



***How to  
Become a  
Strategic  
Communicator***

This is a training tool developed by IDRC



## *Topics*

- Communications: The Big Picture
- Building a Communications Strategy

# *Communications: The Big Picture*



## ***Communications: The Big Picture***



### What is Communications?

- Press release?
- Face-to-face conversations?
- Video?

## ***Communications: The Big Picture***



### Why is Communications Important?

- A valuable and essential tool
- Think strategically

## ***Communications: The Big Picture***



### Strategic Communications

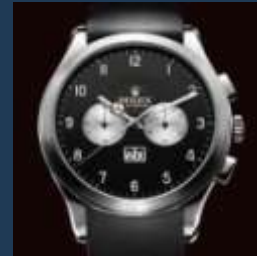
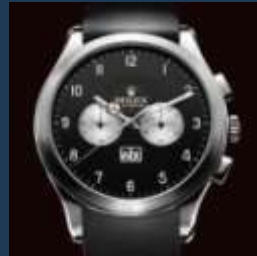
- Beyond dissemination
- Creates engagement
- Makes a difference

## *Communications: The Big Picture*



## Communications for Development

- Selling research or a **Rolex?**



## *Communications: The Big Picture*



### Communications at IDRC

- A corporate imperative
- Communications in the Corporate Strategy and Program Framework 2005-2010



## **Communications: The Big Picture**



*“IDRC will direct resources to staff and research partners to develop and use a range of targeted communication tools and strategies so that the research we support can influence policies, practices, and technologies that contribute to sustainable and equitable development and poverty reduction.”*

## *Communications: The Big Picture*



### Communications Begins with Project Planning

- At the beginning, not at the end
- Budget

## *Communications: The Big Picture*



### Strategic Thinking Revisited

- Analysis
- Focus on the big picture
- Channels of communication
- Key stakeholders

# ***Building a Communications Strategy***



## *Building a Communications Strategy*



### Key Elements of a Communications Strategy

- Context
- Strategic considerations
- Objectives
- Target audiences
- Messages
- Tactics and tools
- Evaluation

## *Building a Communications Strategy*



### The Context

- Economic, social, and political environment
- Media scan
- Trends in public opinion
- Historical context
- Corporate culture and goals

## *Building a Communications Strategy*



### Strategic Considerations

- Anticipate change
- Risk analysis
- SWOT

## ***Building a Communications Strategy***



### Objectives

- Set your goals
- Make them SMART
- Be realistic
- Never work backwards



## *Building a Communications Strategy*



### Target Audiences

- Who do we need to talk to?
- Start local and go global
- Audience research

## *Building a Communications Strategy*



### Messages

- Revisit objectives
- Three to five key messages
- Keep them succinct and simple
- The “sticky message”

## *Building a Communications Strategy*



### Tactics and Tools

- Fit with the objectives
- Adapt for specific audiences
- Short-term and long-term

## *Building a Communications Strategy*



### Reaching Government Decision-Makers

- Policy briefs
- Face-to-face
- Through media
- Through knowledge multipliers
- Through the general public

## *Building a Communications Strategy*



### Working with Partners

- Why is it important?
- Ways to encourage them

## *Building a Communications Strategy*



### Evaluation

- Why
- What
- How
- Build in evaluation at the start
- A communications strategy is organic

## *Building a Communications Strategy*



### In Brief

- Analyze the context
- Set objectives
- Think of your target audience
- Write succinct messages
- Determine tactics
- Evaluate

## *How to Become a Strategic Communicator*



And if you do that...

**Congratulations!**

You are a strategic communicator.



## *How to Become a Strategic Communicator*



- Communication Strategy Template
- Context
- Strategic Communications
- Objectives
- Target Audiences
- Messages
- Tools and Tactics
- Evaluation



# *In Summary*



Checklist