

## Understanding and Reaching Your Audience

Understanding your audience is an important step in communication planning. Answering the questions on this handout will help you better understand your target audience and develop a message that is aligned with the values and priorities of the people you want to reach.

Guiding Questions	Your Response
<p><b>Who is your target audience?</b>            (Messages that target “everyone” or “the general public” are unlikely to be effective. Communications that address a specific group’s unique needs and beliefs are more likely to be successful. This often requires dividing a broad audience into subgroups and tailoring messages to each specific group.)</p>	
<p><b>Is the audience a target of change or an agent of change?</b></p>	<p>___ Target of change      ___ Agent of change</p>
<p><b>What are the defining demographics of your target audience?</b> (e.g., age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, languages spoken, literacy levels, income levels, education levels, spiritual beliefs, professions)</p>	
<p><b>How does this audience access news and information?</b></p>	<p>___ Newspaper (online or print)            ___ Radio            ___ TV            ___ Facebook            ___ Twitter            ___ E-mail            ___ Television            ___ Instagram            ___ Informal channels (e.g., community centers, gathering spots such as farmers’ markets)            ___ School or town meetings            ___ Other (list here: _____)</p>

Guiding Questions	Your Response
<p><b>What are the values and priorities of this audience?</b></p>	
<p><b>What is their current level of awareness about the issue you are hoping to address?</b></p>	
<p><b>What could they do as individuals to address the problem that you are addressing?</b> (Include a clear “call to action” in the message that is realistic and concrete, along with the information needed to act.)</p>	
<p><b>What types of data will you collect to inform your communication efforts?</b> (e.g., surveys, focus groups, key informant interviews)</p>	
<p><b>How will you involve your target audience throughout the development process of your communication efforts?</b></p>	

Adapted with permission from Massachusetts Technical Assistance Partnership for Prevention. (2012). *Communications Toolkit*. Waltham, MA: Education Development Center.