

# Communication tools, plans and evaluation

*Communication officers  
Split, Croatia*

A stream of cooperation

## Session 1: Tools and techniques

What does the evaluation say?

Plain English

Practical exercise

## Evaluation outcomes

The vast majority of participating lead partners and project partners (91%) confirmed that their project communication manager is a qualified person and able to plan, coordinate and implement the projects' communication activities.

Survey participants (89%) confirm that it was possible to develop a sound project communication plan with appropriate effort.

## Evaluation outcomes

e-Newsletter functionality used by 92%.

Social media used by 61%.

Use of videos: 46%.

## Evaluation outcomes

**Project websites:** harmonized approach, time and cost efficient, well-structured and easy to understand but lacks of attractiveness (e.g. only 12 use relevant infographics). 20% thinks it offers limited options.

Library section – 70% provide content.

News and events – frequently updated with in average 1.7 news/month.

Satisfaction: 3/4

## Evaluation outcomes

Some project descriptions are found way too complicated to understand and lack emotion and attractiveness. The use of complex terminology should be avoided. It is strongly advised to make use of storytelling and plain English.

## Storytelling

A technique to develop any given content in an attractive and compelling way.

## Storytelling: appeal to emotion





## Storytelling: Spark your creativity



The Second call for proposals of the Danube Transnational Programme was open from 09.05.2017 to 06.06.2017



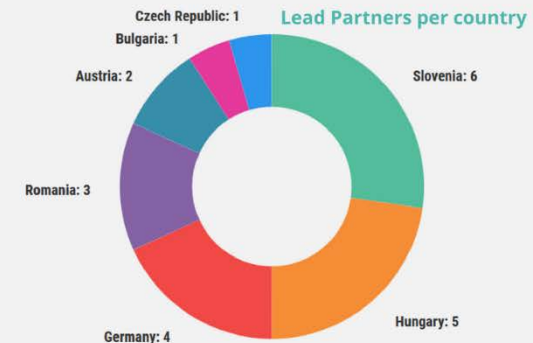
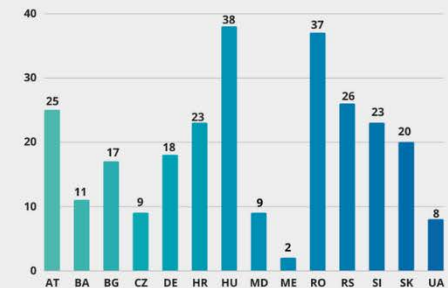
WERE APPROVED



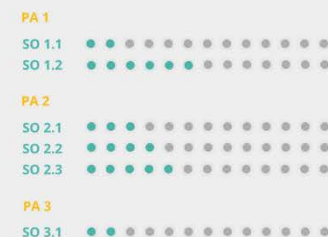
ARE INVOLVED IN THE  
PROJECTS

# Storytelling: use facts and figures

Project partners per country



Approved projects according to the Specific Objective/Priority addressed



## Storytelling: keep it simple



## Free tools to make infographics



**PIKTOCHART**



## Plain English

Finding ways to make writing simpler and clearer.

**Means of Egress:** Ways of exit access and the doors to exit to which they lead shall be so designed and arranged as to be clearly recognizable as such. Hangings or draperies shall not be placed over exit doors or otherwise so located as to obscure any exit.

Mirrors shall not be placed on exit doors. Mirrors shall not be placed in or adjacent to any exit in such a manner as to confuse the direction of the exit.

That was the old regulation. Here is a proposal for the new regulation:

**Exit routes:** An exit door must be free of signs or decorations that obscure its visibility.

## Writing in plain English is not easy

Mark Twain:

**"I would have written a shorter letter, but I did not have the time"**

## Plain English advantages

- it is faster to read
- you get your message across more often, more easily and in a friendlier way

## Plain English rules

- Keep your sentences short
- Prefer active verbs
- Use 'you' and 'we'
- Use words that are appropriate for the reader
- Don't be afraid to give instructions
- Avoid nominalisations
- Use lists where appropriate



## Short sentences

Most experts would agree that clear writing should have an average sentence length of 15 to 20 words.

Most long sentences can be broken up in some way.

## Active verbs

### Active

Peter (subject) watched (verb) the television (object).

Passive: the object becomes the subject and the subject becomes the object.

The television (subject) was watched (verb) by Peter (object).

