

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS



Certified Cooperative Communicator

———— **WORKBOOK** ————

HELLO!

Welcome to your Certified Cooperative Communicator course on Strategic Communications! This workbook is designed to support your participation in today's discussion and activities.

MEET YOUR INSTRUCTORS



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- Strategic Communications Framework
- Situation Analysis
- Goal Setting
- Action Plan
- Evaluate Results
- Work Plan
- Putting Your Plan Together

RESOURCES

[Communication Planning Toolkit](#)
[Hubspot Free Marketing Resources](#)
[Member Loyalty Index Research](#)
[NRECA Audience Segmentation](#)
[Canva Action Plan Template](#)
[Excel Workplan Template](#)

PRE-WORKSHOP CASE STUDY



Your first day of in-person learning will be focused on creating a strategic communications plan. This class session will center around a case study for a fictional electric cooperative – Northern Lights Electric Cooperative. In order to fully participate in the case study, you will need to review the Northern Lights case study website in advance. Take note of any potential risks, challenges, strengths or opportunities that you think Northern Lights should use to inform their strategic communications plan. It should take you 30 minutes or less to review the case study in advance, you will not be given time in class to review the advance materials.

[VIEW CASE STUDY](#)

HOMEWORK INSTRUCTIONS

Use the template below as a guide to take notes on the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities you learn about Northern Lights. You should be able to find 3-5 insights for each category. We will discuss findings together in class.

<div>Strengths (Internal)</div> <div>S</div>	<div>Weaknesses (Internal)</div> <div>W</div>
<div>Opportunities (External)</div> <div>O</div>	<div>Threats (External)</div> <div>T</div>

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK



Notes:



1

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

UNDERSTAND WHERE YOU'RE AT

Ensure alignment with your co-op's business by understanding where it currently stands and where leaders want to take it.

Notes:



INFORMATION GATHERING

A comprehensive situational analysis should include key findings from your research. Start by brainstorming what resources you should review. As you research, take notes on key trends and organizational objectives that will inform your strategic communications plan.

Notes:



SWOT

Activity: Based on your analysis of [Northern Lights Electric Cooperative](#), note your observations and organize them using the SWOT template.

<div>Strengths (Internal)</div> <div>S</div>	<div>Weaknesses (Internal)</div> <div>W</div>
<div>Opportunities (External)</div> <div>O</div>	<div>Threats (External)</div> <div>T</div>



GOAL SETTING

WHAT YOU'LL DO AND WHY

What business result are you looking for? What's the goal for your communications?

2

Notes:



DEVELOP GOALS

Your goals should reflect the insights gained from your situational analysis. The goals you identify will be used to guide decision making over the time span of the strategic communications plan. You should be able to articulate easily how your goals support the cooperative's strategic priorities

Activity: Brainstorm Goals for Northern Lights Electric Cooperative



ACTION PLAN

HOW YOU'LL DO IT

Map out strategies, tactics and metrics
to support your goals

3

Notes:



DEFINITIONS

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

3-5 per
goal

TACTIC

3-5 per
strategic objective

METRIC

1-3 per
goal

Notes:



EVALUATE RESULTS

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Constantly monitor and track your results to understand if you are achieving your goals.

4

Notes:



MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK



ATTITUDES & BEHAVIORS

A shift in attitude (measurable through focus groups, surveys and social listening). Desired behavioral outcomes (i.e. program sign-ups, event attendance, election participation, etc)



INTERACTION

Social media engagement, shares, downloads, retweets, comments.



AWARENESS

Pageviews on a website, podcast listens, email open rate, page scrolls, video views



ACTIVITY

Metrics that monitor your output (i.e. produced 10 issues of the magazine, sent 4 press releases)



ACTION PLAN

Goal: Improve Cooperative governance practices to combat media scrutiny.








Identify 3-5 strategies to help achieve your goal. For each strategy, determine tactics that will support it and how you will measure your progress.

Strategic Objective 1		Time period
➔ Increase awareness of board business among co-op members within 12 months.		🕒 4Q 2022
TACTICS		
● Add “Your Board in Action” section to monthly magazine	● Create governance center on website with information about board meeting continent, board members,and other pertinent governance issues.	
● Publish quarterly podcasts with board members/board president		
METRICS		
🎯 Web traffic to governance page		Improve scores on board awareness survey questions to 8/10 or higher.
Increase podcast downloads by 10%,		

Strategic Objective 2		Time period
➔ Increase participation in board elections within 2 years.		🕒 2Q 2023
TACTICS		
● Implement hybrid election with online voting	● Add election and voting guides to new member onboarding	
● Enhance promotion of election through email marketing campaign		
METRICS		
🎯 Increase of members voting in election by 10%. Increase conversion rate on email campaigns for voting by 3%.		Improve member satisfaction with voting experience on post-election surveys by 5%.

