

CONCERN FOR IMAGE IMPACT (CII)

Concern for Image Impact is an awareness of how one's self, one's role and the organization are seen by others. The highest level of this competency involves an awareness of, and preference for, respect for the organization by the community. Concern for Image Impact is particularly appropriate for senior management positions.

<i>This Means...</i>	<i>This Doesn't Mean...</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• being aware and sensitive of one's image	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• conducting business without caring about the way actions are viewed by others and the impact those actions can have
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• describing and sharing the norms and values of one's role	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• suggesting actions which go against the stated and implicit values of the role
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• maintaining a clear understanding of the direction and intent of the stakeholder's mandate relative to public interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• being caught off guard by a changing need or focus or understanding the mandate at a "superficial" level only
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• developing trusting and productive relationships with stakeholders to advance government policy and cabinet direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• limiting your involvement to updates and receipt of additional work assignments and policy revisions relative to your department's mandate
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• continuously seeking the ideas, concerns and needs of your multiple stakeholders for mutual benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• showing little responsiveness and flexibility to changing needs or concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• anticipating changes in the business environment and public issues and linking that to the strategic direction of cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• taking a "wait-and-see" approach to finding out what will happen in the future or how a group will be impacted by a change

Developmental Activities

Level 1-2 Activities

Complete a Role Audit.

- Meet with your supervisor to identify roles and responsibilities for your position that are not captured in the job description. What are the expectations of this position? Are you meeting them? Are they in line with the government's agenda?
- Meet with your direct reports and have them identify the key roles and responsibilities for your position. Do they match your understanding and/or your supervisor's understanding of the role?
- Meet with peers who are in similar positions to review the roles and accountabilities for your positions.

Reflection Tip:

* Do you understand the full scope of your role? Has it changed in the last year?

Observe the presentation/ image of peers who you believe have a positive image impact for their position.

- Identify the activities or techniques they use.
- Ask them for guidance as to how you could improve your professional image impact.

Practice your follow-through in making agreements and commitments to others. Consider some of the following guidelines.

- Choose your commitments carefully. Evaluate your ability to follow-through before making commitments to others.
- Resist the tendency to make commitments in order to buy more time or keep others from harassing you.
- Keep a running list of the commitments or indirect promises you have made to others.
- Check off those you have followed through on, and assess the extent to which you deliver on the promises you have made to others.

Reflection Tip:

* Log your ability to follow-through on commitments over time.

Identify the boundaries for your position.

- When is it appropriate for you to speak as an individual, an employee or incumbent in your role (i.e. director of the department)?

- What authority do you have in this role? What are the limitations (i.e. confidentiality)?

Reflection Tip:

* Consider both the formal and informal boundaries that impact your position.

Ask some of your peers who you trust and respect to give you feedback on how you are perceived in terms of your professional image/ impact.

- Use the following guidelines when asking for feedback:
 - ⇒ What have they observed when you presented a positive professional image/impact? (Ask for specific examples.)
 - ⇒ What do you need to work on?
 - ⇒ What suggestions do they have to help you improve your professional image/ impact?

Reflection Tip:

* Compare their feedback with your own perceptions.

Level 3-4 Activities

Analyze your audience before your presentation or meeting (an audience can be one person or a group).

- What will the main issues be? List these concerns and prepare responses.
- What message do you want to leave with the audience?
- Consider the impact of your message. How will the audience react? Does your message align with the strategy of government?
- Is this the right message for this audience?

Reflection Tip:

* Talk to peers who have worked with this audience and learn from their experience.

Compare successful and difficult interactions where you feel your actions impacted the outcome.

- Review your recent activities and identify one where you successfully presented the image that you intended and one where it did not happen.

Competencies that support INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

- Reflect on what you did differently in each situation so that you have a good understanding on successful and unsuccessful behaviours. Use this information to modify your approach in future interactions.

Reflection Tip:

* Do you see a pattern?

Assess whether the image you want to project is the image that people are experiencing.

- Clearly identify what image you want to project for the specific situation. For example, if you are delivering a difficult policy change to a staff meeting and you want to be empathetic about the impact this will have on your staff.
- Assess if this is the image/ presentation they and other staff members experienced.
- Ask for suggestions as how to align your presentation with the image that you want to project.

