

Enhancing Communication Strategies in Portuguese Public Administration: Challenges, Best Practices, and a Replicable Model for the INA – Instituto Nacional de Administração, I.P. and Beyond

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Abstract

Effective communication is a critical component for the success of public administration organizations. This study aims to analyse the challenges and identify best practices in communication strategies within a set of Public Administration organizations, with the goal of developing a communication strategy model that can be replicated in other Portuguese public entities and public services, specifically focusing on the Portuguese National Institute of Administration, I.P. (INA) experience.

The research methodology employed involve data collection, document analysis, targeting professionals and stakeholders within the selected Public Administration organizations.

Through rigorous analysis, the study identified several best practices in communication strategies employed by Public Administration organizations. These practices encompassed clear goal setting, stakeholder segmentation, tailored message development, utilization of multiple communication channels, fostering a culture of transparency, and leveraging modern technologies and platforms.

Based on the identified challenges and best practices, a comprehensive communication strategy model was developed and applied specifically to INA. The model incorporates adaptable frameworks and guidelines to address the unique needs and goals of the organization. It emphasizes the importance of strategic planning, resource allocation, performance measurement, and continuous improvement.

Furthermore, transcending a purely academic perspective, this study recognizes the critical importance of connecting theory and practice. By proposing an analysis based on real examples and relevant case studies, the study aims to provide valuable insights not only for academics but also for public sector professionals. This approach emphasizes the applicability of discussions in the practical context of contemporary public administration. Through this lens, the study explores how communication strategies can be effectively implemented and adapted to the challenging dynamics of the sector.

The developed model can serve as a valuable blueprint for other public entities and public services seeking to enhance their communication strategies. By following the guidelines outlined in the model, organizations can overcome common challenges and implement effective communication strategies that facilitate transparency, engagement, and the delivery of public services.

The main preliminary findings of this study provide a significant contribution to the field of public administration, offering practical insights and a replicable communication strategy model in times of institutional identity reframing. Implementing these recommendations can help Public Administration organizations establish robust communication channels, strengthen relationships with stakeholders, and ultimately improve their overall effectiveness and efficiency in serving the public interest.

KEYWORDS: Communication strategies, effective communication, public administration organizations, communication strategy model, best practices, stakeholder engagement

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I. Introduction

Effective communication is an essential pillar for the success of public administration organizations, serving as the requirement for transparency, accountability, and responsive governance (GOMES, 2005; NETO, 2012). This study intends to examine the challenges and extract best practices from communication strategies within a spectrum of – at least the Portuguese - Public Administration organizations. The goal is to craft a communication strategy model that transcends boundaries, applicable not only to the Portuguese National Institute of Administration, I.P. (INA) but also to diverse public entities and services.

The study, in addressing communication strategies in public administration, transcends a purely academic perspective. Recognizing the critical importance of connecting theory and practice, we propose an analysis based on real examples and relevant case studies. This approach aims to provide valuable insights not only for academics but also for public sector professionals, emphasizing the applicability of our discussions in the practical context of contemporary public administration. Through this lens, we will explore how communication strategies can be effectively implemented and adapted to the challenging dynamics of the sector. This assumed dual objective is also supported by the multiple authorship of this study, anchored on the one hand in the pre-understandings of an author with an academic record and a background in legal and political sciences - but currently managing the strategic definition functions at the Board of the Institute - , and on the other hand, in technical experts in the communication and organizational models fields in question. The realm of public administration is both intricate and dynamic, with the INA at its forefront, dedicated to the preservation of history, knowledge, and dynamization of public administration expertise. In this context, the study delves into the nuances of INA's communication experience, seeking to create a replicable model that mirrors its success across the wider landscape.

The pretext for this analysis is more important as it coincides with a time of strategic relaunch of the institution herein analysed. In fact, over a 45-year history and after created as a public institute with legal personality and administrative and financial autonomy, INA then became a general directorate integrated into the direct administration of the State and only in 2021 did it gain a new institutional status that brought it back into the universe of institutions with legal autonomous personality. This new legal and statutory framework inevitably demands for a need of reaching further and of defining a brand policy: focusing on the institutional identity as a substrate for this communication issue is therefore perceived as a strategic goal and a way.

INA provides a public service when it comes to offering training to civil servants in central state services, but its area of activity is not entirely exclusive. That is, the State's central services can hire training from other providers, including private ones, which means that INA is part of a competitive market with other public and private companies. In this sense, INA's communication must always bear this competitive market perspective in mind.

Methodologically, the study employs a rigorous approach, leveraging data collection, document analysis, and insights from professionals and stakeholders across diverse Public Administration organizations. This collective perspective aids in the identification of challenges that include information overload, coordination deficits, technology gaps, and limited stakeholder engagement.

Within the labyrinth of challenges lies the golden thread of best practices employed by accomplished Public Administration organizations. These practices encompass precision goal setting, tailored

message crafting, stakeholder segmentation, exploitation of diverse communication channels, a culture of transparency, and harnessing contemporary technologies.

Considering these challenges and best practices, a holistic communication strategy model emerged and was custom-tailored for INA. This model isn't just a framework, but a flexible toolkit packed with guidelines to address INA's distinctive needs and aspirations. Central to the model are strategic planning, judicious resource allocation, quantifiable performance metrics, and a spirit of constant improvement.

Moreover, the resonance of this model extends beyond INA's walls, extending its reach to embrace other public entities and services yearning for enhanced communication strategies. By observing to this blueprint, organizations can scale universal challenges, crafting communication strategies that nurture transparency, engagement, and effective public service delivery.

The findings of this study collectively enrich the discourse of public administration, offering pragmatic insights and a blueprint for replicable communication strategies. Implementation of these recommendations can guide in a new era for Public Administration organizations, stimulated by robust communication channels, fortified stakeholder relationships, and enhanced efficiency in their commitment to the public welfare.

II. Literature Review

The environment set by a democratic rule of law requires a context of transparency. In this sense, matters relating to the information society are of interest to the community in general and are part of the 'fundamentals of the State', as they are today the cornerstone of democratic discourse. Therefore, the general framework emphasises the emergence of a new paradigm for reconstructing the role of the state – and the way how public entities are perceived - in the context of the global information society.

Effective communication within the realm of public administration organizations has evolved into a critical and multifaceted domain, central to ensuring transparency, accountability, and responsive governance. The importance of robust communication strategies has been highlighted by Gomes, who emphasizes the intrinsic connection between effective communication and responsible governance practices. In a contemporary society that increasingly values open and accessible information exchange, the significance of clear communication cannot be understated (GOMES, 2005).

Strategic communication emerges as a central theme in the discourse of effective governance and public administration (NETO, 2012). Neto explores the profound impact of communication strategies that empower citizens to actively engage in civic processes. These strategies transcend the traditional notions of one-way information dissemination and are instrumental in fostering democratic participation based on informed partnership (NETO, 2012). By nurturing an environment of transparent and open dialogue, these strategies create pathways for informed decision-making and community involvement (NETO, 2012).

The vitality of well-crafted communication strategies is particularly magnified during crises, as highlighted by the American Marketing Association (AMA, 2023). In an era of rapid information dissemination and evolving narratives, effective crisis communication becomes a linchpin in

maintaining public trust and confidence (AMA, 2023). The role of accurate and timely communication is imperative in navigating complexities and uncertainties during challenging times, shaping perceptions, and ensuring credible responsiveness (AMA, 2023).

Addressing the contemporary landscape of communication, Neto underscores the integration of social media within strategic communication frameworks. Social media's pervasive influence underscores its critical role in modern communication strategies (NETO, 2012). As a platform that resonates with digital-native audiences, social media becomes an essential channel for effective communication, broadening the reach and impact of public administration efforts (NETO, 2012).

Trust surfaces as a central and recurring motif across the discourse of communication strategies. Neto highlights the pivotal role of trust-building within communication endeavours, as transparent and coherent communication fosters positive perceptions and relationships between public institutions and citizens (NETO, 2012). By emphasizing trust as a foundational component, communication strategies aim to bridge gaps, dispel scepticism, and engender confidence in governmental actions (NETO, 2012).

