Leadership Toolkit

Leading across London

NHS

Writing to recognise and motivate

Leadership Dimensions	Sharing the vision	Leading with care
Engaging the team	Holding to account	

We are often called upon to write email updates, reports and perhaps newsletters to communicate progress and other information regarding where pieces of work/ projects are up to. These provide excellent vehicles for recognising and therefore motivating those on our team that have contributed to the success of the work/ project.

An on-the-run approach may work well for quick one topic communications, especially if they are simply communicating facts but if you want a communication to achieve a specific outcome, a little thinking and planning *goes a long way* to achieving your objective.

What to do

1. Use the prompts in the *communication planner* to gather and sequence information about

   - the achievement(s) you want to recognise

   - the people involved

   - the positives for the group's objectives and purpose

   - the positives for moving forward such as into another phase of the project or into another year

2. Follow the *guidelines for developing your communication* to turn the information you gathered into messages that will *acknowledge those who deserve recognition* and *motivate them and others* as your team moves forward.

> ### Writing tips
>
> - *Tone and language*
>   Think about the people who will receive your email or newsletter.
>
>   The *tone* of your writing needs to be *in tune* with the way you normally speak to them - open, direct and warm but neutral enough not to jar or provoke a reaction.
>
>   After all, you want them to recognise and respond to your *message* not talk about the *way* your expressed the message.
>
> - *Be positive*
>   In reporting achievements, you are *celebrating in words*!

Communication planner

Gather the 'information elements' that you will turn into messages in your email, newsletter or report.

Achievement	Who contributed?	What did they actually do?	Looking back...	Looking forward...	Seq#
Describe briefly	List the individuals / group to acknowledge	Jot down actual actions and decisions.	How significant has achieving this goal been for the team / unit / Trust?	Set the vision for the next phase. How will you build on this achievement?	Set order

Now *follow the guidelines on the next page* to write your email, newsletter or report.

Recognition and motivating others

Guidelines for developing your communication

1. Think about how you will open your email or newsletter

   - Be 'inclusive'. Reach out to everyone to whom the communication is addressed.

   - Show that you plan to speak positively about what has been achieved.

   - Acknowledge the interdependencies that deliver success.

2. If you are including a number of achievements in your communication or report, make sure you decide on the order in which you need to introduce them.

   Review the sequence numbers you have noted beside each item.

   - Is that the best order for introducing each achievement? Should it be chronological? By importance?

   - Will the order contribute to the build up of positive messages? Should you leave the strongest achievements till last?

3. Choose and write a heading for the first achievement you are going to report.

   - Headings need to express your primary *message* about the achievement. Write the heading as a statement that expresses the success achieved.

4. Write a sentence describing what was achieved - a change delivered? an improvement in patient satisfaction?

   - Be concrete. You are describing a fact along the lines of "we did X".

5. Take your list of *Who contributed?* and your notes from *What did they actually do?*

   - Name each person / group and write a sentence or phrase describing positively what they did. In your statement, you are implicitly praising how work was done as well as noting what was done. For example, *Rosie finished the X and was able to hand over to Max before the deadline, which helped him complete his part of the project*.

6. Take your notes on *Looking back...* and write a sentence expressing the significance of what has been achieved. Be concrete.

   - What has this meant for the team, for the unit, for patients?

   - Why is this achievement satisfying for those who were part of it?

7. Take your notes for *Looking forward...* and write a sentence that *sets a vision* for moving forward.

   - What is next for the team / group? What do we need to focus on next?

   - How has this achievement laid the groundwork for the next phase or for next steps?

   - If the work is ongoing, explain how this achievement has set the team in a position to complete the next stage.

   - Be honest. It may be that good things were done but the objective only partially achieved. Be sure to show how everyone can build on the partial success to step up again in pursuit of a goal.

8. Repeat steps 3-7 for each achievement.

9. Finally, summarise how *you* feel about the past <timeframe> - the project, six months, the year and express how *you* feel about entering the next <timeframe>.