Learn from the experience of others who have worked in similar roles.

- Connect with individuals who worked in similar roles and find out what professional images/ impact worked best with key stakeholders.
- Identify specific situations that you anticipate that you will need to manage and ask them for suggestions in terms of what worked for them in their career.

Conduct regular environmental scans to identify how others are perceiving you/ the Organization/ the government.

- Assess whether the perception is the image that was intended. For example, if it your intention to have an open and transparent communication process, is that how staff perceived/ experienced the process? If your Organization has an "open door" policy for media enquiries, what is the media's perception/ experience?
- Identify what actions need to be taken to align the ideal image with stakeholder perception/ experience.

Work with difficult stakeholders or on controversial issues.

- Tell your subordinates that you will support them in dealing with difficult stakeholders and/or controversial issues. Tell them if they are having difficulties you would like to

be part of the solution; a solution that creates a positive image for your Organization/government.

- Demonstrate how you balance government needs with public needs.
- Use these situations as opportunities to model the desired behaviours and what can be done to be ambassadors for the government's image.

Level 5 Activities

Identify opportunities for you and your staff, as a representative of the government, to present a “positive” face for government.

- Build a structured communication plan that identifies key audiences, messages, outcomes and dates.
- Create a corporate culture with your employees/ peers that supports positive messaging for government initiatives.
- Include creating a positive image as a key success factor.

Reflection Tip:

- * Share these experiences with other staff.

Respond to public/ community needs and complaints in a timely, responsive manner.

- Actively listen to requests or complaints and probe for the underlying interests or concerns.
- Address their needs even if you cannot take action on them immediately. Informing the public of the specific actions you are taking, and making it clear that you will be back in touch with them to report your progress. This will enhance your credibility, the image of government and will build good working relationships.
- Make a note of how the public reacted and use this to tailor your next steps.

Work on gaining the trust of the public as it relates to your programs and the government’s overall image.

- Listen to and work to understand stakeholder positions. Use a mediation/ conciliation approach to working through issues with stakeholders and ensure that they feel that they were heard.
- Present information to the public in a non-technical manner.

Competencies that support INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

- Make an effort to view a problem from their perspective and show sensitivity to their concerns.
- When dealing with the public, admit when you are unsure of a situation. Address sensitive information when it is brought up while, at the same time, keeping the government's image intact. Speak only to what you have control over. Avoid bringing up sensitive information yourself and stay clear of laying blame on higher authority figures.
- Admit it when you don't know something related to the stakeholder issue and offer to find out- don't bluff your way through. Similarly, admit when a mistake has been made. Ensure that your responses are in line with the government's agenda.

Maintain your professional network (both internally and externally) and use it as a forum to promote a positive image (individual/ Organization/ government).

- Identify formal and informal opportunities to project a positive image. These opportunities could be formal such as speeches and presentations or informal, where you are having a conversation with another person. View all of these interactions as opportunities to promote a positive image (individual/ Organization/ government).

Build new partnerships to improve the image of your service mandate within the community.

- Be open to new and innovative partnerships.
- Use your expertise and contacts to approach others to help in the delivery of services.
- Take time to select a new partnership where you feel there will be the biggest payback. Both parties need to gain so that the overall mandate is best served and mutual goals are achieved.

Consider alternative ways of creating a positive organizational image.

- Make sure that you understand the perspective of the person/ organization you are trying to influence (i.e. the issues they are facing, recent changes, budget impacts, etc.).
- Consider innovative and powerful ways of building a positive organizational image.
- Write down your objectives and incorporate them into an action plan.
- Consider the responses the individual/ organization may have.

Maintain a current understanding of the public image of your Organization/ government.

- Review media coverage (newspapers, TV, radio etc.) on a daily basis.
- Keep track of key opinion leaders (good and bad).
- Address issues as they surface; where possible, anticipate issues and have a plan to manage the impact.
- Celebrate positive image coverage within your Organization.

Reflection Tip:

* Make scanning public information a part of your daily routine.