## Use you and we

Use we to give institutional communication a human touch.

Try to call the reader 'you', even if the reader is only one of many people you are talking about generally. If this feels wrong at first, remember that you wouldn't use words like 'the applicant' and 'the supplier' if you were speaking to somebody sitting across a desk from you.

## Use words that are appropriate for the reader

When you are talking to your reader, say exactly what you mean, using the simplest words that fit. This does not necessarily mean only using simple words - just words that the reader will understand. So in general, keep to everyday English whenever possible. And again, imagine talking to your reader across a table.

## Do not be afraid to give instructions

Commands are the fastest and most direct way of giving someone instructions e.g. Please send it to me.

However, if we asked a hardened bureaucrat to write these expressions, we would end up with something like the following:  
Dogs are advised that they should sit down.

## Avoid nominalisations

There will be a **stoppage** of trains by drivers.

Drivers will **stop** the trains.

The **implementation** of the method has been done by a team.

A team has **implemented** the method.

## Use lists where appropriate

Lists are excellent for splitting information up.

You should use bullet points in lists. These are better than numbers or letters as they draw your attention to each point without giving you extra information to take in.

## Myths

You can start a sentence with and, but, because, so or however.

You can split infinitives. So you can say to boldly go.

You can end a sentence with a preposition. In fact, it is something we should stand up for.

And you can use the same word twice in a sentence if you can't find a better word.



## Words to avoid

additional (extra)  
advise (tell)  
applicant (you)  
commence (start)  
complete (fill in)  
comply with (keep to)  
consequently (so)  
ensure (make sure)  
forward (send)  
in accordance with (under, keeping to)  
in excess of (more than)  
in respect of (for)

in the event of (if)  
on receipt (when we/you get)  
on request (if you ask)  
particulars (details)  
per annum (a year)  
persons (people)  
prior to (before)  
purchase (buy)  
regarding (about)  
should you wish (if you want)  
terminate (end)  
whilst (while)

## Practical exercise

In groups, come up with a new text according to the standards of plain English.

## Practical exercise

### ✓ After

**Sec. 3271.10 What do I need to start preparing a site and building and testing a utilization facility on Federal land leased for geothermal resources?**

If you want to use federal land to produce geothermal power, you have to get a site license and construction permit before you even start preparing the site. Send a plan to the BLM that shows what you want to do and write up a proposed site license agreement that you think is fair and reasonable. BLM will review it and decide whether or not to give you a permit and license to proceed with work on the site. Until and unless they do, don't even think about it.