Strategic Objective 3

Time period

 Generate interest in board leadership from a diverse set of members		 4Q 2022
TACTICS		
 Create cohort-based training program for potential future board members	 Increase promotion of board election filing deadlines through enhanced use of earned and owned media efforts	
 Recruit 10 participants to training within first year		
METRICS		
 “Graduate” at least 10 members from emerging leaders program Have minimum of one non-incumbent board candidate for every election	Increase members applying for board vacancies by at least 50%.	

KEY METRIC(S)

Improve scores on board awareness survey questions to 8/10 or higher
Increase members applying for board vacancies by at least 50%
Increase of members voting in election by 10%.








Notes:










ACTION PLAN

Goal: _____

Identify 3-5 strategies to help achieve your goal. For each strategy, determine tactics that will support it and how you will measure your progress.

Strategic Objective 1	Time period
	
TACTICS	
	
	
METRICS	
	

Strategic Objective 2	Time period
	
TACTICS	
	
	
METRICS	
	

ACTION PLAN (CONT)

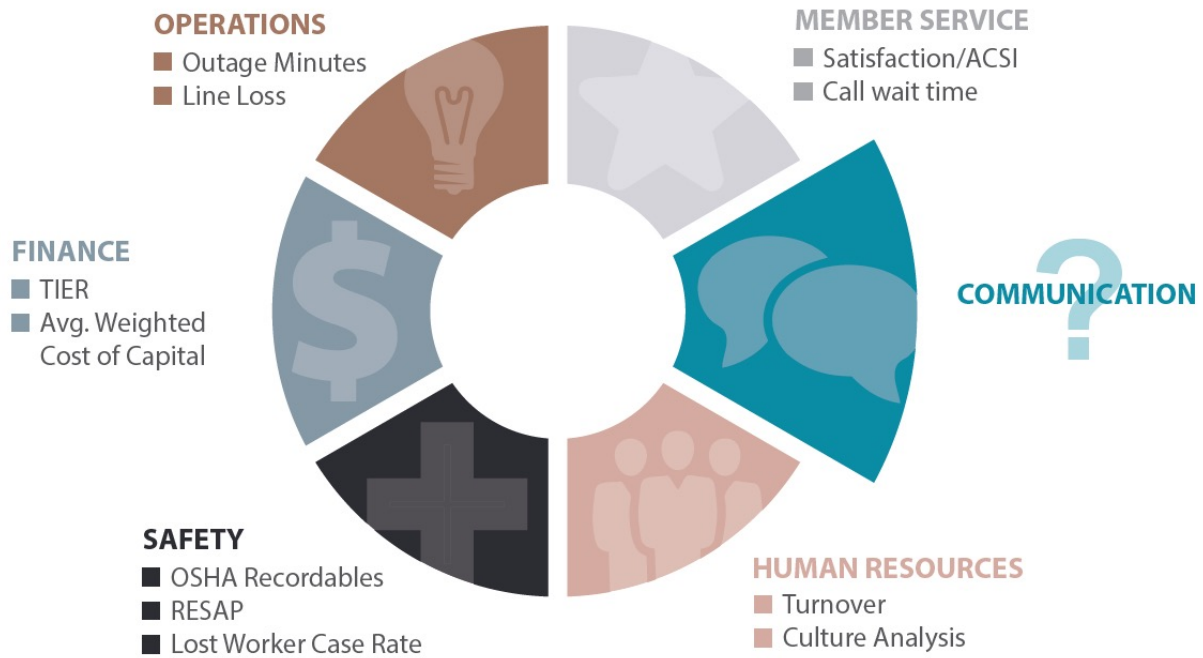
Strategic Objective 3	Time period
<div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div></div>
TACTICS	
<div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div></div>
<div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div></div>
METRICS	
<div><div></div></div>	

Strategic Objective 4	Time period
<div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div></div>
TACTICS	
<div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div></div>
<div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div></div>
METRICS	
<div><div></div></div>	

KEY METRIC(S)



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI)

