Critical Thinking Prompts to Get You Started | Ngā Tohu Āwhina Whakaaro Arohaehae hei Tīmata (Accessible Version)

Use this tool to help plan your communication by asking yourself three key questions:

- What is my purpose?
- Who is my audience?
- How complex is the message?

As you work through each section, you'll find helpful prompts, tips, and examples to guide your thinking.

Write notes as you go – these will help clarify what you want to say, how best to say it, and what your audience needs to understand. When you're done, use your notes in your planning to share with others.

Purpose

What is the purpose of the message?

- What is the purpose of the communication?
    - Is it to inform/ engage. Educate/ seek feedback? For example, inform a policy change, engage a new community initiative, educate a group around a new piece of law, seek feedback from individuals about work that affect them and their community.
- Is there anything we need the audience to do/ know/ feel?
    - For example, is there an action required from the audience? Is that action clear?
- How will I know if the purpose of the communication has been successful?
    - What follow up measures could be put in place?

Write your notes and reflections as you go.

Audience

Who is the audience?

- Is there more than one audience?
    - If there are multiple audiences, do they have different needs? For example, one group may benefit from face-to-face communication and interaction, whereas the other may be suited to written communication

- What are the resources available to me to better understand this audience?
  - Is there someone in my network who has intel about this that I could chat with? For example someone who you have worked with before.
- Is there any guidance I can get to help meet these needs?
  - For example, iwi engagement or accessibility guidelines?

Write your notes and reflections as you go.

Complexity

What is the complexity of the message?

- What is the level of urgency?
  - Is there a deadline or critical dependency tied to this communication?
- Is this message sensitive?
  - Remember official information is discoverable and could be made available to the public. Make sure you are professional in your communication, Teams messages and internal emails are covered by the OIA
- Does this message and the audience require technical language?
  - Is technical language or jargon explained? For example if acronyms are used, are you confident the audience will be able to interpret them?

Write your notes and reflections as you go.

Well done. Now that you have considered some key factors for your communication, it's time to get advice from the communications specialists within your agency. They will be able to help advice on how you best turn your plan into action.