## Session 2: Tools and planning

Tools

Evaluation

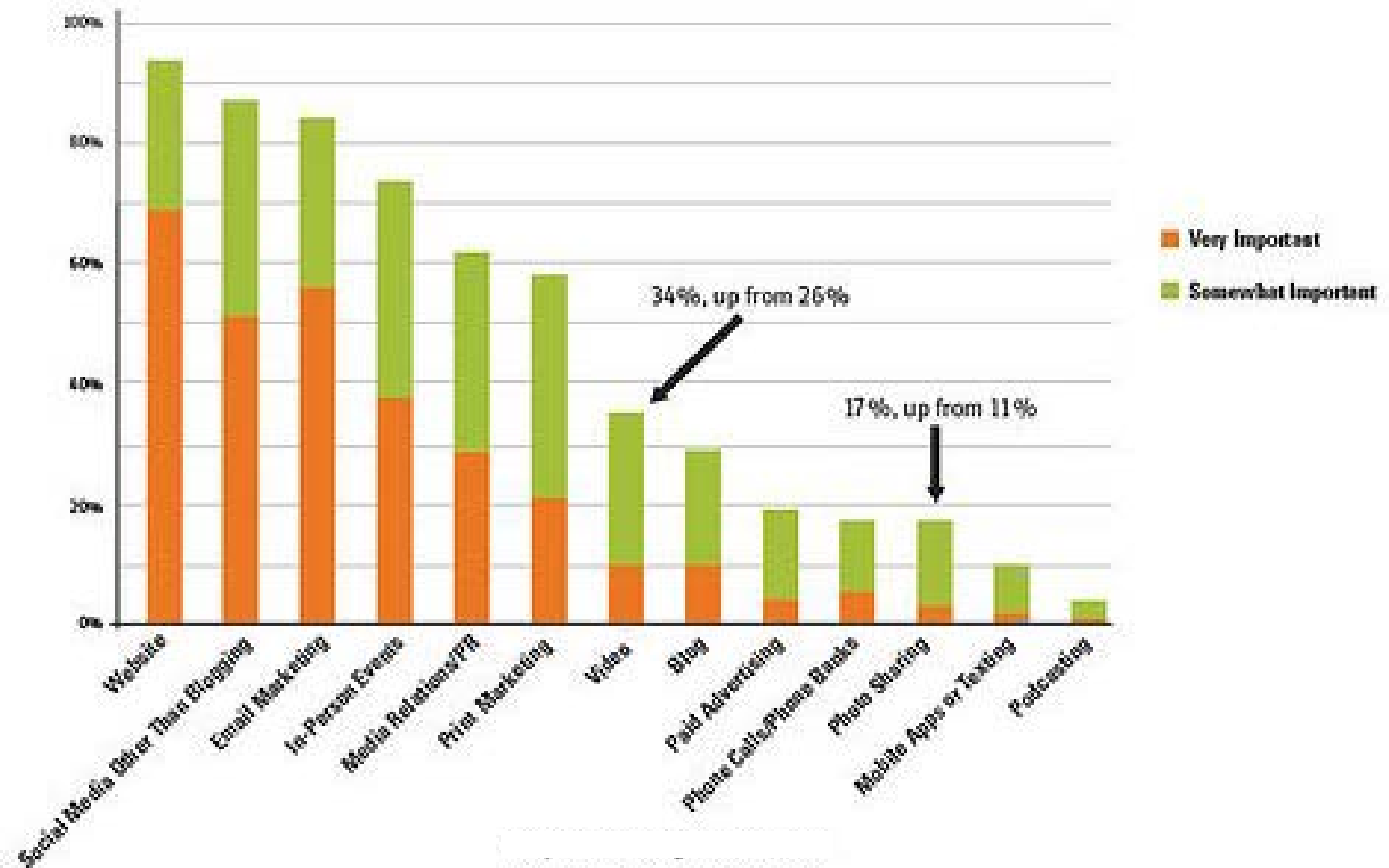
Communication plans

Practical exercise

## New trends in communication

The breakout of the information society has significantly impacted the communication landscape and highlighted the importance of the digital. New developments continue to transform the way we communicate.

In a world of rapid consumption, information is made simple, modern and attractive for quick use. Mobile phones have inevitably changed the way we consume communication.



## Rising tools

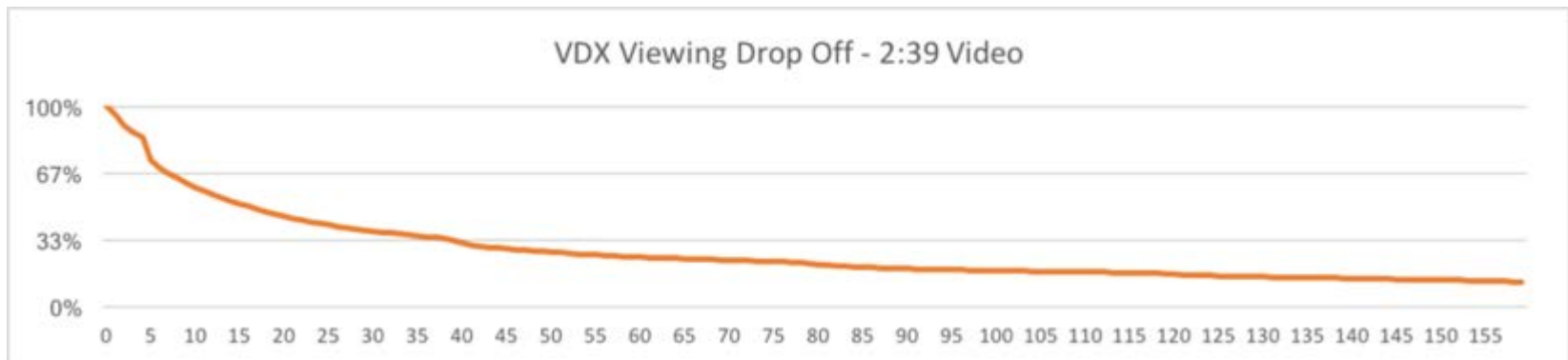
The social media 'big four' (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube) continue to grow but keep an eye on Instagram and Pinterest.

