



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Education, Culture and Employment	Senior Communications Advisor	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
71-14932	Yellowknife	Policy, Legislation and Communications

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Senior Communications Advisor will advise and support the development and implementation of internal and external communication strategies, public affairs programming, marketing strategies and activities to promote the Department of Education, Culture and Employment's (the Department) visibility and image with external and internal audiences. This position is also responsible for evaluating the success of communications plans, policies, and procedures to ensure the Department's communications are strategic, effective, and consistent across the Northwest Territories.

SCOPE

Located in Yellowknife, the Senior Communications Advisor (Advisor) reports to the Manager, Communications and Public Affairs and provides strategic communications planning, advice, and support to designated divisions and regions, as well as to the Minister and Cabinet and Corporate Communications. When required, the position also supports communication with the Government of Canada, education bodies, and Indigenous governments. The Advisor works closely with Cabinet and Corporate Communications to secure input and approvals for communication plans and, when necessary, communication products such as news releases and media statements. The Advisor collaborates with the Manager to plan, manage, and deliver effective communications for the entire Department.

The Department has broad responsibilities across the territory, including all levels of education (junior kindergarten to post secondary), early learning and child care, job training, employment standards, career development, income security programs (including student financial assistance), immigration, archaeology, culture and official languages. Clear communication—both internally to staff and externally to stakeholders, other GNWT departments, and the public—is essential to ensure timely, accurate information is shared; clients understand



available programs and services; stakeholders are aware of initiatives and impacts; and staff understand Departmental direction.

The Department frequently handles complex and sensitive issues, such as Income Assistance concerns, national topics like immigration, or matters of high public interest such as student safety and school closures. Its audience ranges from individual residents to national organizations and industry. The Advisor must help balance proactive communication with crisis response, particularly as the Department's work is often scrutinized by diverse and vocal groups, including those unfamiliar with the NWT.

The role requires developing creative and effective solutions to communication challenges and taking a proactive approach to emerging issues. The Advisor also responds to media requests, which are often urgent, unplanned, and involve sensitive subjects. These requests require coordinating with senior management and front-line staff under tight deadlines, ensuring accuracy while protecting client privacy and confidentiality. During crisis situations, media inquiries may increase significantly, requiring the Advisor to provide clear, concise messaging under pressure while balancing transparency and confidentiality.

Additionally, there are consistent requirements for reading and reviewing legislation, data, reports and a broad range of complex and abstract documents. Responsibilities include preparing written media responses, organizing media interviews, preparing spokespeople with key messages, attending interviews, conducting debriefs, and reporting back to senior departmental officials.

The Senior Communications Advisor is trusted to provide expert strategic advice to senior management, including Assistant Deputy Ministers and the Deputy Minister. Decision-making occurs within the broader GNWT and Departmental policy and strategic frameworks. The Advisor must offer timely, sound advice on communication matters, monitor emerging issues and trends, assess public attitudes, and develop or adjust communication strategies to address both immediate and long-term impacts on public perception.

To be effective, the Advisor must maintain a broad and current understanding of all Departmental programs, services, operations, legislative and policy frameworks, and political matters within the Department's mandate.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provide strategic communications advice.

- Liaise with senior managers and communications staff to identify communications priorities, objectives, opportunities, and needs.
- Monitor and analyze public and media attitudes to anticipate reactions to policy and program changes.



- Develop, implement, and advise on communication strategies and approaches that support the Department's overall vision, mission, and objectives.
 - Assess emerging issues and potential crises and help develop timely and effective communications responses.
 - Recommend strategic communications approaches that support and enhance departmental policy and legislative initiatives.
 - Provide public relations advice and recommend appropriate channels for communicating with the public (e.g., news releases, Public Service Announcements, campaigns).
 - Integrate key departmental messages into communication plans and ensure alignment with broader GNWT strategies.
 - Participate in regular and ad hoc meetings to advise senior management, flag emerging issues, and identify areas requiring communications support.
 - Coordinate with federal counterparts on joint announcements, initiatives, and messaging.
 - Participate in or lead cross-departmental and interdepartmental communications working groups.
 - Monitor and evaluate communications programs and recommend improvements.
 - Lead or support department-wide or interdepartmental communications and marketing initiatives.
 - Use GNWT communications tools (e.g., Communication Planning Briefs, Communication Implementation Plans) to ensure consistent and high-quality delivery.
 - Support Cabinet Communications in developing issues-management plans and messaging for urgent or emerging issues.
 - Evaluate communications, advertising, and marketing activities and recommend revisions as required.
 - Plan, research, and produce communications products promoting departmental and GNWT priorities.
 - Develop materials such as social media campaigns, newsletters, reports, and publications.
 - Assist with managing and maintaining departmental and corporate websites and digital channels.
- 2. Develop, design, update and edit print, digital and video marketing and communications materials (including promotional materials / posters / brochures /social media campaigns, etc.)**
- Plan and develop integrated communication and marketing plans, lead campaign activities from concept to completion, and evaluate campaign effectiveness. Liaise with local media outlets and external agencies as needed.
 - Ensure all departmental print, digital, social media, and video materials comply with GNWT Visual Identity Program (VIP) standards and branding requirements.



