



Examples and lessons learned on Perception and Communication

UK - Denmark - The Netherlands

OECD workshop

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Introduction

- UK, Denmark and the Netherlands work together to produce a paper on Perception and Communication
- Perception and communication are important issues in the approach of regulatory reform, reducing regulatory burdens and better service by government
- This is a working document to exchange experiences

-> All input on lessons learned, examples of means and approaches to influence perception of businesses is welcome!



How to communicate with businesses? (1)

- Involve them in an early stage of regulatory reform, f.i. by organising working groups, business panels
- Make sure government has a box for complaints, suggestions and answer them
- Ask different kind of businesses and branche organisations what the largest burdens for businesses regarding regulation are
- Use businesses, important stakeholders as ambassadors
- Work together with branche organisations like the Federation of Small and Medium-sized enterprises
- Measure perception of businesses by asking them about the level of service by government and the perception of taken measures in reducing regulatory burdens



How to communicate with businesses? (2)

- Corporate government website on regulatory reform
- Question box
- Media campaign with examples of changed regulations
- Communication to enterprises must be:
 - timed** so they get the information when they need it – when they do not need it they discard it
 - targeted** to specific enterprise so they know the information is relevant to them
 - sufficient** – so the enterprises do not have to seek further information



Means of communication and involvement of businesses

- Corporate government website on regulatory reform
- Question box
- Media campaign with examples of changed regulations
- Business panels
- Working groups
- External advisory board



How do businesses perceive the measures taken by government?

Macro and micro business sentiment monitor (results)

- Fewer difficulties arising as a result of poor service by Government bodies
- The quality of services provided by Government is rated more highly
- The percentage of companies feeling hindered as a result of regulatory burdens has decreased from 41% to 39%
- The score for service provision rose from a score of 5.6 to 6.2
- The level of confidence that the Government will succeed in reducing regulatory burdens has increased: from 46% in 2008 to 61% in 2009



Monitor perception of businesses (1)

Perception Monitor is the feedback mechanism of the policy cycle:



- Gives new input for programme
- Uncovers 'white area's'
- Uncovers pinch points and new area's of focus
- Gives input for specific communication efforts

Are we doing the right things, and are we doing the things right?



Monitor perception of businesses (2)

Number of businesses that are hindered by regulatory burdens:

- (seriously) affected 41%
- Not affected (at all) 41%
- Neutral 18%

Starters, freelancers and small businesses feel less hindered than (medium) large companies.

Sectors that feel hindered the most:

- Agriculture
- Trade
- Catering industry



Monitor perception of businesses (3)

Both in 2008 and 2009 businesses are most hindered by:

- Unnecessary information requirements / paperwork
- Compliance
- Contradictory legislations
- Poor service
- Inspections
- Continuously changing regulation



Lessons learned (1)

- focus on specific target groups and adjust the message to them
- simplification leads to changes, which adds up to complaints about compliance with fast changing regulations
- be aware that less burdens are still burdens, there is a negative connotation
- have others (ambassadors and businesses itself) spread the message of burden reduction and noticeable simplification
- involve stakeholders in every step
- listen to their stories and give feedback on what has been done to solve their problems



Lessons learned (2)

- present clear examples of burden simplifications made by government
- give an overview of what government does and has done to reduce burdens (present the context)
- use one sender; in the Netherlands we always refer to the website 'answersforbusiness.nl'
- make sure to use a wide range, in that way most of the entrepreneurs will be reached
- repeat taken measures and efforts by government
- make sure there a lot of measures taken and use examples of measures taken
- differentiate; use different means for specific target groups



Lessons learned (3)

- focus on specific target groups and adjust the message to them
- simplification leads to changes, which adds up to complaints about compliance with fast changing regulations
- be aware that less burdens are still burdens, there is a negative connotation
- have others (ambassadors and businesses itself) spread the message of burden reduction and noticeable simplification
- involve stakeholders in every step
- listen to their stories and give feedback on what has been done to solve their problems



Questions?

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