Community Communication Guide

Strategies for Positive Action

for the Women's Industry Network Seafood Community (WINSC) and the Australian Seafood Industry Council (ASIC)

FISHERIES RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Introduction

A community communication plan is essential for the seafood industry to approach the many challenges it faces in addressing current community attitudes and perceptions about the industry.

Fisheries management decisions increasingly take into consideration social and economic impacts as well as sustainability and environmental issues. Our industry's strength lies in its ability to respond positively and clearly communicate its position within our dynamic society.

This guide is for the use of individuals and groups associated with the Australian seafood industry. It will be particularly useful for women involved in the industry - through the Women's Industry Network Seafood Community (WINSC), and the local community networks they have created.

It should be used with the associated Resource Folder, which provides practical tips and examples for implementing action at a local and individual level.

This Community Communication Guide provides advice for exchanging messages with the people around you!

Community
•• *people around us*

Communication
•• *sending and receiving messages*
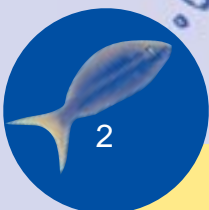
Guide
•• *advice for action*

Purpose

The purpose of the Community Communication Guide is to assist participants in the seafood industry in developing community communication plans. It encourages seafood communities to communicate the seafood industry's activities, social and economic contributions, and environmental commitment to community leaders and the broader community.

This guide provides direction and information for members of the seafood community to further their networks and enable them to make a significant contribution improving the image and raising the profile of the seafood industry.

Contents

Planning Steps

This guide provides seven planning steps that form a framework to work through planning, communication and implementation.
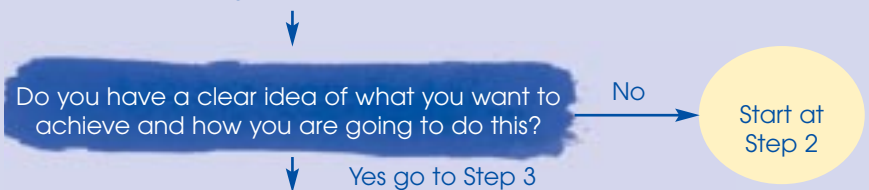
The supporting Resource Folder may be used to address specific issues and provide guidance for managing activities.

Good communication provides for the sending and receiving of messages. Effective communication is about developing relationships and trust.

Step 1. *Using networks to get started*   **Where to start**

Do you have a great network of people to work with you? → No → Start Here

Yes Go to Step 2

Step 2. *Setting Objectives*

Do you have a clear idea of what you want to achieve and how you are going to do this? → No → Start at Step 2

Yes go to Step 3

Step 3. *Shaping messages for local communities*

Do you have an accurate list of messages → No → Start at Step 3

Yes go to Step 4

Step 4. *Deciding who to communicate with*

Do you know who you need to be sending your messages to? → No → Start at Step 4

Yes go to Step 5

Step 5. *Choosing activites*

H ave you decided on the activites that will best convey your messages? → No → Start at Step 5

Yes go to Step 6

Step 6. *Developing action plans*

Do you have easy to follow task lists so that everyone involoved know what they are responsible for? → No → Start at Step 6

Yes go to Step 7

Step 7. *Evaluating your success*

Have you accessed the success of your activities and learnt how to do it better next time? → No → Start at Step 7