Expanding into the realm of democratic governance, Neto delves furthermore into the transformative role of communication in promoting active citizenship. Communication strategies that facilitate dialogue and access to reliable information are instrumental in nurturing informed and participatory democratic processes (NETO, 2012). These strategies empower citizens to make well-informed decisions, enriching democratic ideals through vibrant public discourse (NETO, 2012).

Institute for Economic and Social Studies (IESE) introduces the concept of empirical assessment within the discourse of communication strategies. Evaluation emerges as a crucial aspect in the refinement of these strategies (IESE, 2021). Data-driven insights derived from empirical assessment facilitate evidence-backed decision-making, leading to the optimization and enhancement of communication strategies (IESE, 2021).

Front office attendance, as studied by BRINCA, elucidates the significance of communication in fostering positive stakeholder interactions. Effective and consistent communication emerges as a cornerstone for enhancing customer engagement and satisfaction (BRINCA, 2012). As a strategic approach, well-executed communication strategies contribute to the creation of lasting and positive stakeholder relationships (BRINCA, 2012).

The digital age brings forth new challenges and opportunities, a theme explored by Pinto et al. Innovative communication strategies that adapt to the rapidly evolving technological landscape become crucial tools for navigating these dynamics (PINTO et al., 2020). Such strategies mirror the evolution of communication in response to changing technological paradigms (PINTO et al., 2020).

Lastly, Gomes delves into the intersection of communication and monetary policy. Gomes emphasizes how communication contributes to transparent financial governance, elucidating policies to the public and promoting societal welfare (GOMES, 2005, *passim*). Communication in this context is pivotal in fostering understanding and trust in financial institutions, aligning their objectives with broader societal well-being (GOMES, 2005).

In short, these diverse perspectives coalesce to underscore the indispensable role of communication strategies across various facets of public administration and governance. From crisis management to democratic engagement, health communication to regional development, the discourse on

communication strategies resonates as a milestone for building effective and responsible governance practices.

III. Research Methodology

This research adopted a comprehensive approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research methods to gain a profound understanding of communication strategies within public administration organizations. This methodological fusion aimed to explore the subject from various dimensions, thereby enhancing the depth and breadth of data available for meticulous analysis.

However, and as already explained, the aim of this study is not scientific development *per se*, but the possible offering of a toolbox for public administration entities in times of strategic identity relaunching. Therefore, instead of or in addition to the references not unknown in the field (v.g. to name the most comprehensive or recent, Pasquier (2018), Fredriksson (2018) or Vilma Luoma-aho (AAVV. 2020), the specific aim is precisely to stress the lack of specific thinking produced within the Portuguese public administration and not resulting from external input. In what concerns specific approaches in the Portuguese landscape, shifting focus to the realm of health communication, the Center for Communication and Society Studies, University of Minho, illuminates the multidimensional nature of this domain. Health communication encompasses a spectrum of contexts, ranging from organizational to crisis communication (Center for Communication and Society Studies, University of Minho, 2022). Adaptable communication strategies that cater to the nuances of these contexts become indispensable tools in effectively conveying crucial information to diverse audiences (Center for Communication and Society Studies, University of Minho, 2022).

Regional development, as emphasized by Norte Portugal Regional Coordination and Development Commission (CCDR-N, 2015), is another arena where communication strategies play a pivotal role. CCDR N underscores the alignment of communication practices with regional objectives, highlighting the need for communication strategies that resonate with sustainable regional development goals (CCDR N, 2015). In this context, communication serves as a conduit for conveying regional aspirations and progress to stakeholders (CCDR N, 2015).

This list is close to the totality of non-academic studies in Portugal concerning the issue we are addressing. This realisation made it necessary, in terms of the qualitative aspect, to encompass participatory workshops held at the National Institute of Administration (INA, I.P.). These workshops were facilitated by the Directorate of Organizational Models and Promotion of Innovation (DSMOPI) - Innovation Area, in collaboration with the Center for Knowledge in the Domain of Public Administration (CCAP), and brought together specialists from the Department of Communication and Public Relations (DCRP), as well as Innovation Pivots representing different units of INA, I.P. Through interactive discussions and dynamic brainstorming sessions, participants were prompted to create personas that encapsulated the distinctive attributes of INA's target audience. This process fostered a deeper comprehension of their specific information requirements and communication preferences. This qualitative approach served as a conduit for capturing diverse perceptions concerning INA's communication challenges and the effective practices they adopted in their external communication strategies.

On the other hand, the quantitative dimension of the research involved document analysis. An array of sources, including academic articles, books, official government reports, and communication strategies from various public administration entities, underwent thoughtful scrutiny. Analysing these strategies proved to be more intricate, given that many public entities do not operate based on a structured strategy, but rather rely on day-to-day planning. Nonetheless, this analysis broadened the scope, providing a panoramic understanding of the existing communication strategies within select governmental organizations. Furthermore, it facilitated a systematic assessment of the common challenges encountered and the successful practices embraced by these entities.

Through this document analysis, a wealth of valuable information was amassed, shedding light on the diverse communication challenges faced by Public Administration organizations. Additionally, it unveiled effective strategies employed by these organizations to overcome these challenges. This approach has not only yielded insights and recommendations for other public entities striving to enhance their communication strategies but has also laid a sturdy foundation for crafting a tailored communication strategy template, specifically calibrated to meet the distinctive requisites of INA. In a nutshell, the amalgamation of participatory workshops and document analysis furnished this investigation with a comprehensive standpoint, ensuring that research outcomes were fortified by both qualitative narratives and quantitative evidence.

Given the above, the identification of the 10 challenges mentioned below, brought forward by the lens and method of participatory methodology, is a new replicable proposal delivery.

IV. Analysis of Communication Challenges in Public Administration

The Public Administration management model based on the New Public Service centralizes the citizen's role in the spectrum of relations with public institutions. Citizens are invited to relate and become more actively involved, namely, regarding to their rights and duties. One of the fundamental principles of this model is that the Administration should “serve citizens, not customers”. According to Denhard “the public interest is the result of a dialogue about shared values “and not the aggregation of individual interests. Therefore, public officials do not just respond to the demands of “clients”, but rather focus on building relationships of trust and collaboration with and among citizens.” (*apud* PEREIRA et al in “Pos-new public management movements: the new public service” 2020, p. 45).

It is also important to point out that companies are giving more and more prominence to the social sector and, in this sense, no longer having a merely transactional vision of the good or service they sell, but also align themselves with the concept of a more prosperous, more humane, and more integrated.

As stated by Neto “Both public and private entities are called to a responsibility considering their multidimensionality. Nowadays, private entities are also recognized as having a particular mission in society (Corporate purpose, which has been worked on by authors such as Colin Mayer or Stephen Bainbridge, among others). More, therefore, than a function or social clause, it is important to consider the function “developed in society” by the freedom of enterprise and by the company's subject. It is a vision that values companies as subjects of the political-legal community, and as something more than mere economic operators.

Even if the adoption of this “corporate purpose” does not transform companies (private corporate) into something else, it undoubtedly brings closer the considerations regarding the relationship of trust, which after all seems closer than one would think.”

The perspective of a Public Administration framed by the New Public Service will thus serve as the basis for the communication model that will be built and which, at first, led us to question whether public institutions, more specifically the Portuguese ones, assume a communicational position in line with this paradigm. In the different communication strategies and approaches, is the citizen truly the central element?

After a literature review exercise with inputs also from sharing the experiences of professionals with many years of expertise in the field of communication in different public entities and who are now part of the INA communication team and other key elements in this organization, we reached at to a set of **ten communicational challenges for Public Administration** nowadays.

1 | Assuming the inseparability of the concepts of Communication and Marketing

Communication and Marketing are inseparable. Many of the concepts covered, both from a communication and marketing perspective, intersect. The most current definition of the American Marketing Association is that “[M]arketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.” (Approved 2017).

