

WORLD CONFEDERATION of PRODUCTIVITY SCIENCE

Guide to establishing a National Productivity Campaign

Executive Summary

Many governments see the need for some kind of campaign to help promote the concept of improved productivity, to make their peoples aware of the need for improved productivity and to support the actual process of improving productivity.

Such a campaign might be general – aimed at improving overall national productivity – or it might be aimed at a specific strategic sector.

A campaign often accompanies a wider initiative aimed at restructuring, changing the focus of investment or improving sectoral or general infrastructure.

The government is clearly responsible for setting the tone of the campaign and establishing the key messages – to support short, medium or longer-term aims. At the start of the initiative, the government might determine that the campaign will extend across a number of years – perhaps with a changing focus in each year. However it is important to involve all major stakeholders in the planning and execution of the campaign in order to get maximum ‘buy-in’.

Many governments delegate the execution of the campaign to a key agency – perhaps a National Productivity Centre – but it is important that the government stays involved at ministerial level.

A key issue is to identify the primary and secondary audiences for the campaign and then to make the campaign interesting and engaging for these intended audiences ... but it must not offend or patronise other possible stakeholders.

This guide sets out a framework for creating and executing such a campaign. It is intended only as a broad guide since the actual campaign must be designed to meet current local priorities and to reflect local history and culture.

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Main steps involved in designing and executing a Productivity Campaign

Decide on the key areas where improvement is to be targeted – these may be industrial sectors, geographical areas, infrastructure elements, etc. (It is particularly helpful to use international benchmarking to demonstrate where improvement is required to meet competitive demands.)

Determine the key success indicators – how will you know the campaign has worked (in the short term, in the longer term).

Determine the key stakeholders – those with ownership of, and influence in, the target areas. These may be significant companies, employers' associations, employees' associations, professional associations, regional and local governments, larger educational and training organisations, etc.

Decide on the key individual/agency responsible for the campaign – and make sure they have the time and resources to execute.

Consider whether this individual/agency needs specialist help – either specialist productivity help or marketing help to devise an effective process to 'sell' the message.

Think through the 5 or 6 main messages you wish to convey throughout the campaign. (These should obviously be driven by national development strategy.)

Establish a process of consultation with the key stakeholders – determining whether there should be consultation with such stakeholders as a collective group or on a one-to-one or segmented basis. Use this consultation to clarify aims and goals, to establish potential barriers to success and to establish key catalysts or facilitation processes. (This might involve the setting up of a steering group so that these key stakeholders remain engaged throughout the campaign.)

Refine the key messages in line with this consultation.

Decide where and how you are going to 'place' your messages – in print media, on the web, radio & TV advertising, in workplaces (posters), in public buildings, on billboards, in existing publications and newsletters ... or all of these! Think of the obvious places ... and the less obvious ... but think about where messages will be seen by your targeted audiences. How 'technically sophisticated' is your audience – is YouTube appropriate?... or Twitter?

This obviously throws up an important point (which you may have addressed already) ... allocate a budget! Though you might have done this earlier, now you will have a better idea of the kinds of costs involved. This might involve you in having to prioritise some of the decisions about 'message placement'.

Determine a number of phases for the campaign to create momentum. For example, phase 1 might introduce the campaign and key concepts; Phase 2 might introduce specific productivity measures and approaches, specific tools and techniques. Phase 3 might introduce results.

Design some posters. (Even if posters are not your preferred method of audience contact, it helps you create short, succinct messages that carry the main thrust of the campaign ... and these messages can be used on the web, on radio, on TV, etc rather than on posters.)

Make sure the messages use not more than 5 or 6 words and are in a language that is very simple and appropriate to the intended audience. Successful messages use words that relate to the reader – 'you' and 'your' rather than 'me', 'we' or 'us'. Try to decide on a small number of keywords and use one of these in every message – to ensure an integrated campaign.

These messages could be things like ...

Becoming World-Class

More with LESS

Making work better, making better work

People make productivity

Making a Modern Public Sector

or could be more specific and detailed, referring to specific productivity approaches, tools and techniques.

Becoming Lean

The Ten Commandments for Continuous Improvement

The Seven Wastes

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Repeat and Re-inforce: Use differently designed posters/messages carrying the same text

Test these messages on a sample of your target audience(s) – and make changes as appropriate.

Think whether a logo ... or even a cartoon character ... might be useful to ensure all messages are seen to be part of the same campaign? (If the campaign might be repeated at a later date, make sure the logo/character will not date.)

Consider a linked website that might offers further, more detailed information – especially resources for employers so that they can carry out a parallel campaign in their workplaces.

Think whether humour would work. Humour is a powerful transmitter of messages – but also a dangerous one if you get it wrong.

Consider the most appropriate date and format for launching and publicising the campaign – to get maximum press coverage.

Execute – put your plan into action. Establish a plan and schedule, building in specific events – seminars, conferences, etc to maintain momentum. Again, these events might be industry sector specific to maximise relevance. Also think about when and how the campaign is going to close.

Recognise and report engagement

Think about some kind of competition/award to get the audience engaged and to recognise their ideas. This is particularly appropriate if part of the audience is schoolchildren or students. (For example, those engaging could be recognised with a 'Productivity Gold' award and receive a gold lapel pin or)

Recognise and report success

Publicise 'success' – both in terms of the 'process of the campaign – we have now held x events, talked to y people, etc ... and (later) about how the campaign is affecting individual organisations ... and impacting on the key success measures established at the start of the campaign.

Review progress regularly and modify the campaign in the light of what you find.

Close the campaign!

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