

Communications Model - The 7 Steps

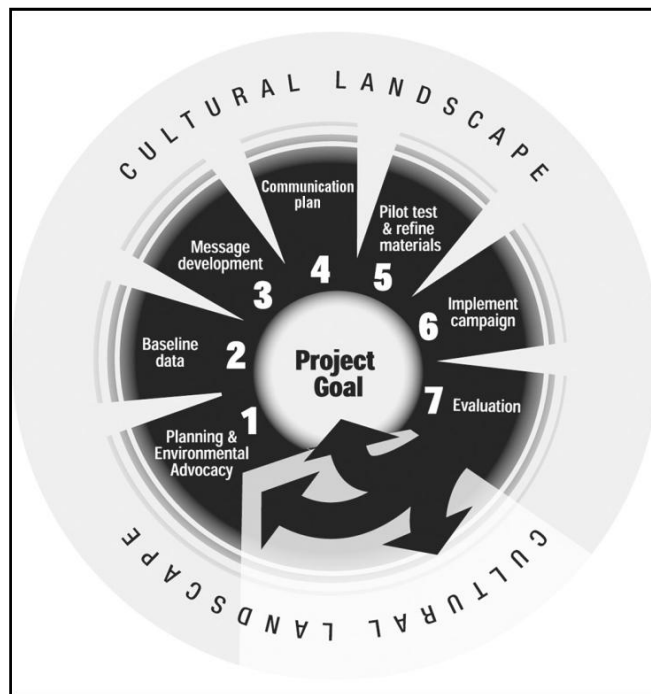
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The Positive Community Norms (PCN) process is often applied through the 7 Step Communications Model. The 7 Step Communications Model is a process for building upon the positive attitudinal and behavioral norms that already exist in a culture.

The PCN Communications Model has been successfully applied at local, regional and statewide levels for a variety of health and safety issues. It has been the foundation of successful campaigns on a broad range of topics.

In the real world of implementation, the practitioner facilitates a dynamic process that involves operating within and between each of the steps continuously and simultaneously, thus the PCN Communications Model is illustrated as a circle below.



STEP 1 - Planning and Environmental Advocacy

Project planning determines the scope and direction of your campaign and ensures that all of your efforts are aligned with your program goals. Environmental advocacy entails creating a political, economic, and social atmosphere conducive to change.

While planning and environmental advocacy is the first step in the 7 Step Process, this work will occur continuously and consistently throughout all aspects of your project. Activities like developing relationships with key stakeholders and allocating and training staff require constant attention and maintenance as the key players change. The more attention you give to project planning and environmental advocacy, the fewer roadblocks you are likely to experience on your journey toward success.

Your main objective during this step is to begin creating a political, economic, and social atmosphere that is supportive of change, ultimately via your campaign and its goals. This *environmental advocacy* can be time consuming work, but it is an essential step that will lay the groundwork for your campaign.

STEP 2 - Baseline Data

Current and available data (e.g., quantitative, research, qualitative) are analyzed to determine areas where additional data are needed to establish a baseline for healthy behaviors and perceived norms. Additional data gathering methods are established such as the use of focus groups or structured interviews.

STEP 3 - Message Development

Message development is a rigorous process, involving numerous drafts based upon feedback from focus groups and intercept surveys. The scope of the message is determined by the focus population's readiness for change, their current behavioral practices, and their normative perceptions.

STEP 4 - Communication Plan

Traditional and non-traditional media approaches are assessed for their potential to reach the focus population. The environment of competitive and complementary messages is monitored. A project-specific plan is developed and modified as needed.

STEP 5 - Test and Refine Materials

Concepts and developed messages are tested (e.g., focus groups, interviews) with the focus population for accuracy, authenticity, and to assess preferences. Specific materials and messages may be developed to target secondary reinforcers, such as parents or teachers, for a campaign focusing on youth. Sub-population testing of materials may also be conducted.

STEP 6 - Implement Campaign

The focus of the PCN campaign is to effectively engage, honor, and steer the public conversations within the community. The implementation and distribution of materials are conducted according to the communication plan. Testing of materials for "next generation" messages may be conducted. Training of key stakeholders and secondary reinforcers commences to expand the campaign's reach and to gain valuable support of the campaign. All challenges are documented and viewed as opportunities for increased collaboration and message exposure in future campaigns and next generation messages.

STEP 7 – Evaluation

Positive Community Norms evaluation is an on-going process of reflection. The purpose of PCN evaluation is to add value to the community by capturing positive changes and transformation as well as barriers to these desirable outcomes. Qualitative and quantitative data are gathered, analyzed, and fed back into the model in a continual process loop.

PCN evaluation helps to: (1) articulate our campaign successes; (2) understand why we might not be getting the changes our programs expect; and (3) improve our programs and our strategic efforts to positively transform community norms.