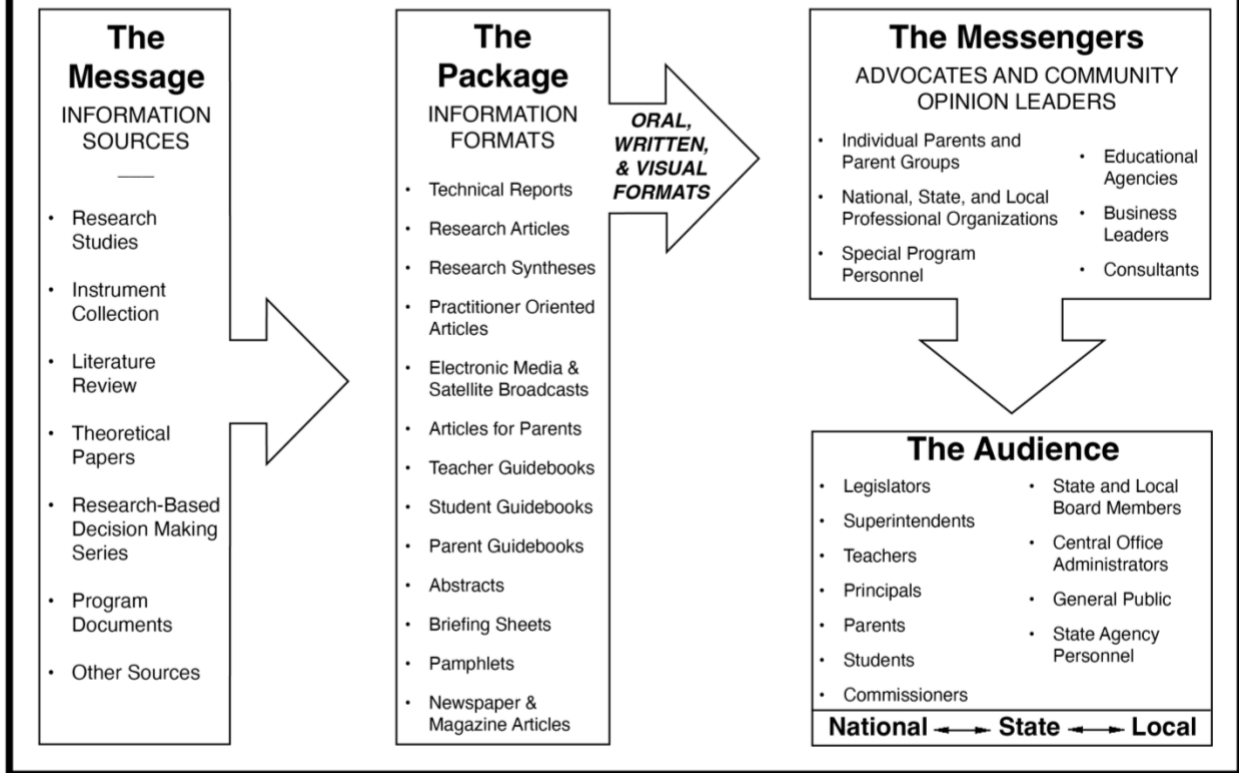# Plan for the Dissemination of Information

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Any idea, research study, program, project, or innovative teaching activity should be considered for dissemination to one or more target audiences. An important issue is how we develop a dissemination plan to circulate selected information. The plan should consider the four categories of information in the figure below. Although these four categories are in order of the steps that should be followed, a good idea is to always begin with the audience(s) you want to influence in mind.

The length of any document needs to take the audience into account. Policy makers such as legislators and administrators, for example, ordinarily don't read books and long articles. Major ideas for this audience should be a focus of the overall idea and the practical payoff for students or teachers. I sometimes call these short but powerful statements "the hook," but also recommend that references to more detailed information be attached for interested readers who want to look at more implementation strategies.

Researchers or academics obviously want to see research studies or reviews and available instruments that might be useful for conducting their own studies. Teachers, on the other hand, usually want more "how to" information and especially things like videos, visitation opportunities where they can see the idea or activity in action (seeing is believing) or teacher guidebooks that provide how-to information about the implementation of a project or teaching activity. We have found that, whenever possible, it is a good idea to present a diagram or figure (such as the one below) that allows the reader to get the big picture at a glance. Always field test the draft of any plan for dissemination with a few selected audience members from a given group and use their feedback to make a final version. The following figure from our research center is one for which we have received numerous requests over the years.

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented Dissemination Model

The Message
INFORMATION SOURCES

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- Research Studies
- Instrument Collection
- Literature Review
- Theoretical Papers
- Research-Based Decision Making Series
- Program Documents
- Other Sources

The Package
INFORMATION FORMATS

ORAL, WRITTEN, & VISUAL FORMATS

- Technical Reports
- Research Articles
- Research Syntheses
- Practitioner Oriented Articles
- Electronic Media & Satellite Broadcasts
- Articles for Parents
- Teacher Guidebooks
- Student Guidebooks
- Parent Guidebooks
- Abstracts
- Briefing Sheets
- Pamphlets
- Newspaper & Magazine Articles

The Messengers
ADVOCATES AND COMMUNITY OPINION LEADERS

- Individual Parents and Parent Groups
- National, State, and Local Professional Organizations
- Special Program Personnel
- Educational Agencies
- Business Leaders
- Consultants

The Audience

- Legislators
- Superintendents
- Teachers
- Principals
- Parents
- Students
- Commissioners
- State and Local Board Members
- Central Office Administrators
- General Public
- State Agency Personnel

National ◄─► State ◄─► Local

"Think twice before you speak or write because your words and influence will plant the seed of either success or failure in the mind of a target audience." Napoleon Hill

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