In this sense, talking about Marketing is not limited to the expression of working with customers, it is, nowadays, also serving society in general and citizens in particular. In this regard, Public Administration, and more specifically those who work with communication in these areas, should not neglect this close and complementary relationship.

2 | Strengthening the role of Relationship Marketing in Public Administration’s Communication

Relationship Marketing is increasingly understood by brands as the way forward. The perception that communication and Marketing boil down to just a mere transaction of a product or service and that its function ends after its provision is reductive. So, we talk about the dichotomy Relationship Marketing Vs Transactional Marketing, where communication makes sense in a broad, integrated, and long-term perspective in the organization, guiding the relationship with all its stakeholders.

According to BELMONTE there are three areas of action in terms of Relationship Marketing: customization, loyalty programs and after marketing. (BELMONTE, 2009)

These areas of development of Relationship Marketing must also be attended to and incorporated into communication in Public Administration, as the relationship with the citizen should not be limited to a simple one-off interaction.

Furthermore, according to the same author, “[V]isionary brands have already understood that the responsibility of Brand management is not restricted to Marketing, but to the organization. This builds greater meaning for the «relationship» and a more lasting competitive advantage through the ability to anticipate consumer needs and using all the points of contact with the Brand.”

This point is also crucial for all Public Administration entities to understand that the relationship built with the citizen is based on the sum of experiences with all the institutions's points of contact and, in a stricter sense, with all employees, for example, departments, services and organizational structure. Also, as Belmonte refers, “[T]he consumer assumes an active role in the creation and development of a Brand, making «listening», «understanding» and «responding» essential pillars of the organization in the development and delivery of products and/or services directed to him.”

3 | Aligning of the organizational culture with the success of Communication in Public Administration

Building an image or building an identity invariably depends on how the public perceives the organisation.

In this sense, it is essential that there is an aligned organizational culture to which several elements contribute, such as the clear definition of the vision, mission, attributes and objectives of the entity (which can be translated into documents such as strategic plans or memoranda, for example) as well as through an open-door policy with employees, as they are the ones who represent the brand/institution and contribute to communication results.

As BRINCA points out, “[I]n this way, and because communication is present in all the activity of an organization, no aspect should be neglected and the entire discourse of the organization should be uniform, regardless of the contact channel. ”

In addition, the relationship that is built with the citizen is increasingly based on a relationship of trust that should not be neglected as the bond of citizenship. This trust can be generated by several factors that are important to identify in each organization and work for them always starting from a common base that of the entity's purpose and the path it intends to take in the medium and long term.

4 | Assuming different communication assumptions in Public Administration

All communication professionals have learned different communication theories throughout their academic career, however, the question that arises, even more so in the context of Public Administration, is how to relate them in everyday life based on the current management model and how these are strategic or not for communication with the different target audiences.

One of the many situations is, for example, the famous axiom of the School of Palo Alto that states “It is impossible not to communicate: All behaviour is a form of communication”. On the other hand, there is also the communicational assumption that ‘What is not communicated does not exist’.

How should Public Administration conceive communication based on these two assumptions, for example? On the one hand, the absence of communication will demonstrate that the entity does not want to communicate and, on the other hand, even if there are facts that can be communicated in the organization by neglecting the role of communication, it is as if such facts did not exist. It is therefore up to communication professionals to manage these perceptions (or lack thereof) and to alert the boards of their organizations to the impact of actions or lack thereof.

Another factor that should be considered is that, very often, even when communication is well done, there are situations in which target audiences avoid, block or are not interested in the transmitted message. MACNAMARA (2018) identifies some of these reasons:

- i) Selectivity – which encompasses different types of selectivity: exposure selectivity; of attention; of perception and retention,
- ii) Cognitive Dissonance – when a person seeks some kind of coherence in their beliefs and ideologies when presented with a message that is true, but that they do not want to internalize (for example anti-smoking campaigns);
- iii) Reactivity – when the person does the opposite of what is expected;
- iv) Cultural factors – realizing that there is a multiculturalism nowadays and that it is important that communication respects the different forms of culture in society;
- v) Excess of information - which makes the global process of communication difficult.

One of the strategies to mitigate some of these processes is to promote sincere communication on the part of public organisations.

5 | Setting a firm bidirectional communication in partnership models

When we talk about two-way communication in which citizens and stakeholders participate in the communication model, this should not be summarized, as Soares say, in “obtaining feedback, as is the case with satisfaction surveys, which are widely used in New Public Management”. According to the same author in a bidirectional communication model “participation is based on a partnership.”

It is therefore important to analyse how this two-way communication can be enhanced with a commitment to partnerships. In Public Administration, these partnerships can be seen as cross branding in which, as a rule, there is no competition between entities and can thus be a way of aiming for greater and better gains. However, this step requires good coordination, which can be called into question when there are limitations on the part of the institutions, at least on one of the parties (depending on a higher decision and limited teams, for example).

On the other hand, clear, empathetic, and assertive communication with stakeholders should also be assumed, not privileging any of the parties, but being aligned with the specific needs of each one. It will be a win-win relationship with partner entities but also with citizens in which their participation is essential throughout the communication process.

6 | Avoiding overloading citizen with information/communication

In a highly mediated society where technologies are the order of the day and where the concept of the global village has never been as visible as it is now, it is important to understand how Public Administration is able, on the one hand, to convey information daily to the same public and , on the other hand, how to manage the large volume of information to communicate, which often has an overload effect on the various recipients.

This is a challenge that often leads citizens to filter the information they want to see, restricting it to what they are not interested in, despite being very important. Reinforces MACNAMARA (*op. cit.*):

“Also in today’s connected online world, some audiences are simply overloaded with information and either heavily filter what they receive or ignore much of what is available.”

In fact, the concept of communication is more demanding than that of information: if one realizes that information can be understood as a stage prior to communication, blocking it by excess will also lead to a refusal of the communication process itself.

Furthermore, it is also necessary to overlook the General Data Protection Regulation’s issue, which created clear limits to disclosure actions in the private context, but also by public organisations.

7 | Continuously monitoring technological developments and topics on the agenda

Communication officers need to keep up with the rapid and continuous technological development of new tools that are put at the service of communication (websites, newsletters, multiplicity of social networks, etc.). These evolutions, being sometimes very fast, imply that organizations have human resources predisposed to learn very easily but also to have technical and financial conditions that allow these updates and ways of working not to accentuate the gap between the public and the private. In this regard, for example, when we talk about social media strategy, we often compare the results of interactions and whether they came through organic or paid publications. If the advertising procurement process (not to mention budgetary issues) requires, sometimes, a different public procurement mechanism, this factor alone will condition the actions of public organisations.

But, in addition to technological themes, the issues that are on the agenda and the way these communication professionals identify, plan and act on them is crucial. Concepts such as sustainability and inclusive language, more than important themes, are already internalized ways of being in society and that must be accommodated in all communication activities in the Public Administration.

Another interesting issue to analyse was the pandemic situation and the concept of the "new normal". In fact, at that time, it was necessary to create/adjust new communication strategies and make room for new ways of communicating (mainly online). A study by PINTO, P. et al entitled “COVID-19 on Instagram: strategic communication practices by health authorities during the pandemic” analysed the content, during the pandemic period, of communication by the World Health Organization (WHO/Europe), from the Pan American Health Organization, the National Health Service of Portugal, and the Ministry of Health of Brazil on Instagram (IG). Regarding the National Health Service (SNS) the study reveals how it reacted and grew during this period. “The profile of the SNS of Portugal on IG had a growth of 82.4% of followers, between 1st march and April 15, 2020. Own content and centred on the work of the Directorate-General for Health (DGS) predominated. The profile did not repost any external content. WHO was cited in only one post (12/2). The participation of actors outside the government took place through videos (35 personalities acted in DGS campaigns also shown on TV) and the use of the song “Juntos Somos Mais Fortes” (Together We Are Stronger), by the band Amor Electro, as the soundtrack for posts about professionals in combat to the virus”.

