

COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES FOR TASK LEADERS

A Summary Guide

The “Communication Guidelines for Task Leaders” has been developed as part of the HRM 2002 Consortium Task Three, “Improving Communications and Relevance of CHRM Consortium Research and Study Products”. The guidelines are aimed at improving the communication practices of the Academy’s Center for Human Resources Management as they relate to Consortium tasks.

Task Three of HRM 2002 Consortium has identified Consortium tasks as the primary unit where the research products are planned, designed and developed. While retaining a high scientific quality, the tasks also have been developed to improve communication with the recipients of the research products in order to make the products more relevant and useful.

In the context of the “Guidelines” communication is every exchange of information related to the research task. It includes:

- Searching for and receiving information from the stakeholders about the identified needs and problems.
- Continuously exchanging views, experiences, qualified opinions and feedback with the target group about the progress of the project to make sure that the planned research product answers the actual need.
- Exchanging information about the work process, methodological and managerial issues, and contacts with the other tasks and the management of the CHRM.
- Informing the stakeholders about the existence and value of the research products.

Having such a large scope, communication is not just important for delivering the research products once they are ready to the stakeholders. It also plays an essential role in developing the products best suited to support change envisaged by the Consortium.

During the development process of the research products, there are several categories of professionals with whom each task will need to communicate. Primarily, it is important to build a strong communication to the Consortium members who are particularly interested in the research topic and to professional groups representative of those who will practically use the research products and make changes once they are ready. Such groups can be: HR Directors, line managers, HR professionals dealing with a certain issue, training professionals, executives, etc. The communication strategy proposed in the Guidelines identifies different ways to consult these target groups and to use their feedback to improve research products.

There are also other groups that will benefit from the research products. Once the research products are ready, it is important to develop communication strategies with them to ensure both that the research results get the deserved momentum and to increase their impact. Such groups are: the press, Congress, professional associations, union leaders, etc.

There are a number of common elements and similar dynamics in the tasks that allow them to benefit from the communication strategy proposal developed by the Task Three. Every task is different in terms of research topic, scope and resources and every task leader will be the best judge of how to develop the most appropriate communication strategy. Likewise, that strategy is vital to the success of each task.

The proposed “Communication Guidelines for Consortium Task Leaders” tackles the communication needs of the task at each stage of work. It contains background explanations about the communication function at each stage, it identifies the target group that needs to be addressed, it describes methods that may be used at each stage and provides tools to be simply taken out and used in meetings and planning activities.

STAGE 1: PREPARATION OF THE RESEARCH

Methods of communication	Tools offered by the "Guidelines"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task preparation meeting with the Consortium (2h) • Writing the Task Description • Launching the task by writing an article for the e-newsletter and /or by including it in the official Consortium work plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample agenda for the communication component of the meeting • Sample budget elements for the communication budget • Draft of the "task mandate" document

STAGE 2: FIRST TASK MEETING

Methods of communication	Tools offered by the "Guidelines"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task meeting (1h) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample agenda for the communication component of the meeting

STAGE 3 A: COMMUNICATION AT ALL TASK MEETINGS

Methods of communication	Tools offered by the "Guidelines"
Task meetings (4x1h)	Sample agenda for the communication component of the meeting

STAGE 3 B: COMMUNICATION WITH THE TARGET GROUP

Methods of communication	Tools offered by the "Guidelines"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultative Workshops with the target group (4 x 2h) • Creating a mailing list • Preparation of presentation (visuals) for the Consultative Workshops • Preparation of the "workshop conclusions" • Writing articles about the research to the e-newsletter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline for the consultative workshops

STAGE 3 C: COMMUNICATION WITH THE OTHER TASKS

Methods of communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with the other Task Leaders and Consultants of the CHRM • Preparation (or update) of the Reference Document of your research • Preparation of handouts about the state of the research. • Preparation of visual presentation (ex. Power Point presentations)

STAGE 4: FINAL PREPARATION OF DELIVERABLES

Methods of communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of activities related to the launching of the research products • Preparation of drafts of the research products.

STAGE 5: DELIVERY AND COMMUNICATION OF THE RESEARCH PRODUCTS

Methods of communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launching Event • Workshop for Consortium Members for presenting the research products (2h)