Videos are on the rise.

It is becoming more visual!

## Videos

Research shows that short videos are becoming a trend in communication. Remember, we live a world of rapid consumption. The more visual, the better.





## Free tools for video making



## Examples of in-house videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VfX8q3fvKI>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9x\\_w8SdArEo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9x_w8SdArEo)

## Social media

Virality of the messages

It is very visual

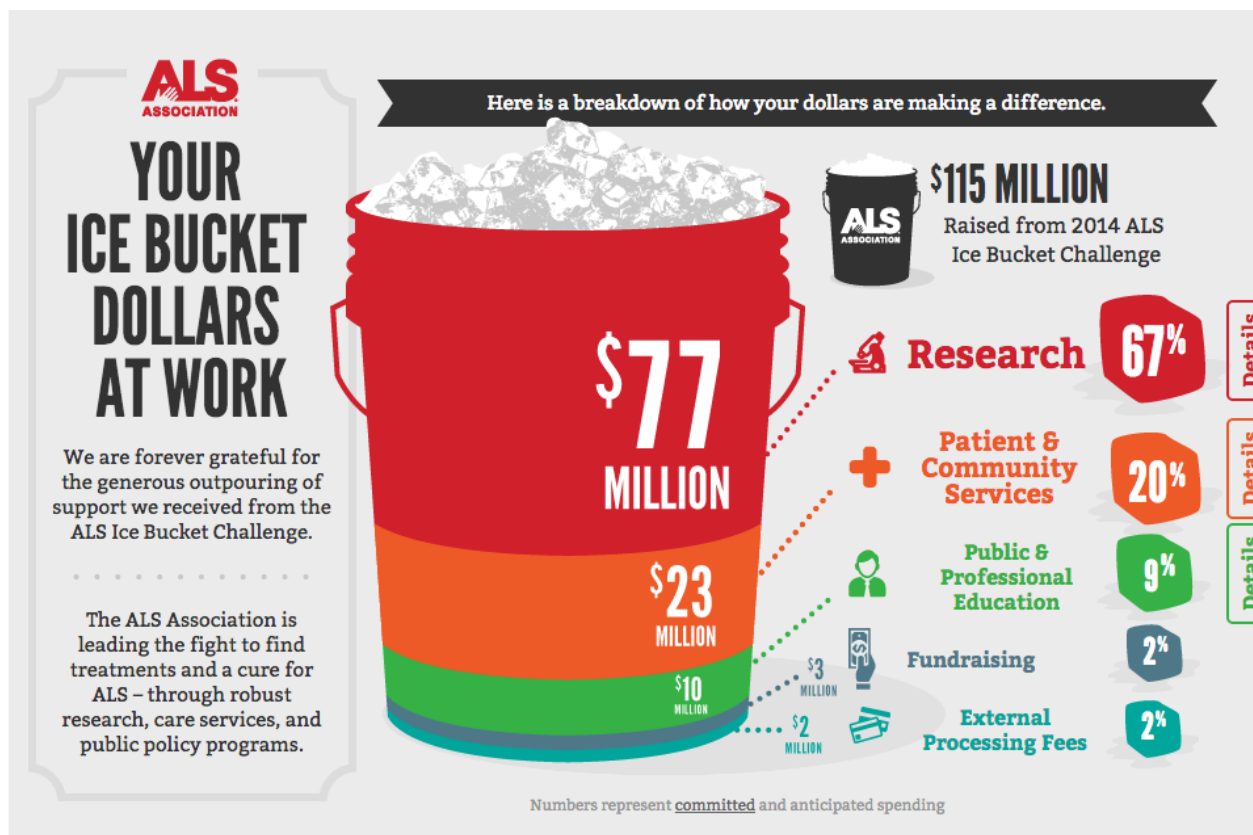
Low-cost communication

Real time information

## Social media



## Media impact



## Media relations

Invitations to events

Press releases

Targeted social media

Sell facts and figures

Use of press officers

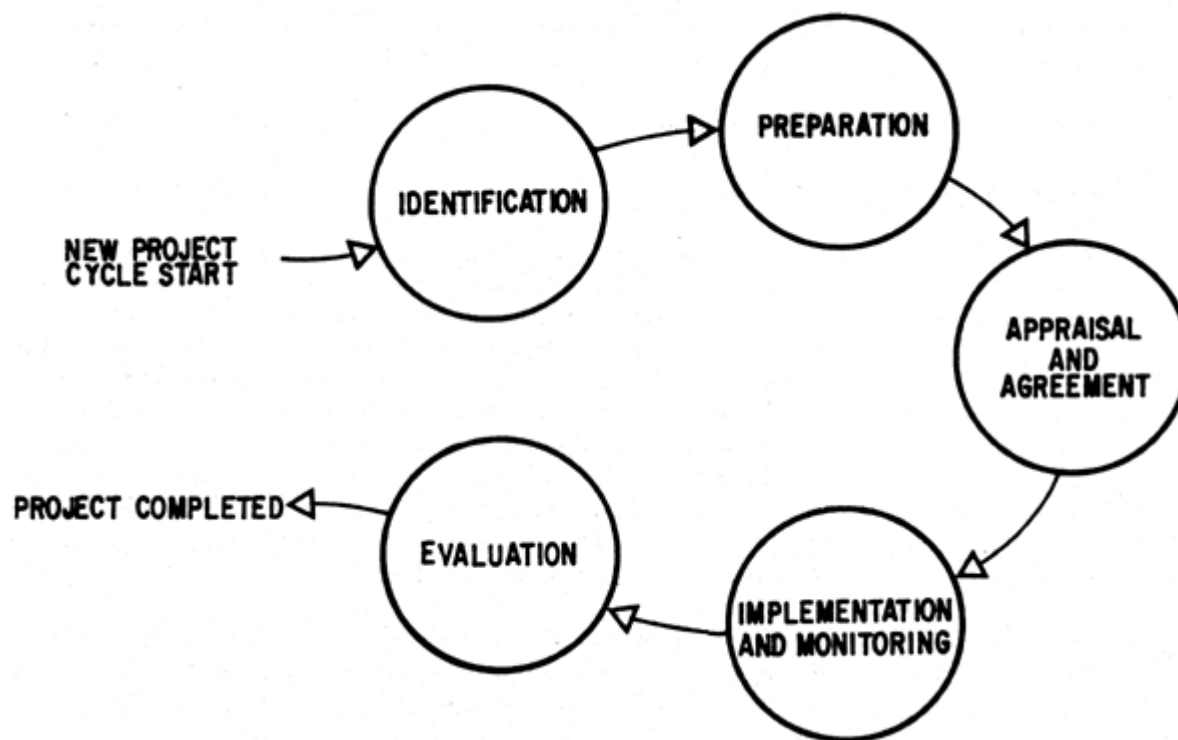
## The media is interested in...

Actuality of project topics/results.

Relevance of project achievements to the country/region that makes up the audience of the media you are targeting.

Present a story that the media and society can identify with.

**Evaluation should be an integrated part of the planning cycle throughout its stages**





## Embed evaluation in design

Evaluation should be the starting point of the planning process. When thinking about your objectives and tools, make sure you select an appropriate evaluation method. Otherwise, the success or failure of your activities will be made on assumptions.

## What do we want to achieve with the evaluation?

In many cases, observational studies are enough to fulfil the evaluation needs of your organisation. Carry out surveys, interviews, analytics and desk research.