8 | Managing communication in the Public Administration as a strategic goal

Even though there is an increasing recognition of the importance of the role of communication in public organizations, the way for it to become a strategic element in them is still a long way off.

A first observation is the serious lack of specialized communication officers, combined, several times, with their lack of total dedication to these issues. In addition, in many organizations there are no departments, divisions or communication centres or, if they exist, many merge with other areas such as information technology, services related to libraries or front office attendance (this last one, although often the core of public institutions, it seems, in several situations, also the one with the lowest investment focus).

Another finding that is often observed is that leaders are not always prepared to work with communication as an integrated part of the entire organizational process and their involvement in defining Communication Strategies is often sparse. Also, the fact that organizations are dependent on government authorities means that there is a need for continuous alignment, which can sometimes cause entropy in the process.

It was also found that few public sector communication strategies were available online, which can lead us to, at least, two considerations, one, that many organisations do not have communication strategies and the same is to say that, at medium - and long-term, vision on communication objectives does not exist, at least formally. In a second perspective, that entities prefer not to share their communication strategies.

Of the communication strategies available online, we highlight two areas that, due to their specificities, seem to have a policy of greater transparency and sharing, namely, areas related to European funds and the health area (the latter possibly because has a closer and more direct impact on the citizen and often implies a need for reaction or very close and immediate involvement).

The financial factor is also an element to consider when we talk about communication and often this is a constraint to the role of improving communication towards a new paradigm.

It is essential that Public Administration, top managers, and supervisors recognize the importance of communication for building and consolidating the credibility of institutions.

9 | Measuring the impact of communication on the Public Administration

It is important to clarify that measuring the impact of communication is possibly one of the best ways to ensure accountability results of different public organisations. In some of the cases analysed, communication strategies were evaluated by external entities, allowing for a fairly accurate assessment of their degree of impact.

It should also be noted that expected and achieved results are sometimes understood differently depending on the audience analysing them. This point should always be taken in perspective when analysing the impact of communication.

There are several studies and models that talk about the evaluation of communication, Macnamara analysed several models of communication evaluation process and proposed based on the analyses made a model of his own. In this model, the objectives of the organisation are defined, but always bearing in mind that contexts are not watertight, and stakeholders, audiences and society also change over time. In Macnamara's model, inputs are associated with the preparation of activities, then activities are, in essence, their production, outputs measure the effects of exposure and distribution, outcomes result from the response received by different audiences (changes in behaviour/awareness)

and finally the impact that are the results obtained (for example, improvement of public health or state savings). (MACNAMARA, 2018)

In the Public Administration, in many situations, communication evaluation is still limited to the evaluation of outputs and not of impact. This is a very sensitive area for organisations, but it is urgent to raise awareness and alert to this necessary evolution of communication evaluation.

10 | Building a space for Public Administration's communication officers to share experiences

The tenth, but no less important, challenge that we consider essential for better and more effective communication in the Public Administration is the creation of a space for sharing experiences and good practices for communication officer in the Public Administration. Throughout the previous nine challenges, an implicit and transversal emerging conclusion is the need for communication professionals to be more aligned technical terms as well as in terms of strategic alignment within their organisations and Public Administration in general.

It is recognised that there are some experiences in some local municipalities or within some government areas, but no initiative across the entire public administration. In this sense, it is suggested to create a network of communication officers in the Public Administration and that activities dedicated to the development of this important area can be implemented. Some examples include the creation of non-formal or informal training moments such as thematic webinars, public workshops or networking sessions. It is also proposed that formal training moments be made available in training courses related to the themes of Strategic and Operational Marketing in Public Administration or Digital Marketing, Communication, among others.

V. Identification of communication strategies best Practices in Portuguese Public Administration

As previously mentioned, in our research on the state of the art of communication strategies, the lack of these documents on the institutions websites was notorious, which led us to three hypotheses: a) since it is considered a very sensitive element in the organization, it is decided not to make it public; b) Public Administration entities do not follow a structured communication strategy; c) communication strategies do not exist in most public entities.

Either hypothesis is, with due reservations, a little short of what is required of an open, transparent Public Administration that continuously interacts with the citizen. It is therefore important to create tools and mechanisms that allow the sharing of models and good practices for the construction of Communication Strategies of public entities. One of the possible solutions will involve the sharing of knowledge, through training provided in 2024 by the INA in this area, and the implementation of webinars in communication.

It is also important, within the framework of the Communication Strategies that we analysed, to highlight the following points:

a) Most of the analysed Communication Strategies refer to EU financial support funds or financial instruments. Therefore, they result from a transparency framework for the allocation of funds and results, such as, for example, the Communication Strategy of the Management Structure of the Financial Instrument for Urban Rehabilitation and Revitalization or the NORTE 2020 Communication Strategy (Regional Operational Program of the North 2014-2020);

b) It should be added that the Financial Funds also carry out mid-term and final evaluation studies, which are carried out by external entities, which, in addition to analysing what has been done, as a rule, propose recommendations for improvement. As an example, it can be shared the Evaluation of the Communication Strategy of POCH - final report June 2021 and Study of Interim Evaluation of the Communication Strategy of Madeira 14-2021);

c) Within Public Administration, health is also an area in which communication strategies are frequent and publicly accessible, which is possibly explained by the immediate need to relate to citizens, most often with very clear objectives for health literacy with a view to a nudging approach. Indeed, in the health area, in addition to the Communication Strategy, different communication guidelines are also available, which are designed for decentralized services to adopt and adapt. For example, the Health Communication Guide Specialized Areas (2022) covers “very diverse areas, from organizational communication to communication that aims to involve and mobilize the community, from participatory communication to communication for behavior change, as well as crisis communication and communication with the media”. The Good Practices Health Communication Guide (2022) “includes strategic guidelines and practical guidelines on how to develop different aspects of communication”.

d)-Also common to the documents read and that probably could be set up as good practices to be considered, both in the communication strategy model that will be presented and in terms of methodological content, are the role of social networks even after a pandemic context, the reference to the humanization of brands, even in the context of Public Administration; the set up of three phases for putting the strategy into practice, such as launch, implementation and conclusion and the importance of evaluating the impact of the Communication Strategy.

VI. Communication Strategy’s Model

Based on the state of the art already exposed, on the challenges identified and the good practices shared, a model proposal was built that aims to help all communication officers from public entities and Public Administration in general to, in a logic and practical way, work out their communication strategies.

The model is strongly inspired by the model created by Carlos Oliveira SANTOS (2020) and contains, as already mentioned, a perspective of the authors on the experience lived over several years in the field of communication and of other authors who were analysed.

The model is based on a communication and marketing strategy for social economy organisations, as it is important to embed a marketing rationale very often set apart from the third and public sector.

5 P’s of Marketing (Product, Price, Promotion, Place and People) are indeed links between the needs identified and the solutions proposed by public entities (moreover in a competitive framework of product placement, as pointed out).