- Provide input on messaging, content, design, and appropriate mediums (e.g., brochures, advertising, exhibits).
 - Advise departmental staff on design and communications considerations for third-party materials and review public-facing content to ensure compliance with graphic standards and official languages requirements.
 - Recommend and refine web content to strengthen the website as a key communication and marketing tool.
 - Capture and process images and shoot and edit basic photo and video content as required.
 - Supervise and manage contractors and consultants involved in advertising, graphic design and video production.
- 3. Provide Media relations and advice support to Manager, Communications, other Managers, Directors, and Assistant Deputy Ministers to ensure that information provided to media and public is accurate, appropriate and consistent with Department messaging. Work with Manager of Public Affairs and Communications to:**
- Develop and coordinate proactive media campaigns and relations.
 - Implement standards for media relations in keeping with the GNWT media policies.
 - Develop and maintain a network of media contacts and other key contacts to use for disseminating public health advisories.
 - Monitor media for emerging issues and provide advice and recommendations to the Manager.
 - Provide expertise in the development of material for media requests and interviews.
 - Develop concepts for and support in the delivery of media events and opportunities, media messages and media backgrounder.
 - Develop news releases, public service announcements, media statements, and public health advisories.
 - Pack and carry display equipment and materials, as needed.
 - Maintain a list of Department and Authority spokespeople and manage contract for media training.
 - Equip departmental spokespeople with key messages for media interviews; conduct pre-interviews and de-briefs with departmental spokespeople; advise on best interview practices; support spokespeople through media interviews.
- 4. Manage the Department's Digital Communication and Online Presence.**
- Ensure the Department complies with the GNWT social media strategy.
 - Lead, participate, and provide expert advice to Department staff, including senior management, and interdepartmental committees/working groups, specific to web and digital communications planning.
 - Ensure Department web and digital communications follow GNWT standards and identify new and innovative web and digital solutions to Corporate Communications.



- Ensure Department web content is up to date and relevant through staff meetings and provide web and social media analytics on program areas and campaigns.
- Provide advice on best internal communications format for employee collaboration within Department.
- Create and optimize Department social media pages within each platform to increase visibility of social content.
- Generate, edit, publish, and share content (Original text, images, video, or HTML) that builds meaningful connections, raises positive community awareness about programs and services, and encourages members of the public to utilize services.
- As required, collaborate with other departments to generate content for shared initiatives.
- Moderate all user-generated content in line with the public social media guidelines for each community.
- Develop and run paid social media campaigns, analyze results, and track and monitor campaign budgets.
- Continually improve content, through analyzing social data/metrics, insights, and best practices, and then act on the information. Report on social media activities to the Manager.

5. Support the delivery of Official Languages Services for the Department.

- Ensure that public communications are in accordance with the *Official Languages Act* and Indigenous Languages Services Standards.
- Coordinate the translation of public communications materials to French and Indigenous languages.
- Support assessments of Departmental communications and services to ensure French language service requirements are met in accordance with the GNWT's Strategic Plan on French Language Communications and Services.
- Maintain an inventory of bilingual public printed material published by the Department.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

No unusual demands.

Environmental Conditions

No unusual conditions.

Sensory Demands

No unusual demands.



Mental Demands

No unusual demands.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of communications, public and media relations theories and practices, including issues management and strategic communications planning.
- Knowledge of public education/information and training theory and principles.
- Knowledge of and/or the ability to acquire and apply knowledge of the North's socio-economic, cultural and political environment.
- Knowledge of strategic planning, analysis and problem-solving techniques.
- Knowledge of print, design, audio-visual and multi-media production techniques.
- Awareness of the importance of traditional knowledge, language and culture.
- Skilled with computer software: word processing, desktop publishing, email and Internet.
- Skills relating to developing and coordinating proactive media campaigns and relations.
- Written and verbal communication skills, including plain language for the development, editing and proofreading of public information.
- Project management skills to lead, plan, organize, coordinate and complete complex and concurrent projects independently or in teams within time and resource constraints while monitoring progress and evaluating results.
- Ability to ensure Department web and digital communications follow GNWT standards and identify new and innovative web and digital solutions to Corporate Communications.
- Ability to work effectively in cross-cultural, and highly politicized situations.
- Ability to ensure Department web content is up to date and relevant through staff meetings and provide web and social media analytics on program areas and campaigns.
- Ability to monitor and evaluate communications programs and recommend improvements.
- Ability to analyze issues and suggest and influence appropriate means of action related to communications planning and execution
- Ability to develop and express ideas, concepts, judgments and recommendations to a variety of audiences in clear and concise ways, using appropriate verbal, written and graphic means.
- Ability to commit to actively upholding and consistently practicing personal diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness, as well as safety and sensitivity approaches in the workplace.

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

A degree in journalism, communications or public relations and four (4) years of directly related communications experience.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.



ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Security

- No criminal records check required
- Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

French language (check one if applicable)

- French required (must identify required level below)

Level required for this Designated Position is:

ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION

Basic (B) Intermediate (I) Advanced (A)

READING COMPREHENSION:

Basic (B) Intermediate (I) Advanced (A)

WRITING SKILLS:

Basic (B) Intermediate (I) Advanced (A)

- French preferred

Indigenous language: Select language

- Required
- Preferred