



# **Creating Communication Priorities Worksheet**





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## Introduction

One of the most important activities a church leadership team can do is determine how it will prioritize all of the announcements, ministry needs, etc. that will impact communications. You might not always have a black and white choice...but when you do, it's important to have priorities. They will keep you on target toward your mission and vision, help your communications channels and voice match your church's culture, and will remove obstacles that result from a lack of clarity.

Take some time to carefully think through the questions below. Some of these answers seem obvious (i.e. we're going to prioritize clarity over clutter), but when you really look at the values of your church, the obvious choice might not be the right choice (i.e. we think we value clarity, but we need to announce 5 things from the stage each week to keep our ministry leaders happy). At the end of the process, re-write your communications priorities based on your answers and begin making a specific plan for how you will communicate based on these priorities.

## Find Your Priorities:

Will your priority be to communicate with insiders or outsiders?

- Outsiders - there will be a heavier emphasis communicating to those in the outside circles (community and crowd), and a progressively lighter emphasis toward those in the inner circles (congregation, committed and core).
- Insiders - as the core grows, they will naturally bring in outsiders.

Are you a unified church (in terms of communication) or a federation of sub-ministries/campuses who all get to set their own priorities and agendas?

- Unified church - we speak with one voice and have one set of communication channels.
- Contextualization is important.

Are you more focused on the weekend worship service or on non-worship gathering events?

- Weekend worship service - everything else is an on-ramp to get people to attend the weekend.
- The weekend worship service is only one of our many catalysts for spiritual growth and will be treated as any other ministry.



Is your goal to be fair toward all ministries and activities or will you prioritize some ministries/events/activities over others?

- Be fair, even if it means important ministries might get less communications emphasis.
- Not be fair, but instead will be appropriate based on ministry priorities. This means that “equal time” is not valued or considered.

Will you focus more on the needs of your guests, or on needs of your ministries?

- Guests - ministry communication needs are secondary to guest needs.
- Ministries - the on ramps will help guests get connected.

Will you be an organization that provides answers or asks questions?

- We want to provide answers to help remove obstacles for people to take their next step.
- Ask more questions than we answer - allowing them to absorb and seek on their own terms.

Will you have a bias toward “excellence” or towards “shipping it.”

- Everything we do will be done with excellence. If it's not top-notch, we won't use it.
- We prefer action over inaction, even if it means things aren't perfect.

Will you be all things to all people, or will you focus on being known for doing only a few things really well?

- We prefer the buffet approach. Provide a lot and let people choose their own adventure.
- We prefer the progressive dinner approach. We'll guide people on their journey.

Is your style more formal and/or intellectual, or more casual?

- We will always be in a language, style and method that is visible and understandable to the first-time guest.
- Our community requires us to use a higher level of academic approach in our language.

Will you give people everything they need or just a digest to get them started?

- We want to reduce the noise in people's lives.
- We prefer to make all the info available and let people choose what to absorb and what to ignore.



Are you a fail forward organization or a sustainability organization?

- Sustainable. We won't launch a deliverable (e.g., newsletter or digital tool) if we don't have the systems and personnel to maintain it with excellence.
- We like to try a lot of things. We keep what sticks and drop what doesn't.

Do you value inspiration more or information?

- Inspiration - it doesn't matter if it informs if people aren't motivated by it.
- Information - it doesn't matter how revved up we get somebody if they don't have the information to take action.

Based on your answers above, write out your communication priorities:



If you had to divide your communications in to 3 tiers, how will you determine what gets your top tier of emphasis through your bottom tier? Which communication channels are included in each tier of “service”?

Tier 1 (Most Emphasis) What’s Included?

Tier 2 (Medium Emphasis) What’s Included?

Tier 3 (Least Emphasis) What’s Included?





Finally, brainstorm a list of alternative communication methods available to those ministries who don't receive top tier communications. For example, you might not give someone who is in Tier 3 a stage announcement, but you might be able to give them a few social mentions.

Be as creative as possible in this section.