

Evaluating communication campaigns

Evaluation has been flagged as one of the major challenges facing communication professionals today. Assessing the impact and value of communication activities, gaining organisational support or simply learning how to work better are amongst the key benefits of evaluation.

An adapted approach

Evaluating communication activities built around programs or campaigns requires an adapted approach to evaluation.

What is the purpose? Most communication campaigns aims to change individual attitudes and behaviours or to mobilise public and decision-maker support for policy change - or a combination of both. A visual representation of the pathway between communication activities, the intended outputs, outcomes and ultimate impact is important in pinpointing the evaluation

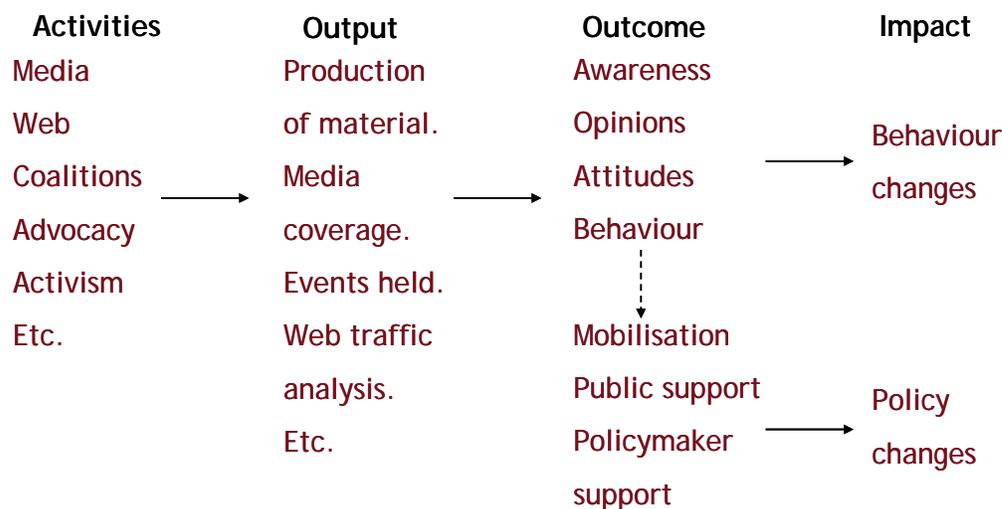


Figure 1: Generalised pathway for communications Campaign

What should be evaluated? Most communication evaluation focuses on output: measuring communication performance (e.g. number of press releases issued, events held, etc.). Although this can be useful initial feedback, far more important is to measure outcomes: did communication activities result in any opinion, attitude and/or behaviour change amongst targeted audiences? The aim of evaluation may not always be to prove communication efforts definitely caused change, but to assess the assumptions and quality of the communication activities.

«The owl can see that which others cannot; which is the essence of true wisdom» (ancient lore)

How to evaluate? Methods to evaluate communication campaigns vary according to the objectives set and activities used. Following is an overview of evaluation methods relevant to program communications:

<i>Outcome/impact:</i>	<i>Quality of communication</i>	<i>Opinions Attitudes</i>	<i>Behaviour</i>	<i>Policy change</i>
<i>Method:</i>				
Web analytics	✓	✓	✓	
Short polls	✓	✓		
Focus groups	✓	✓	✓	
In-depth Interviews		✓	✓	
Panel studies		✓	✓	
Surveys		✓	✓	
Control group studies			✓	
Tracking mechanism				✓
Chronological monitoring				✓

Figure 2: Overview of evaluation methods for communications Campaign

Cost-effective evaluation

Owl Research & Evaluation supports organisations in analysing, assessing and evaluating activities in the communications, training/events and development fields.

Our key services include:

- ◆ Developing evaluation methodologies and guidelines
- ◆ Evaluating communication activities and campaigns
- ◆ Evaluating training programmes and events
- ◆ Supporting evaluation projects with research design, management & analysis

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