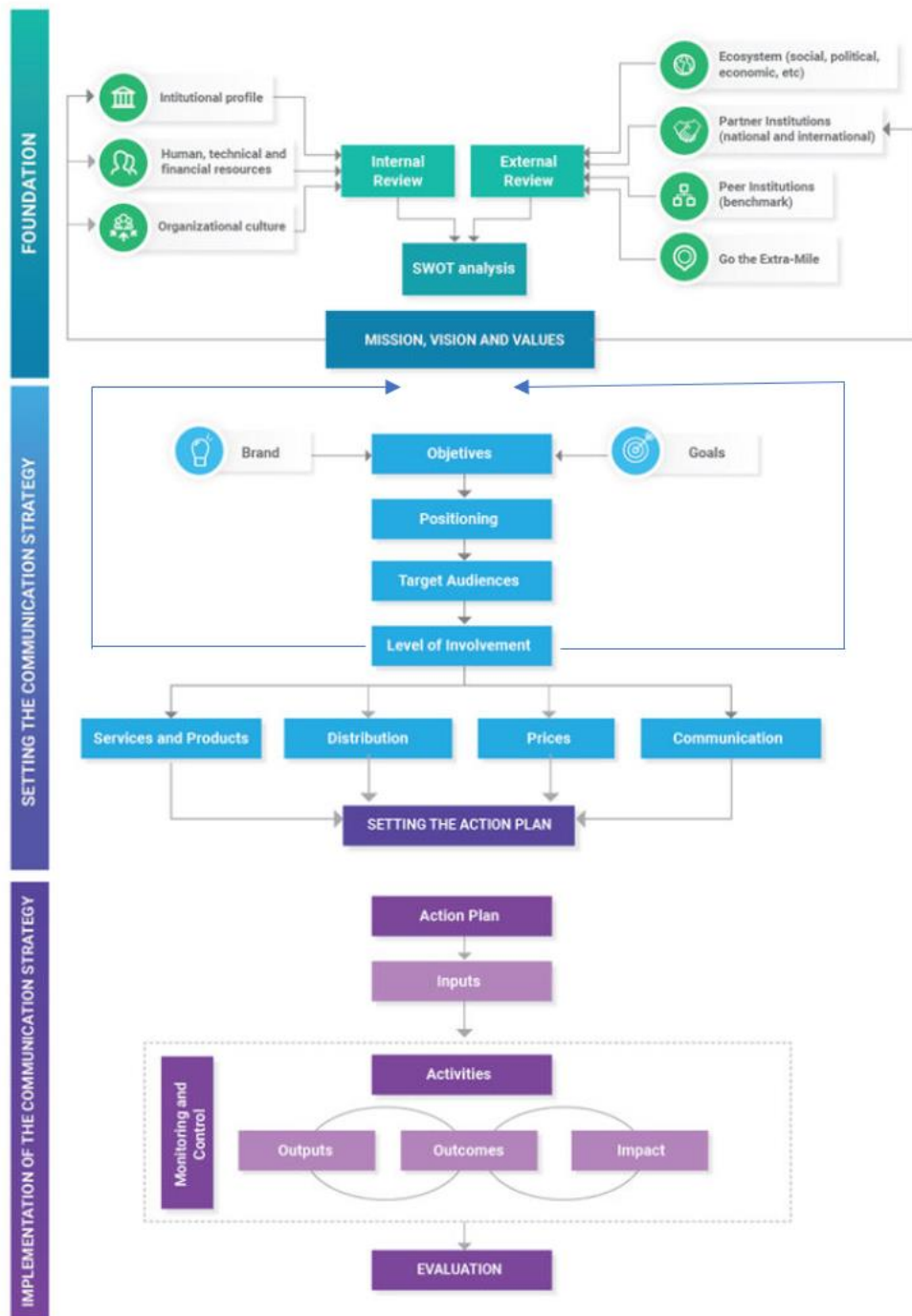


Image 1 - Communication Strategy's Model

The proposed model for the communication strategy is composed of three moments. The first, which corresponds to the foundation, consists of a general analysis process of the institution, having as object of study the main internal and external factors that have a direct influence on its behaviour and performance, and on the way in which it is perceived by its stakeholders, publics, and society.

Internally, the proposal is to analyse three factors: 1) the institutional profile, which consists of identifying and observing the key characteristics that make it unique; 2) human, technical and financial resources, which summarise the fundamental means available, which enable the institution to establish real goals for its objectives, being essential to carry out a weighted quantitative and qualitative assessment of these components; 3) the organizational culture, which must be observed

through a holistic view of the institution and identified as a factor with a significant weight for the current corporate world, being aligned with the institution's potential.

Externally, the following objects of analysis were defined: 1) the social, political and economic ecosystem, which must be read in advance, in order to obtain essential data for guiding the institution's strategy in line with the context of society in which it is inserted; 2) partner institutions (national and international), fundamental for the development and enhancement of our own institution, making it essential to evaluate this network of relationships; 3) counterpart institutions, which should serve as a comparative model reference, identifying the best strategies and practices adopted and how these can be replicated in our institution; 4) "go the extra-mile", in which, despite all the constraints that any public institution faces, these should not imply that they stop aiming for results beyond the previously defined goals, being fundamental a general attentive observation, so that exceptional opportunities must be identified that could boost results capable of exceeding initial expectations.

Once the institution's internal and external factors have been examined, this collected information is fundamental for carrying out the SWOT analysis, which will provide a structured framework for weighing internal and external factors, which, due to their value for the institution's performance, should be taken into account when defining all strategic areas, starting with the valuable contributions they provide in the process of defining its mission, vision and values.

Having established this first stage of the proposed model, which is characterized by an action of self-knowledge and evaluation for the establishment of the key elements that define the objective, direction and principles of the institution, the bases are built to start the process of defining the communication strategy, which will be the second moment of the model.

In defining the communication strategy, the objectives for this area are circumscribed in the foreground, which must be in line with the brand, namely how it is intended to be perceived externally, and with the goals defined and projected within the framework of communication. These three components are balanced to define the institution's positioning before its public - how it wants to be seen and understood -, having as a concrete basis the significance of what it has to offer distinctively, when compared to the competition. Subsequently, the target public on which the institution should focus its communication is determined. This characterisation and delimitation of the target public is fundamental for the whole strategy to be conducted in the sense that the messages transmitted, through the most varied channels and actions, are as direct and clear as possible, so that a strong and lasting connection is established.

The next step must be to assess the target audience's level of involvement with the institution. At this point, after defining the level of involvement, it is suggested that the strategy definition phase be revisited to validate that all the communication vectors are aligned with the target audience and with the involvement that the brand wants to achieve.

Understanding this connection will make essential contributions in the survey and evaluation phase of four dimensions with an impact on levelling this relationship, which are specifically: services and products – what they are and how they meet the needs and aspirations of the target audience, adding value relative to the competition; distribution – determining how these services and products reach the target audience, with a focus on their accessibility, taking into account the characteristics and specificities of the offers; prices – which translates into the value that is justified by the quality and benefits of the services and products available; and communication – in which the observation of the

process of construction and decoding of messages, conveyed in the various channels used, will provide data that are decisive for a new approach, with a view to designing and defining the action plan.

Now that the action plan has been defined, the last step in defining the communication strategy, before moving forward with implementation, and whenever possible, is strategy testing. The purpose of this operation is to offer guarantees for the proper execution of the action plan in terms of the acceptance rates of the target public and that the intended messages are transmitted and aligned with the general objectives of the strategy, which are, and we must not forget, also those of the institution. In line with the orders of magnitude of the institution and the strategy, the test can be carried out with a representative group of the target public, through its exposure to simulation campaigns to obtain feedback or by carrying out surveys focused on the various aspects of the strategy, especially the perception of the message(s), among many other possible operations in this context. From the evaluation of the strategy testing results, it is expected that the necessary contributions will be made for the last adjustments to the action plan and move towards its implementation within the framework of implementation of the communication strategy, which corresponds to the last moment of construction this model.

At this stage, it is important to bear in mind that the action plan, in addition to representing the start-up stage of strategy implementation, embodies the result of the entire set of processes triggered up to this point in the model. In this sense, the action plan should present a concise overview of its purpose and its objectives and goals. In turn, the action plan is designed and implemented through the activity plan, through the operationalization of available and allocated resources (inputs), namely human, financial, material, technological resources, among others.

The set activities, to be put into practice, must be included in a plan and detailed description of the tasks that compose them, including a survey of the resources that will be allocated and the identification of those responsible for their execution. The development of activities is monitored within a framework of continuous monitoring and control of their implementation, by the results obtained in terms of outputs, outcomes, and impact, in this order of growth in magnitude or relevance.

