

Planning Your Material

Planning your material is an essential part of the development process. Planning helps you define the needs of the audience and the objectives, strategies, time and money it will take for the project. During planning you could find there are existing materials you can use, or you might decide to modify your budget or timeline. A good plan makes your development process easier and helps you save money by selecting a format and approach you can afford and that meets the needs of your target population.

IN THIS GUIDE YOU WILL LEARN TO:

- Identify the major steps for planning your project
- Determine your audience needs and purpose of the material
- Realistically look at your budget
- Make timelines for your project

Identify Your Target Audience

Who will use or read this material? Identify and assess your audience in order to understand their specific background, concerns and needs to create materials that are accepted and effective with that population. Make sure you know:

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Knowledge, attitudes and behavior related to tobacco usage
- Socio-economic status
- Education and literacy levels
- Sexual orientation
- Languages spoken

Learning about your target population is critical to developing successful materials. For in-depth information on conducting audience assessment, see the TECC Guide, *Assess Your Audience*. (coming soon)

Define the Purpose of the Material

Why do you want to develop this material? Ask yourself and your agency the following questions to define the purpose:

Which kinds of tobacco use or issues are you addressing?

- Cigarettes
- Cigars or pipes

- Chew or spit
- Second hand smoke
- Tobacco advertising
- Tobacco laws or policy

What do you want your material to accomplish?

- Help people to stop using tobacco
- Prevent children or teens from starting to use tobacco
- Learn about the health implications of tobacco
- Make people aware of tobacco advertising campaigns
- Help the community mobilize against tobacco use
- Pass new laws

How and where will it be used?

- As a stand-alone piece
- Part of a packet or activities
- A teaching tool/curriculum
- Used in clinics or medical offices
- Part of a greater tobacco education campaign

Clarify Your Educational Objectives

Based on your assessment and knowledge of your target audience, pick an objective that fits their needs. There are three main types of objectives:

Increase awareness or knowledge

The key to increasing knowledge is to provide enough details to interest your reader, but not too much to overwhelm them. Give information that fits their needs and concerns.

- What does your audience need or want?
- What are the information gaps?
- What are the main ways they receive information?

Change attitudes

In order to change attitudes, you need to know your target audience and their beliefs very well. This is where it is especially necessary to have audience-centered material. From your assessment you should know:

- What are their attitudes and beliefs about tobacco?
- Who are the community or group leaders?

- Who does this group listen to?
- Who does this population follow?
- What kinds of messages would help counter tobacco use?

Change behavior or teach new behaviors

There is a lot written on health education and how to help people adopt new behaviors. To help people to change their behaviors you need to:

- Provide good reasons and motivations to adopt the new behavior.
- Show and describe the new behavior.
- Show how blocks and barriers can be successfully handled.
- Show peers or community role models with the new behavior.
- Give hotline phone numbers and places to get help and support.

Check Existing Materials

There are thousands of excellent tobacco education materials that already exist. To find out what is out there, contact TECC at 800-258-9090 or email to tecclibrary@etr.org. We will search our library of more than 20,000 items to find out if there is something you can use or adapt. Projects that are funded by the California Department of Health Services Tobacco Control Section (CDHS/TCS) are required to contact TECC for assistance and a search of existing material before developing a new material to ensure non-duplication of effort.

There are also many other resources to check for existing materials. For more information on this topic, please see the TECC Guide, [Identifying Existing Materials](#) (link).

Examine your Budget

It is exciting to plan a project, but will it fit into your budget? Before getting more into the development process, take time to figure out your projected expenses. Be sure to leave extra money since there are usually unexpected costs.

Consider a format

Your format will be determined by your purpose and what works best for the target population. Right now you are considering a format, but you cannot formalize that choice until you have finished your assessment, have developed key messages and finalized your budget.

In making your initial choice, remember that some formats are better for different audiences depending on ages, literacy levels, educational levels, and cultural backgrounds. For instance, teenagers might respond better to posters and signs with the

current style of dress and language. Younger kids might like comic or activity books that are aimed at their age level. Adults may relate to brochures, wallet cards or booklets. For more detailed information on formats, see TECC Guide, Developing Key Messages. (coming soon).

Talk to several printers

Printers are wonderful resources. They can help you figure out if you can afford to do the print project you envision. They can help you scale down a project or improve it. A good printer will help you understand the printing process and how much it will cost. Basic information a printer will want to know includes:

- Quantity to be printed
- Size of material
- Paper type and quality
- Number of colors
- Amount of bleeds
- Amount of halftones
- Type of folds or binding
- Special instructions
- Date needed

Go ahead and call several printers even if you don't have all the above information. Your initial calls may explore ideas and formats in order to get general information and an overview of prices. As you move along in the process, you will decide on specifics and have a clearer picture of the materials you are developing.

Get estimates

Some agencies do all their material development in house, but others use outside vendors or consultants. Here are basic services and supplies you may need to estimate:

- Writer/Editor
- Designer/Graphic Artist
- Layout/Typesetting
- Distribution
- Photographer/Illustrator
- Art and paper supplies
- Photocopying
- Printing
- Mailing and postage
- Graphic or desktop publishing software

Plan for other costs

In addition to the above expenses, also plan for:

- Field test expenses for conducting focus groups, one-on-one interviews or information surveys such as:
 - developing survey
 - copying survey
 - meeting space
 - facilitator
 - incentives
 - analyzing results

- Revisions and changes
- Extra consultant fees
- Unforeseen problems

*Always
leave extra
money for
unexpected
costs.*

Figure expenses

After talking to the printer and getting estimates, you will know if you can complete the project within your budget. If your estimates are over budget, you can lower costs in a variety of ways by changing the quantity, modifying the format, or reducing the number of inks.

Develop a Timeline

It is extremely useful to plan a timeline and work schedule for your project. A common mistake is to underestimate how long it will take to develop your material, which is why a timeline is so important. From idea through production can take from 3 to 6 months for the entire process.

Weekly Timeline—Many people like a weekly, detailed timeline.

WEEK OF	TASK/ACTION	STAFF
January 7	Schedule planning session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set place and time ● Notify team 	Carlos
January 14	Conduct planning session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss ideas ● Identify target audience 	Team
January 21	Second planning meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss formats and budget ● Create timeline 	Team
January 28	Check for existing materials	Marta
February 4	Get cost estimates/talk to printers	Kim
February 18	Confirm development of new materials/Assign tasks	Team
. . . continue timeline		

Backwards timeline—Another way to plan a timeline is to start backwards. Begin at the target date for getting the material to your audience and work backwards to the start.

TASK/ ACTION	STAFF ASSIGNED	TIME NEEDED	TARGET DATE
In hands of target audience	Roberto	1–2 weeks	June 28
Distribution	Sara	2 weeks	June 14
Printing	Printer	2 weeks	
Proofreading/final edits	Team	1–2 weeks	
Last revisions	Jorge	1 week	
Field test with target audience	Contract	1 month	
Finalize draft (writing/graphics/layout)	Team	3 weeks	
. . . continue timeline			

Cultural Considerations

Involve the Community

Keep an open dialog and communicate with your target population. Ask them for their opinions and feedback about materials and types of materials you are considering as well as ideas for content. Involve the target audience as much as possible and use their opinions and beliefs to create material that addresses their needs and behavioral styles.