

Principles for Effective Internal Communication

Local Program Communication Guidance, Oregon Department of Transportation

The purpose of this document is to provide high level, statewide guidance around best practices for communicating Local Program info and issues within ODOT.

Putting the principles to work:

For contact with Legislators, review [ODOT's Legislative Handbook](#).

Regions should have a written Conflict Resolution process for Local Program issues.

Resolve issues at the lowest level.

If issues cannot be resolved at the lowest level they need to be elevated through the appropriate written conflict resolution process.

exchange of meaning

- Concept that communication is the effective exchange of meaning or understanding.
- Everyone is accountable for the effectiveness of their own communication.

face-to-face

- There is unlikely to be an effective exchange of meaning or understanding unless there is discussion and the opportunity for questions to be asked and answers obtained.
- Obtaining feedback and effective listening are critically important

open communication

- Unless something is a sensitive matter it can be (and is expected to be) communicated in a complete, unambiguous and timely manner.
- Communication about significant happenings needs to be thoroughly planned.
- Take the time to communicate adequately and effectively.

deliver positive and negative news

- Communicate both good and bad news speedily, in advance if possible, even if the full impact of the decision or message is not yet clear.
- Approach controversial issues directly and timely with the right people in the room.
- Communicate even when "all the details aren't clear."

LALs are crucial

- Important information must be made available to Local Agency Liaisons in a timely manner.
- Enables LALs to communicate it to their partners and answer partner's questions.
- Always give LALs a "heads up" with an opportunity to ask questions or clarify Local Program messages before they go out.

respect individuals

- All communication must be truthful, and the impact and consequences of communication determined in advance and taken into account.
- Information provided to any one person should be also provided at the same time to all others involved or likely to be interested.

information is not communication

- Written or electronic messages should be supplemented by face-to-face communication as necessary.

documentation

- Clearly document decisions made.