Yes! Congratulations Start on your next project
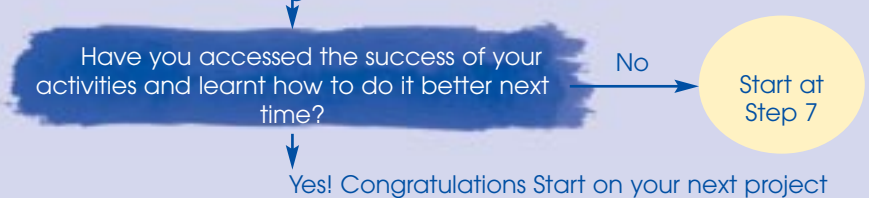
N Use your network — When you see this symbol use your network for help
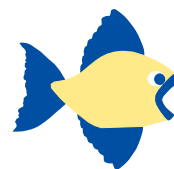
Go to the resource folder section indicated.
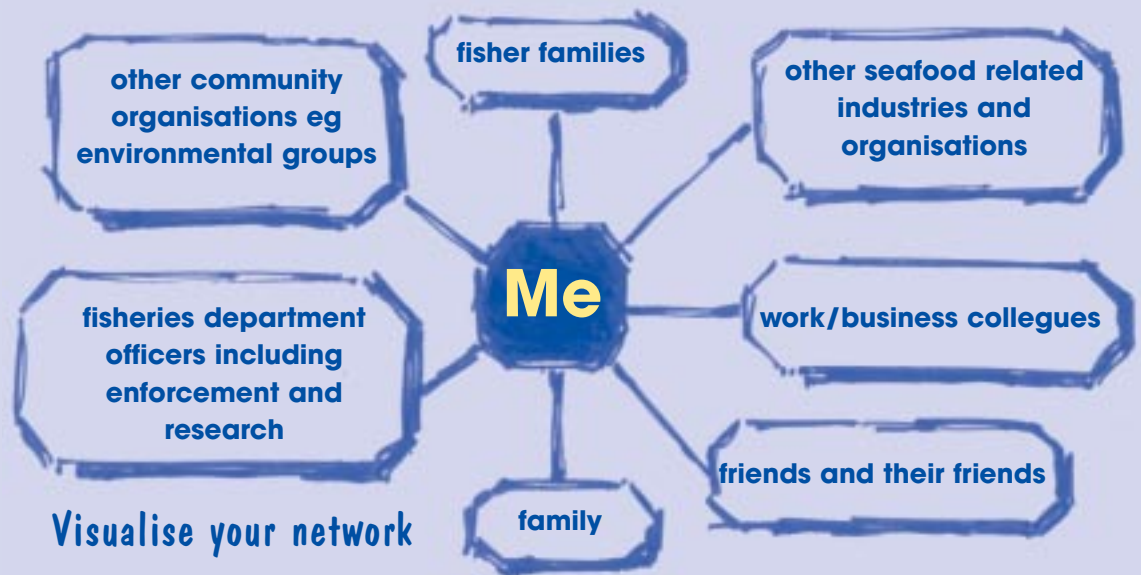
It's no good just talking about what should happen. It's up to us to make it happen. That's going to take changing peoples' attitudes and perceptions about our industry.

You know what the issues and problems are. Let's get organised and work together towards changing some of those attitudes with some facts and action. Part of getting organised is not doing it alone. It is working with others in your community who have similar interests and objectives.

Networking is about establishing communication links with other people as a means of exchanging ideas and information. It is as simple as six people having coffee and a chat.

fisher families

other community organisations eg environmental groups

other seafood related industries and organisations

Me

fisheries department officers including enforcement and research

work/business collegues

friends and their friends

family

Visualise your network

Merging the expectations and perceptions in a group or team is not always smooth sailing. You are all individuals working towards common goals. Be sensitive to, and supportive of, the emotional mood of individuals and the group. Only hold expectations of yourself, not others.

Checklist for setting up networks

Methods:

- [ ] Use existing networks - like fishing meetings - to recruit helpers
- [ ] Contact people who might be interested – the aim is to build up a network of willing workers to share and achieve your vision (be as inclusive as possible)
- [ ] Meet to discuss your ideas and develop a shared vision
- [ ] Encourage everyone to spend time after the meeting to consider all the issues and the vision you've jointly created
- [ ] Make a contact list with names, phone numbers and email addresses and distribute it to all those who attended the meeting and to others who may be interested
- [ ] Make notes on the shared vision of the meeting and distribute this information widely
- [ ] Build on the strengths of the individuals in the team

Skills required:

- [ ] Ability to communicate ideas to others
- [ ] Ability to listen to the ideas of others
- [ ] Survival level organisational skills for organising and running a meeting
- [ ] Sense of humour, patience and persistence
- [ ] Secretarial skills to record outcomes and compile contact list- computers are handy but not essential

Information sheet 5

- [ ] Within the group it would also be helpful to have some skills or experience in the following: media, writing, secretarial, public speaking and a wide range of industry experiences and interests
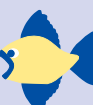
Outcomes:

- [ ] A network of people with enthusiasm and vision

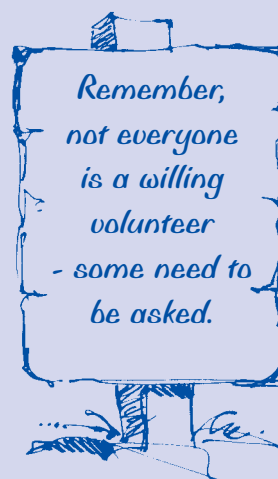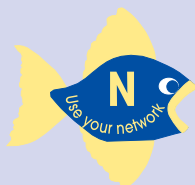*Action sheet* 1

Evaluate:

- [ ] Is there anyone else who should be included?
- [ ] Do we have all the skills and resources we need to move on?

Follow up:

- [ ] Circulate contact lists and meeting outcomes widely
- [ ] Recruit people with specific skills

Use your network

Remember, not everyone is a willing volunteer - some need to be asked.

Step 2. Setting Objectives

When individuals or groups use this guide within their local communities they hope to achieve the following objectives:

1. To educate consumer and community groups about all aspects of the seafood industry

2. To improve community and individual perspectives of, and attitudes toward, the seafood industry

In developing your plans, you may want to refine or adapt these objectives to suit your needs and those of your local community.

Checklist for setting objectives

Methods:

☐ Write down your ideas for what needs to change, how this will help the industry, and how you can achieve them

☐ Prioritise your ideas

☐ Discuss your ideas with others

You know your local issues and problems and are best equipped to progress change.

Skills required:

☐ Basic writing skills, you don't need a computer to have a few good ideas!

☐ Strategic and creative thinking

☐ Ability to communicate ideas

Outcomes:

☐ Confidence in knowing you've got some good ideas that can be progressed into action

☐ A wish list has been started

Evaluate:

☐ Is there more to go on the wish list of good ideas?

Follow up:

☐ Find help where needed by going back to Step 1

Step 3. Shaping messages

The regional diversity of the industry means that each area and group needs to define their own messages and the best ways of delivering them with the available resources.

However, your messages may need to be more specific to your region and community to reflect the local issues. One way of designing messages is to consider the following three questions:

1. What do you want to get across to the community?

2. What does the community want/need to know about the local seafood industry?

3. What could the community get wrong about the local seafood industry unless you stress the correct information?

Your answers to questions two and three should shape what you have written to question one.

The seafood industry wants to be seen as:
• proactive and responsible in ensuring economically and environmentally sustainable outcomes
• providing high quality seafood products
• a significant contributor to the Australian economy and internationally competitive
• investors in the latest innovations, technology and equipment
• employing a professional and skilled workforce
(Reference ASIC 2001)

Checklist for shaping messages

Methods:

☐ Meet to clearly identify and list key issues and problems

☐ Create your regional vision for the industry

☐ Clarify your key messages and list them (Use the three questions listed above to design your messages)

Action sheet **9**

Skills required:

☐ Strategic and creative thinking

☐ Ability to listen to the ideas of others

☐ Ability to explain your ideas

☐ Research skills

☐ Secretarial skills to record outcomes

The messages you develop should guide the content of any materials you produce like media releases, fact sheets or presentations for the audiences identified.

Outcomes:

☐ Identified issues, objectives, messages and activity options

Evaluate:

☐ Do we have a framework on which to build our strategies to achieve our objectives?

Follow up:

☐ Circulate the objectives and activity options to help develop networks and invite others to join the group or just keep them informed

Use your network

Step 4. Deciding who to communicate with

Who do you want to get your messages to? Is it individuals in the community, community groups, or the community in general? This will vary depending on the issues and messages you've already identified in Step 3.

You must now consider the information needs of your target audience. How do they get information now and how do they like to get information? Give it to them how and when they want it - not how you want to give it!

