or Word programs are all useful formats for communication plan timelines. Since the many implementation plan deliverables may overlap, it is important to use a format that allows concurrent tracking of tasks.

When you create it, it could look something like this (beware of your deadlines for your goals!)

Activity	Action holder	Week									
		11-jun	18-jun	25-jun	2-jul	9-jul	16-jul	23-jul	30-jul	6-aug	
Comm. nr 1 Create PowerPoint	Tester 1	x	x								
Publication of 1-PP	Tester 1			x							
Comm. nr 1 Create Poster	Tester 2		x	x							
Publication of 1-Poster	Tester 2				x						
Evaluation of goal #1						x	x				
Modify communication plan						x	x				
Comm. nr 1 Create article magazine	Tester 3					x	x				
Publication of 1-mag	Tester 1							x			
.....	...										

### Success Measures

How will you know if communication and promotion is success? A communication plan should always include tangible success measures.

In the time table you see that evaluation is planned too. Did you reach part of your goal?

- Should we communicate more?
- Did you use enough media?
- Are the key messages clear to your audience? Just ask some of your recipients if
  - o The messages are clear and understandable
  - o What you've done is engaging and informative for them?
  - o They would like to receive future communications about this subject?



So plan ahead, but be ready to change parts of it after evaluation. This is a very important part of the plan. You can't plan ahead everything, because you're dealing with people here.

Well, also an important lesson for testing or projects themselves. Often people forget that planning 2-3 months ahead is almost an impossible task. Lots of projects just get changed after a few weeks.

### Conclusion

This way of setting up a communication plan looks very much like setting up a (testing) project. The main thing is to think about it, brainstorm, and structure the way you work and keep track of your path. If you take this seriously, this is a good way to promote the testing trade with other disciplines.

Testing isn't easy, but communication is also a lifetime study for some people. A bit of structure will help you guide your promotion via a communication plan. Most of it is also fun to do, don't forget this important aspect!

Besides promotion you will learn a lot of your organization, meet more people than when you stayed within your own team and probably will get more recognition for the things you do. And that was the main goal anyway in all these articles I wrote about promotion of testing.

Hope you learned a bit from this series and that I could help you a bit on your way and helped you with coming over some uncertainties. If you got questions or remarks, please let me know.



**Rob van Steenbergen** is an independent software test consultant from The Netherlands.

In the last five years he has been involved in infrastructure projects and is now working at the Dutch company Nobel as a test manager. He is working in miscellaneous projects for customers of this company and coaching and helping project managers and technical colleagues with setting up

and improving test processes internally.

Website – [www.chickenwings.nl](http://www.chickenwings.nl)

Blog - <http://rvansteenbergen.blogspot.com>

Rob can be reached at <http://twitter.com/rvansteenbergen>