It is understood that these are interconnected and that the monitoring and control mechanism aims to assess whether the data collected corresponds to the objectives and targets set out in the action plan. If a lack of correspondence is found, the results should serve to trigger a reflection on the action plan, with a view to making the necessary adjustments for a new attempt to redefine the activity plan. When monitoring and control do not detect serious mismatches between the results obtained and the defined objectives, the model ends with the global assessment of the strategy. The results of this evaluation will make essential contributions to the redefinition of any of the moments that make up the strategy – the foundation, definition and implementation of the communication strategy.

Given the above, the communication strategy model created to the INA (better explained in ANNEX), bears in mind that:

- a) The objective of the article will be to validate the creation of a model that can be replicated to all public administration organizations, which may mean, in some situations, the adjustment of some of the referred elements;
- b) All Public Administration's communication officers will be able to follow the model as a reasoned proposal and in some way will allow for the harmonization of different procedures and concepts;

- c) This chapter will focus on all the steps from the model to the action plan, regardless of topics of a more operational nature;
- d) The communication strategy hereby presented falls within the time lapse of 2022-2026 in accordance with the Institution's Strategic Plan;
- e) The three phases of the INA communication strategy (foundation, preparation of the communication strategy and implementation) are scheduled as follows: 2022-2023 – Foundation; 2023 - Strategy preparation and communication's Plan testing; 2024, 2025 and 2026 - Implementation of the Communication and Evaluation Strategy.
- f) The model aims to bring public administration entities closer to a strategic vision linked to communication and marketing. In the case of INA, which finds itself in a competitive market where private companies compete for the same service at very competitive prices, this need is even more pronounced.

VII. Applicability and Replication of the Model

The scope of this article aims to propose and manage a comprehensive model for all entities that make up the Public Administration and that want to challenge themselves to build a Communication Strategy.

We set out to build an accessible, intuitive, and complete model that we applied to the INA as a way of boosting its applicability and replication.

The Communication Strategy model is, from this moment on, public and replicable to any entity. In fact, if all or most public organizations decided to align their communication with this model, it would be easier to build a more coherent and integrated vision of Public Administration. However, we want to go further. Thus, INA, as a facilitating entity for sharing knowledge in Public Administration, will carry out, in 2024, various training courses within the scope of 'Strategic and Operational Marketing' that aim to provide all workers in public functions who so wish with tools to create a Communication Strategy.

VIII. Conclusion

- a) The challenge we set ourselves was clear: to understand how to improve communication in Public Administration, that must see itself as a pillar of a state that serves its citizens and fulfils its mission if, and only if, communication serves to make explicit a trustworthy model of transparency;
- b) To this end, we first tried to understand how Communication Strategies were being designed in Portuguese Public Administration. This research resulted in ten challenges that we consider to be the most imperative and current in communication in Public Administration today;
- c) A communication strategy model was then created and proposed which can be replicated by any public organization and, as an exemplary starting point, we applied it to INA;
- d) Having the model matrix built, it seems easy and clear to apply. However, although we are optimistic about the importance of this work's proposal, , the results will not be immediate,

so it will be interesting to follow the evolution and acceptance of this model by public organizations.

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ANNEX

INA Communication Strategy 2022-2026

I. FOUNDATION

1. RULING AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

a) Mission

INA's fundamental mission is the creation, transmission, and dissemination of knowledge in the field of Public Administration, contributing, through training, teaching, scientific research and technical assistance, to the innovation and modernization of Public Administration and to the qualification, training and valuation of its human resources.

b) Vision

To mobilize Public Administration towards knowledge; to mobilize knowledge for Public Administration.

c) Values

INA is committed to the following institutional values:

- i) Public interest – adherence to the obligatory pursuit of the public interest delimits the legal capacity of INA as a Public Institute, subordinating it to the legal and ethical principles that shape Public Administration and administrative activity;
- ii) Collaboration – emphasis is placed on the promotion of collaborative, participatory and close action, which integrates individual and collective autonomy and responsibility;
- iii) Response – the aim is to provide adequate, timely and reliable feedback on impulses and requests that are addressed to you;
- iv) Future – emphasis is placed on anticipating and analysing trends, preparing INA and Public Administration for a changing world.

d) Organizational culture

“In a changing world like ours, neither the Administration is the same nor the citizens are. It is for this more than noble constitutional mission that we will have to train people.” Neto (2022).

In terms of organizational culture, there are several instruments and activities that allow INA to build a strong, cohesive, and harmonious culture. Some examples include the existence of the INA Code of Ethics and Conduct, the Welcome Manual, the People Plan and the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan.

Regarding the Code of Ethics and Conduct, we can point out that it is an instrument that is barely used in Public Administration, but that allows clear guidance to be given to workers on their boundaries of action.

The People Plan allows, through various activities and internal communication actions, to foster team and group spirit, such as monthly face-to-face meetings to share experiences, celebrate birthdays and welcome new employees. There are also other actions that reflect the importance of practicing close

internal communication, such as the creation of the Social Responsibility Group, the existence of a Participatory Budget – OPINA, and team building actions.

Mention should also be made of the open-minded spirit of the board of directors with an open-door policy for its workers, highlighting, for example, the importance given to workers' participation in workshops designed to gather input for the organization's management decisions.

Another fundamental point that must be given attention in terms of organizational culture and that will guide the entire communication strategy we are preparing concerns to the instrument created by the INA called the Strategic Plan 2022-2026. This guiding plan, which governs all of INA's activities, was the result of a prior diagnostic work involving INA's employees, stakeholders and strategic partners. Briefly, the Strategic Plan sets out four strategic objectives:

- i. Promoting training in Public Administration (PA) – based on knowledge – of people, teams and Public Administration entities, in close collaboration with Higher Education Institutions;
- ii. Encourage research, development and innovation in management and public service;
- iii. Increase the awareness of the INA brand, highlighting the institution's culture and the public value of the services it provides;
- iv. Reinforce institutional positioning as a natural partner in effective international cooperation networks.

2. INTERNAL ANALYSIS

a) Institutional Profile

The National Institute of Administration, I.P., (INA, I.P.) is a public institute integrated in the indirect administration of the State, with its own legal personality, endowed with administrative, financial, and patrimonial autonomy.

Teaching and training in Public Administration, which are attributions of INA, aim at the creation, transmission, and dissemination of knowledge, in the field of Public Administration, contributing, through training, teaching, scientific research and technical assistance, to the innovation and modernization of Public Administration and for the qualification, training and enhancement of its human resources.

Human Resources	
Designation	Staff Map
Directors - Senior Management	3
Directors - Intermediate Management and Team Leaders	11
Scientific Research Staff	1
Senior Technicians	69
IT Specialists	5

IT Technicians	6
Technical Coordinators	0
Technical Assistants	23
Operational Assistants	3
	121

a) **Human, Technical and Financial Resources**

- b) The INA team has been increasing and on December 31 of 2022, it was composed of 87 elements from different areas. The forecast for 2023 will be an increase to 121 workers, distributed as above.

3. **EXTERNAL REVIEW**

a) **Ecosystem**

The Ecosystem that orbits around the INA promotes, to a greater or lesser extent, an impact on the organization. The challenges of a post-pandemic phase, the limitations of the public budget; the need of alignment with binding governmental guidelines, the public policies on the human resources management and capacity building, or the obligations within the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) have a significant positive impact on the institution's performance until 2026.

As explained, INA finds itself in a competitive market where private companies compete for the same service at very competitive prices.

Partner Institutions

One of the key points in INA's appreciation is the continuous interest and commitment in sharing experiences and knowledge with other national and international institutions.

A strong relationship is being built with the Academia through consortia that aim to strengthen the role of INA as a facilitator of knowledge in Public Administration.