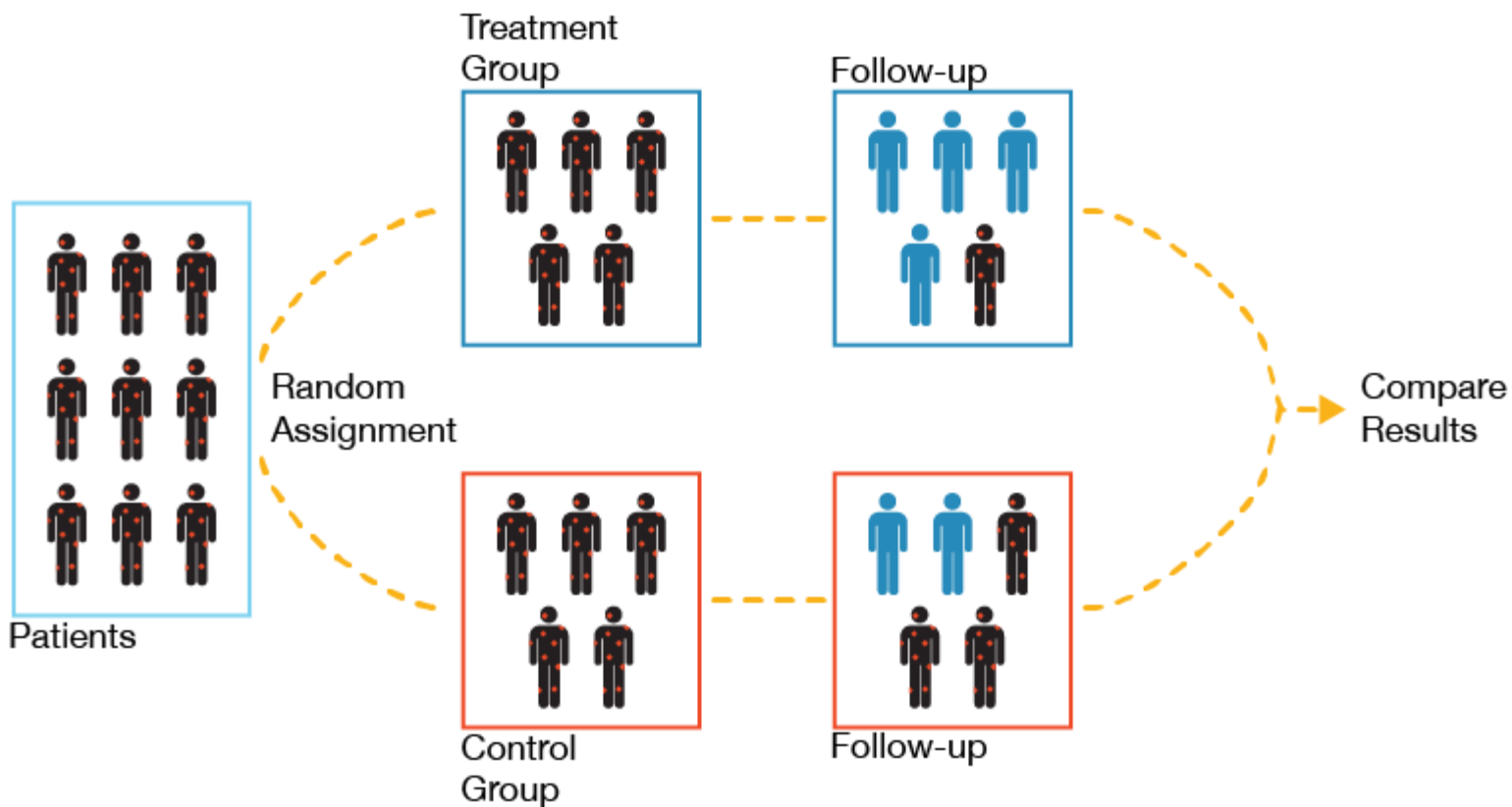
If you want to draw cause-effect relationships, you need an experiment or quasi-experiment.

## Evidence-based evaluation

Why?

- More rational, rigorous and systematic approach.
- It should produce better outcomes

## Control and treatment groups



## Problems

Why not just compare outcome for participants with outcome for non-participants?

Selection problems affect outcomes e.g. dropout, spillovers, non-random programme placement.

Crucial problem: finding valid control group (counterfactual)

## Prepare the communication plan

Review your project objectives and priorities. Understanding the overall project aims is key to identifying how the communication of the project will be organised.

Do a SWOT analysis of the project regarding communication.

Involve your colleagues in the project in setting up the Plan.

## Step 1

Define the project's communication target groups.

Analyse your target groups.

Identifying primary and secondary target groups

## Step 2

Identify your communication objectives.

Think of the key messages.



## Step 3

Define communication tools and activities.

Define the visual identity.

Set budget values.

Be realistic.

## **Include evaluation measures**

How the evaluation will be monitored and evaluated.

Include indicators.

How you will collect the data.

It supports reporting and project evaluation overall.

Evidence-based evaluation is a strong tool to understand your successes and failures.

## Practical exercise

In groups, describe a DTP project and design its communication plan. Choose:

- Use plain English to describe the project.
- Choose project communication objective (in line with project objective).
- Pick your target group.
- Come up with the key message/s.
- Decide on which communication tools to use.
- Choose how to evaluate it.
- Decide on the budget.

Gabriel Alvarez

[gabriel.alvarez@gmx.com](mailto:gabriel.alvarez@gmx.com)

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