



GCA BULLETIN 9

2010

THE GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATORS' AWARDS (GCA) – AN INCENTIVE FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

The prospect of winning the GCA is an incentive for government communicators to strategise for communication. Government communicators operate in a world of a vast array of interests in which everyday concerns weigh heavily on most people. The need to strategise is necessitated by the reality that a thousand voices speaking without a common message and single purpose will in the end just make an indistinct noise that few will hear. Communicating in a noisy world and competing for attention with voices that have different and conflicting objectives will create confusion and misinterpretation of messages.

A communication strategy is about defining what we want to say. Strategising is about achieving objectives. If we are unclear about our objective, the rest of our communication effort will be of little or no value. It is important to ensure that we engage in the right terrain by understanding what has led to the need for communication.

A communication strategy provides an opportunity to translate broad objectives into achievable goals. As we interrogate our environment and sharpen our understanding of how different sectors of society relate to our objectives, it is critical that we have some form of research results about the issue at hand. Research must inform the communication strategy because it enhances the understanding of the environment within which government operates and gives insight into the dynamism and the challenges it brings.

Government communicators should be conscious and sensitive to the needs of the public. The design and implementation of a communication strategy must have the primary goal of connecting people to the implementation of the Programme of Action. An ideal strategy details the structure of information flow; objectives; the messages; target audience; resources; channels and tools to carry the messages; and feedback mechanisms to monitor implementation.

The GCA is one of the efforts of building a competitive Government Communication System that entails all elements and is supported by a five-year communication strategy which is linked to the electoral mandate of government. All communicators who enter the GCA must submit a communication strategy, which is aligned to the work of government and which also addresses key interventions and priorities. A well-developed communication strategy will guide the GCA judging panel to know whether the strategy has been implemented effectively.

In contributing to building a responsive communication system, the GCA aims to be the best-practice incentive programme that seeks to engage, motivate, recognise and reward individuals and teams for a job well done in support of service delivery.

With only two months left before the closing date for the GCA entries, it is unbelievable that there are still a number of departments that have not finalised their communication strategies. To ensure that we make the March 2011 GCA a success, we would like to encourage communicators to finalise their strategies and ensure that 2011 is the year of efficiency.

“Striving for excellence in government communications”



government
communications

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