Entities from different areas within the scope of cooperation, communication and innovation and also international entities as CLAD, Rinape, IIAS, DISPA, CPLP among others.

b) **Peer Institutions**

Trying to identify INA's counterpart entities in the area of training - and regardless of entities are, for example: ANQEP, Ad&C; PlanApp and DGAEP - , we came across two situations of particular note: entities that have as a target Audience workers performing public functions, highlighting private training entities that can provide training, and public entities that do so in areas or with specific audiences, such as Academia, AMA and FEFAL; Public or private organizations with public funding that provide training to citizens in general: CENJOR; IEFP; Academia Digital Portuguesa; InCODE, etc.

c) **Target Audience**

We will use the Epsy Star model to identify the different INA target audiences:



d) Engagement Level

Beyond identifying the target audience, we intend to identify the level of involvement we want to have with each target audience, as this will allow us to create different relationship strategies:

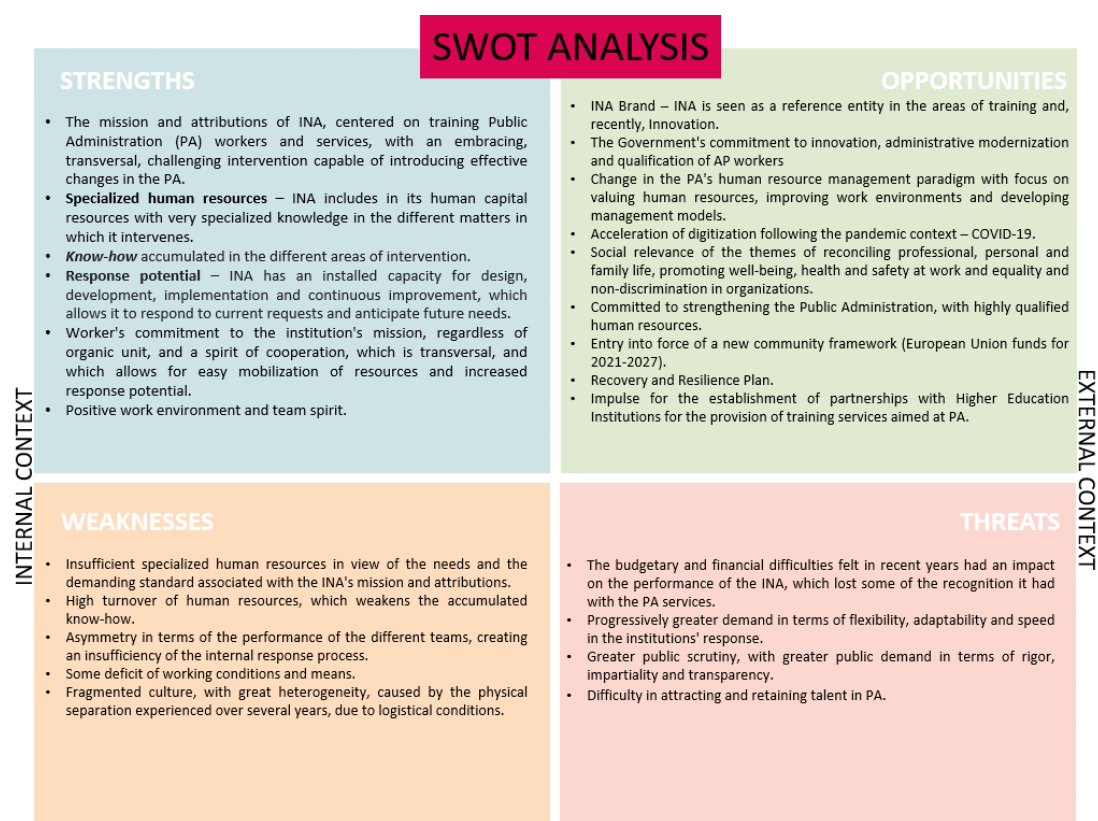
Target	Engagement Level
INA Workers	Organic
Ministries and Offices	Proximity
Public Organizations	Proximity
INA Alumni Network	Proximity
Trainers	Proximity
Partner Entities (includes Higher Education Institutions)	Cooperation
International Organizations	Cooperation
PA Senior Managers	Interaction
PA Technical Careers	Interaction
Intermediate Management and Team Leaders	Interaction

e) Going the Extra Mile

In this area, we have identified national and international organizations that, although they do not fall within INA's scope of action, we believe that establishing any form of relationship or interaction will already be an asset to the objectives outlined in terms of attributions. Some examples are: OECD; Education for democratic citizenship and human rights education (EDC/HRE); European University Association (USA); UNU - United Nations University; Erasmus +; European Consortium of Innovative Universities: ECIU; European Network of National Human Rights Institutions – ENNHRI and Francisco Manuel dos Santos Foundation, among others.

f) SWOT Analysis

Based on the elements gathered above, both through the diagnosis that gave rise to the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan and the analysis already carried out on this strategy in terms of internal and external analysis, as well as the participation workshops that were held internally, the following SWOT analysis of INA was drawn up:



Based on this SWOT analysis, another one was built to respond to the challenges listed and which sought to start outlining a strategic path for INA as an institution, but also at a more micro level for communication itself.

SWOT ANALYSIS

INTERNAL CONTEXT

Strategies to leverage Strengths

- Review the INA personnel map, dimensioning it in view of the demands of the activity.
- Promoting project-based management
- Develop plans for attracting, retaining, motivating and developing INA's human resources.
- Promoting management based on competencies and defining and implementing individual development plans, reconciling worker's motivations with INA's needs and organizational strategy.
- Create an internal system of incentives and recognition of people and teams for the results achieved.
- Reinforce the production and internal management of knowledge, promoting the transfer of knowledge from people to the institution and the creation of an organizational memory that lasts over time.
- Involve all teams in strategic planning and in the evaluation of organizational performance.

Strategies to mitigate Weaknesses

- Reinforce teams with more human resources.
- Promote the training and qualification of INA's human resources and manage professional paths, promoting, in addition to technical training, the development of collaborative and team work skills.
- Managing turnover, through the use of mapping strategies and increasing an incentive policy, but also streamlining internal recruitment and selection procedures and knowledge transfer mechanisms.
- Review INA's financing model and diversification of funding sources.
- Review internal procedures and work methods, making them more effective and efficient.
- Look for installations that respond to needs.
- Invest in the renewal of equipment and computer systems.
- Hold regular team meetings and extended meetings and promote collaboration initiatives between organizational units.
- Develop team building actions and promote well-being in the workplace.

Strategies to leverage Opportunities

- Strengthen the INA's position as a reference entity for the PA through the development of innovative products and services in the area of human resource management, adapted and impactful, which respond to current needs and anticipate future needs.
- Promoting an approach to PA services, adopting collaborative approaches, in an internal consultancy logic, being a partner in the change and development of public services.
- Commit to promoting networking within the PA, collaboration mechanisms and sharing knowledge and good practices.
- Commit to modernizing the responses of INA's different areas of activity, making them more up-to-date and more flexible.
- Promoting PA's quality standards of action in the different areas of human resource management, through consultancy and, eventually, an internal audit system for PA services.
- Promote initiatives with a view to attracting and retaining talent in PA.
- Reposition the INA in the professional training market for PA, reinforcing its centrality either by functioning as a managing entity of the existing offer and complementing it, either through direct offer or through strengthening synergies with IES and Research Centres.

Strategies to mitigate Threats

- Rethink the balance between INA's support areas and "business" areas, adapting it to the needs of the future.
- Commit to external communication and dissemination of INA's activity, promoting the visibility of the work carried out and the sharing of knowledge and experiences.
- Request the competent authorities in budgetary matters, with the support of the Guardianship, that the INA be exempted from captivations in the budget headings associated with its current activity. Promoting the PA's opening to the outside world and external marketing regarding the quality of services provided by the State and the advantages of working at the PA, as a way of attracting new qualified resources.
- Work towards certification under the ISO 9001:2015 standard, as a way of standardizing internal procedures and responding to the growing demands for rigor and transparency.

EXTERNAL CONTEXT

II. SETTING THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

1. BRAND

In a brand building and identification exercise, we tried to answer three questions: *Who are you? (Brand Identity); What do I think about you? (Brand Response)* and *What type and intensity of relationship do I want to have with you? (Brand Relationship)*.