Some groups/organisations in your local community that you might want to consider are:

- Government agencies – Federal, State, Local councils
- Local community groups – CWA, Lions, Rotary, Senior Citizens
- Local businesses – tourism, Chamber of Commerce, other businesses
- Environmental/conservation groups
- Educational organisations – primary schools, high schools, colleges, TAFE

Checklist for identifying who to communicate with

Methods:

☐ Brainstorm in a meeting of your network which community groups and individuals are important for communicating within your local community

☐ Prioritise your list, consider who is the most influential in the community? Consider ways you can communicate with one group that will help in communicating with others, such as school groups

☐ Think outside the obvious, and consider Rotary or Lion's clubs and local politicians

☐ Discuss your ideas with others who are also communicating with the local community

1 *Action sheet*

☐ Make up a contact list of key target groups, organisations and affiliations - include contact name, position, organisation, phone, fax, email and address

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Information sheet **5** · · · **8** *Action sheet*

Skills required:

☐ Strategic and creative thinking

☐ Ability to ask for help

☐ Secretarial skills for recording outcomes and keeping contact lists

Outcomes:

☐ A contact list of key people you want to communicate with

☐ More developed community networks

Often the people or groups that you find the most difficult to deal with – and the ones you might be hoping to avoid – are the ones you most need to communicate with.

Evaluate:

☐ Who else should be targeted?

Follow up:

☐ Maintain and regularly update lists of key contacts

Step 5. Choosing activities

When you have an idea of what you want to say and to whom, you need to consider the best method or methods of delivery.

Activity ideas:

- Organise a community education program through public interest workshops, seminars, open days, presentations, displays and seafood festivals —
- Use the media —
- Lobby support (perhaps through a letter campaign) from the community and community leaders —
- Promote seafood education for our school children —
- Produce a local brochure or fact sheet about our local industry, a seafood recipe book, or a website about your local industry —
- Get greater representation on committees, boards or councils. —
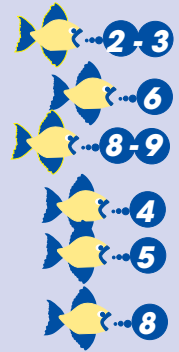
Some of these activities require ongoing commitment where others may be more short term or may address specific issues as they arise. Either way, there's plenty for you to get involved in that will make a difference! Be realistic at what you can deliver with the resources you have available. Consider the strengths and skills of those on your team and if you need more expertise go looking for it. There are a lot of people just waiting to be asked!

Checklist for choosing the best activities

Methods:

☐ Decide who you want your messages to go to such as the general community, community leaders, politicians, media, seafood consumers environmental and conservation groups, or children (see Step 4)

☐ Decide what activities will be most appropriate

☐ Establish the timeframe for the activities, whether they are relatively short-term or ongoing activities

Skills required:

☐ Strategic and creative thinking

☐ Communication skills in listening and talking

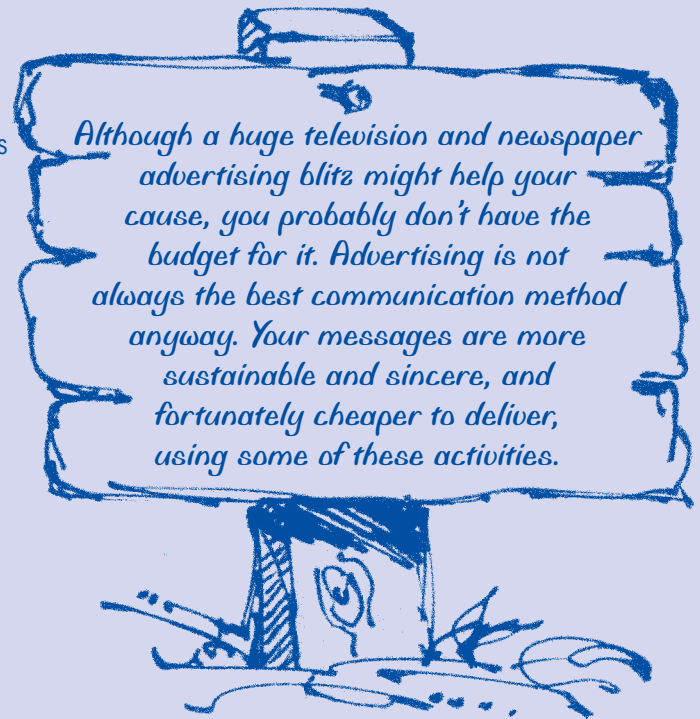☐ Secretarial skills to record the decisions

Outcomes:

☐ A well defined framework for planning action

Evaluate:

☐ Have we got it all?