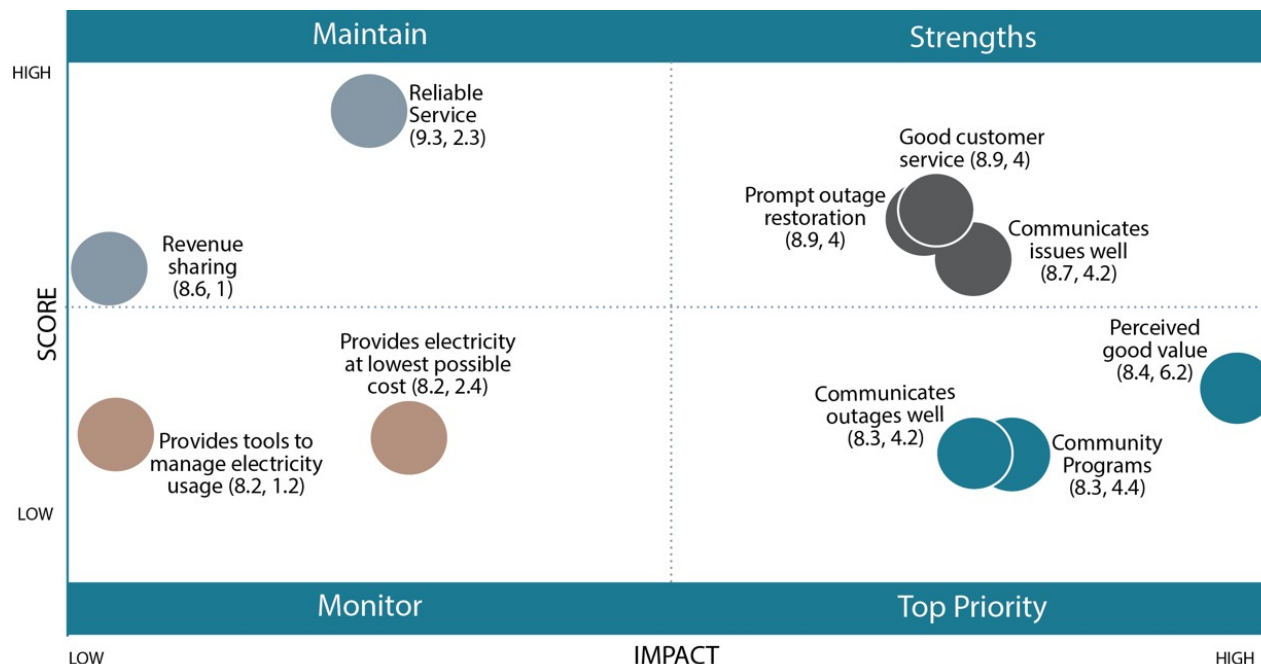


What are some communication KPIs you use, or are interested in using at your co-op?



IMPROVING YOUR KPI

Surveys and KPIs can be used to both evaluate your progress and set priorities. Impact mapping is a valuable tool for visualizing the impact of your communications program.



MEMBER LOYALTY INDEX



The Member Loyalty Index is a survey instrument used to measure the level of emotional attachment your members have to your cooperative. Statistically speaking, emotional attachment is key to achieving member trust, participation, engagement and advocacy.



1. Communicates well about important issues
2. Offers a good value proposition.
3. Communicates well when things go wrong.
4. Aligns customer service offerings with member expectations.
5. Invests in programs that improve the local community.
6. Provides member-focused energy management tools.

ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET

GOAL

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

TACTICS

MEASUREMENT



PUTTING YOUR PLAN TOGETHER

Strategic Communications Plan
Example structure

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mission/Vision

Write your mission/vision here

Values

These values guide our decisions and direction to benefit our membership. Our core values are:

- Value #1
- Value #2
- Value #3

Situation Analysis

This year's communication plan is driven by the following key factors:

- Key factor #1
- Key factor #2
- Key factor #3

Goals

We have identified the following goals:

- Goal #1
- Goal #2
- Goal #3

ACTION PLAN

Goal 1:

Write your goal here

Strategic Objective 1:

Write your strategic objective here

Tactics

- Write a bullet for each of your tactics
- Write a bullet for each of your tactics
- Write a bullet for each of your tactics

Metrics

- Write a bullet for each of your metrics
- Write a bullet for each of your metrics

ITS YOUR TURN!

Time to spread your wings and fly

We encourage you to put together a strategic communications plan for your co-op. There's no better way to take your department to the next level. Developing a plan to help your cooperative achieve its organizational goals through strategic communication is a surefire way to make sure communications always has a seat at the leadership table.

If you choose to embark upon this journey, we're here for you. If you get stuck or have any questions along the way, feel free to contact either one of us directly.

To help you get started, we've created templates you can download. If you like simple and straight to the point, check out the word template. If you fancy a little flair, the template designed in canva might be more your style.

GET TEMPLATES

We look forward to continuing to work with all of you as we work together to advance cooperative communications. Make sure to keep in touch!

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