We also concluded that, in addition to answering these questions, the focus should be on answering them using the figure of the personas. So the challenge was to define which persona INA should be.

a) Who are you? (Brand Identity)

Trainer, innovative in some areas.

b) What do I think about you? (Brand Response)

- Tries to adapt to changes, mainly with a great effort in the time of the pandemic;
- It is reinventing itself;
- Very committed to partnerships;

c) What type and intensity of relationship do I want to have with you? (Brand Relationship)

- Professional and regular;
- Formal, informal (networking) and non-formal relationship.

2. MAIN OBJECTIVES

Once all the strategic analysis has been carried out, it is important to identify the main communication objectives that are intended to be carried out for the period up to 2026 (aligned with the time target of the strategic plan). These are the identified objectives:

- Raising awareness of the INA brand;
- Create awareness about INA's mission;
- Communicate and inform about training courses;
- Promote the importance of a more robust and more capable Public Administration for the development of a more innovative, close, participatory, and responsive public service.

3. GOALS

According to the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, these are the goals to be pursued:

- To increase awareness of the INA brand, highlighting the institution's culture and the public value of the services it provides - Awareness index in 2026 - 70%.
- To adopt an effective and coherent promotion strategy, to build an image of value among the INA interlocutors, through the reformulation and promotion of INA's institutional image and communication:
 - i. Number of views of the INA website per year:
 - 2021: 1 468 660
 - Target 2026: 2 000 000
 - ii. Number of subscribers to the INA newsletter:
 - 2021: 6 245
 - Target 2026: 10 000
 - iii. Number of followers on INA's social networks:
 - 2021: 31 014
 - Target 2026: 50 000
 - iv. Implementation rate of the INA Rebranding and Communication Plan:
 - Target 2026: 100%
- To recognize the internationalization of the offer and the brand as a permanent and transversal challenge in fulfilling INA's mission, through the promotion of INA's image and the training, research and technical assistance it offers, with counterparts and other Public Administration entities in other countries:

- i. Number of users accessing the INA website from abroad per year:
 - 2021: 15 714
 - Target 2026: 25 000
- ii. Number of foreign subscribers to the INA newsletter:
 - Target 2026: 1 000
- iii. Number of foreign followers on INA's social networks:
 - 2021: 1 015
 - Target 2026: 3 000

To sum it up, the position INA is seeking to achieve by 2026 is to be recognized as "the public administration's knowledge hub".

4. SERVICES AND PRODUCTS

The service par excellence that INA provides is the creation of customized training courses in different strategic areas already defined. The courses have different characteristics depending on the target audience within the Public Administration are aimed at.

For instance, for 2024, more than 200 courses are planned with more than one edition. And, as said, because of not given the absence of a monopoly position with regard to the training of public service workers.

which means that INA is part of a competitive market with other public and private companies. In this sense, INA's communication must always bear this competitive market perspective in mind.

In addition to this core service, INA is also responsible for creating and implementing innovation programmes that include, for example, mentoring and participatory workshops and an area related to publishing and selling books.

a) Distribution

Depending on the area, the services provided by INA assume different forms of distribution. Briefly:

- Training courses: performed face-to-face in training rooms and online;
- Innovation Programs: carried out in the services contracted in person and also online;
- Edition and Sale of Books: available at the INA Library and online sailing.

b) Prices

The INA essentially provides services to the Public Administration and, although it has an annual State budget, its activities include revenue collection.

Thus, the services provided and priced are:

- Training Courses have a value that can vary depending on different factors;
- Training Courses within the scope of the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) are free or have support through scholarships for trainees;
- Book prices are varied;
- Programs in the field of innovation sometimes require the payment of a fee,

III. **COMMUNICATION**

At this point related to communication, it is important to focus on two aspects: the tone of communication with which we want to communicate and the strategic lines that we intend to establish and strengthen with each target audience in accordance with the defined engagement.

About the tone with which we intend to communicate (which encompasses image and content) this must reflect: Humanization; Trust; knowledge (to know)/ technical ability (to know how to do); Quality.

Regarding strategic communication lines, we built a framework where we identified the target, the type of engagement we intend to have with each one and the strategic lines we intend to follow.

Target	Engagement	Strategic communication lines
INA Workers	Organic	Intrinsic alignment with the brand and communication objectives through specific communication activities; With the alignment of this public it will be easier to effectively amplify the notoriety.
Ministries and Offices	Proximity	Create spaces for dialogue and interaction with these audiences, whether through face-to-face activities such as events and/or meetings, as well as online; Have an open-door policy so that they can disseminate the INA mission.
Public Organizations		
INA Alumni Network		
Trainers		
Partner Entities (includes Higher Education Institutions)	Cooperation	Create cooperation projects and mechanisms with these audiences to raise awareness of INA's mission; Disseminate synergies between INA and public institutions and others, national and international, with a view to boosting value creation.
International Organizations		
PA Senior Managers	Interaction	Create spaces for dialogue and interaction with these audiences, whether through face-to-face or online activities; Inform about INA's different areas of action, with a special focus on Training; Create, through communicational content (regardless of the format), call to action for these target audiences; Customization, loyalty programs and after marketing activities.
PA Technical Careers		
Intermediate Management and Team Leaders		
Social Media	Informative	Make known the different areas of intervention of the INA; Support, through press relations activities, moments of interaction between the Board of Directors or Ministry and journalists.

1. SETTING THE ACTION PLAN

The construction of the action plan or annual communication should not be done without a first test moment. In this sense, a test model will be presented below which, after being implemented (in the

case of INA, the test period will end in December 2023), should be reviewed and, if necessary, improved to proceed with the creation of the action/communication plan for 2024 according to the third phase of the communication strategy, that is, the implementation phase.

2. ACTION PLAN/ANNUAL COMMUNICATION PLAN

The annual communication plan will be based on the two moments of the Communication Strategy already presented (that is, the Foundation and the Setting the Communications Strategy) and, based on these points and the annual challenges that the INA will stipulate, an annual action plan/communication plan will be drawn up highlighting the following points:

3. SPECIFIC COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

- a) To increase the visibility and recognition of the INA brand;
- b) To anchor the brand identity in the centrality of the role of the institution and its workers, in the preservation of the history and in the dynamization of the PA knowledge;
- c) To adopt an effective and coherent promotion strategy, to build an image of value among the INA interlocutors;
- d) To humanize the INA brand;
- e) To promote training courses;
- f) To promote the different areas and projects of INA.
- g) To highlight the contribution of the Recovery and Resilience Plan to the INA's training courses.

4. CHANNELS

It is also important to refer the INA's privileged communication channels, both online and offline. Channels are the tools that allow content to be shared.

- a) Online: Site; Social media; Streaming platforms; Mailing; Email boxes; Intranet.
- b) Offline and face-to-face: Events; Meetings; Seminars/Conferences; Roadshow.

5. ACTIONS

To be developed annually, which includes (only an example):

Activity	
Segmentation	
Target	
Specific objective	
Main goal	
EP 2022-2026 Indicator	
Expected outcome	

Impact	
Budget	

At the same time, a monthly social media plan will be created to ensure better planning of communication activities.

IV. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Throughout the year, activities should be monitored and, if necessary, reformulated/updated/alterd or even eliminated.

There should also be a moment of communication audit where a broader and more holistic analysis will be made on the impact of the annual communication plan on the strategy and whether there is a need for a possible change to the points that are considered more watertight in the Communication Strategy.

In a first phase, which will still be a test, we will develop the implementation of a shorter action plan, but still to be carried out during 2023.

1. IMPLEMENTATION

Having defined the Communication Strategy and the annual communication plans (the latter, according to the test model presented in the previous point) the implementation will be carried out during the years 2024, 2025 and 2026.

The implementation will take place according to the parameters of the created model.

2. ASSESSMENT

The final evaluation of the strategy will take place in 2026.