Follow up:

☐ Be flexible about altering the targets or messages as the project progresses

☐ Establishing task lists, working together and delegating

> *Although a huge television and newspaper advertising blitz might help your cause, you probably don't have the budget for it. Advertising is not always the best communication method anyway. Your messages are more sustainable and sincere, and fortunately cheaper to deliver, using some of these activities.*

Step 6. Developing an action plan

You have established your objectives, messages, target audience and activities. Now it is time for the real action! Create a task list that provides the direction and checklist for your activities.

Build on the strengths and skills of your team when considering the best way to sell your messages.

Cost out the activity in terms of time, skills and money. Make a budget and consider how you can get some sponsorship for your activities.

The task list should include everything that has to be done, by whom and by when. Keep it simple and to the point under the headings of TASK, ACTION, BY WHOM and BY WHEN. That way everyone knows what's expected of them. It also works as a checklist of achievements and a record of events. This helps in planning future activities as you can assess what worked best.

Consider the audience and identify the best person or people for conveying your messages.

Checklist for producing action plans, task lists and delegating

Methods:

☐ Identify volunteers with skills and passion suited to each of the tasks required

☐ Create a task list under the headings of TASK, ACTION, BY WHOM, BY WHEN

☐ Establish a budget for the activities if required and look for funding/sponsors

☐ Check what permits or permissions may be required

☐ Select a spokesperson/people

Information sheet **5**

Action sheet **10**

Thorough planning is essential. Your activities will only be as good as the weakest link so leave nothing to chance.

Skills required:

☐ Survival level organisational skills

☐ Treasurer, if money is involved

☐ Secretarial skills

☐ Enthusiasm and commitment

Outcome:

☐ Well planned activities that are successful

Evaluate:

☐ Is everything covered?

☐ Have we included everyone that should be?

Follow up:

☐ Make the media aware of your activities

Action sheet **6**

You are the most credible person to tell your story to your local community. People are more likely to listen to someone from within their community. However, there may be someone who can attract more attention that may help to promote your activities.

Step 7. Evaluating success

It's important that you assess and celebrate the successes of your hard work. A good way of doing this is to have a de-briefing meeting with all the people who worked on the project or activity. Discuss the successes and how you could have done it better or with less effort. From this you should get more good ideas for future activities.

Checklist for evaluating success

Methods:

☐ Hold a de-briefing meeting with your group and discuss what worked and what could have been done better

☐ Did we make a difference? Quantify the results in terms of how many attended or media coverage given. How you measure the success will depend on the type of activity undertaken

☐ Put together a brief report on the project for future reference

☐ Brainstorm for your next project!

☐ Circulate the report throughout your established network and to your local and peak industry association

Skills required:

☐ Communication skills in listening and talking

☐ Secretarial skills for reporting results

Outcomes:

☐ A completed project where everyone involved has had the opportunity to comment on the outcomes - this promotes shared ownership of activities and promotes future action

☐ Some ideas for future activities

☐ Hopefully a happy team of committed volunteers

Evaluate:

☐ Is our final report a meaningful document?

Consider how it could have been more fun. As volunteers, having fun is important. Enjoyment and achievement are partners in success!

Communicating your activities and successes will extend your network and provide future support for activities.

Follow up:

☐ Schedule the meeting for the next project!

Community Communication Resource Folder Contents

Action sheets

1. Developing networks
2. Conducting seminars, workshops, and open days
3. Organising displays and events
4. Promoting seafood education
5. Producing brochures fact sheets and websites
6. Taming the media
7. Creating seafood cookbooks
8. Lobbying and representation
9. Presentations, meetings and proposals
10. Gaining sponsorship and funding

Information sheets

1. Common terms used by the seafood industry
2. Finding handout materials and further reading
3. Making better use of communication technologies
4. Contact details and websites
5. Templates and checklists
6. Avoiding conflict

Seafood facts

1. Seafood for the consumer
2. Fisheries management
3. From Antarctica to the tropics: a snapshot of the Australian fishing industry, FRDC 1999
4. Fishing methods
5. Seafood Services Australia

   Blue chooser

   Green chooser

6. Careers and training
7. Environmental initiatives
8. Other networks and organisations

The Community Communication Guide and Resource Folder is available on the FRDC website www.frdc.com.au