

SFJPDPS2.6.3

Promote and support a policy during operation



Overview

Government policy is subject to constant public scrutiny and often attracts criticism. In order to present a positive view of policy it is important to promote its benefits to all stakeholders. This helps to counter potential criticism of policy as it is applied in practice. This unit is about the management of communication regarding an active policy.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 devise and maintain a plan for presenting general information and a positive image of a policy on an ongoing basis
- P2 liaise with stakeholders to agree on the messages and the communication channels that should be used to carry them
- P3 work with internal and external communication managers to devise and deliver detailed communication programmes
- P4 test the effectiveness of communication programmes using available feedback on stakeholder perceptions
- P5 adjust communication programmes if feedback indicates that perceptions differ from policy intentions
- P6 identify features of the policy that are most likely to attract criticism
- P7 prepare briefing material for different stakeholders which contains clear messages and possible responses to criticism
- P8 frame initial responses to questions about and criticisms of a policy and construct detailed responses
- P9 investigate criticism of a policy and construct detailed responses
- P10 liaise with those who must promote and defend a policy to ensure effective delivery of messages and responses

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 specific legislation, regulation, governance and cultural requirements that relate to the nation or region to which the policy will apply
- K2 that the policy formation process involves continuous engagement and partnership with a range of stakeholders meaning that those in policy functions must coordinate and on occasions take the lead but must also constantly seek to ensure that there is full stakeholder engagement
- K3 how to devise a communication plan for a policy
- K4 why it is important to present positive messages as well as responding effectively to criticisms of a policy
- K5 who are the stakeholders of a policy and what each group of stakeholders needs to know
- K6 the advantages and disadvantages of different communication channels for presenting messages about a policy
- K7 why it is important to draw on professional communication expertise to portray a policy effectively
- K8 different options available for testing the perceptions of stakeholders about the effectiveness of a policy
- K9 how to anticipate which features of a policy are most likely to attract criticism
- K10 principles of effective writing for clear communication of key messages to different groups of stakeholders
- K11 how to frame initial and subsequent responses to questions or criticism
- K12 how to guide and support those who will deliver official government responses regarding the style and approach to delivery

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Additional Information

Behaviours

The policy function role demands a high level of professionalism and general professional behaviour that should be taken as read. The most important behaviours that will help you achieve effective performance in this unit are:

Communicating

1. You present information persuasively and in a way to which people can relate.
2. You identify people's preferred communication media and styles and make best use of them.

Building relationships

3. You recognise and support specialist skills that communication managers bring to the promotion of policy maintenance.
4. You demonstrate a clear understanding of different stakeholders, their wishes and their needs.

Problem solving and decision making

5. You are willing to make changes in communication programmes when needed to bring perceptions nearer to reality.
6. You address criticism of policy actively and decisively.

Focusing on results

7. You consistently work towards achieving positive acceptance of a policy.

Acting ethically

8. You seek to present information clearly and without distortion of the key policy intentions.
9. You demonstrate political neutrality in your support of a policy.

Acting strategically

10. You seek to ensure that the messages you promote fit with broader strategy.

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