

# Creating a Communications Toolkit

A communications toolkit can make it easier to share and market your work to others while ensuring consistent messaging across partners. The toolkit is not the same as a communications plan; whereas the communications plan includes the details of what to communicate, when, how, and to whom, the toolkit includes some of the media used to support execution of the communications plan. The toolkit might include videos, sample social media posts, press releases, infographics, and one-pagers.

This resource provides some considerations and ideas for what to include in a communications toolkit.

**Start with what you already have.** Worried about your capacity to build a toolkit? Start by culling the materials you have already created. Can things be repurposed or shared more widely? Are there items that just need an update?

**Include key messages.** Work with partners to craft one to three key messages. These messages should be concise and compelling and should get at the heart of the work—improving outcomes for students and educators. Consider testing these messages on non-educators to make sure that they are free from education jargon.

**Work with partners.** Collaborate across partners to create your toolkit. Create guidelines for use that ensure consistent messaging and graphics while allowing organizations to make minor adjustments based on the audience or organization.

**Reach out for help.** In addition, consider how you can augment your capacity. Is there someone in your organization, such as a Director of Media Relations, Communications Officer, or Communications Director who can provide some support? Consider your external network as well. Contact your, or a local university's, communications department to see if there is an undergraduate or graduate looking for an internship. Another option is to contact local communications firms and see if they would donate a few hours to help you.

**Use free media.** Did a local paper do a story on your program? Include it in your communications toolkit and share it. Did the university website profile a professor involved in the project? Include it. Leverage the free media as another tool in your kit.

## Example Communications Toolkits

Although these toolkits are dated and do not include graphics, they highlight the variety of resources to consider including in your toolkits:

### [Grantee Communications Toolkit](#)

This resource for District Reform Support Network Grantees includes examples of elevator pitches, audience messages, frequently asked questions.

### [College Scorecard Communications Toolkit](#)

This resource includes a sample e-mail, sample Facebook posts, sample Twitter posts, and key talking points.



**Use free and low-cost resources.** Many graphic design platforms have free or low-cost versions. These platforms enable you to quickly create polished graphics using easy-to-use templates for posters, one-page overviews, and social media posts. You can also use free versions of social media marketing platforms to schedule and release social media posts and, in many cases, to track their impact.

**Highlight your successes.** Spotlight events, feature quotes from educators, and share key outcome data. Items you might include in the toolkit include:

- Project overview
- Infographic featuring key participant data
- Infographic featuring key outcome data
- Video spotlights
- Graphics for social media spotlighting a key staff member or a program participant
- Graphics for social media featuring key outcome data
- Did you know...? graphics with interesting facts or data
- Presentation slides with an overview of the project
- Copies of local media coverage
- Logic model and/or theory of action



*Sample social media graphic*

**Use hashtags.** Create and share your own hashtag. If your local education communities or partner organizations have relevant hashtags, include those as well. In addition, you can use frequently used hashtags like #MotivationMonday, #ThrowbackThursday, #ThankfulThursday, #FlashbackFriday, and #FactFriday. Don't forget to use #sustainEED to share your great work with the larger Effective Educator Development Community!

**Use your network.** Amplify your message by strategically including partners in social media communications. Find their social media handle and include them when appropriate in order to reach your followers but also the followers of your partners.

**Start small and expand over time.** Having just a small repository of communications materials in a shared drive or in a central document can help you save time when you need to share information quickly. Over time, continue to update and build your toolkit.

Have you created a communications toolkit? Are you thinking about what you might add over time? Let us know at [eed-ta@aemcorp.com](mailto:eed-ta@aemcorp.com).

