

Strategic Communications and Storytelling

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Strategic Communications: Purpose of The Plan

- **Be proactive in communications planning; limit reactive communications**
- **Align strategic communications with organization's objectives**
- **Develop consistent key messages to use throughout your campaign**
- **Design key messages for different audiences**
- **Know your timeline, benchmarks and measures of success**
- **Remember: Make it accessible. In the event of a transition, the plan should be easily executed by other team members.**

Strategic Communications: The Plan

- What's your objective?
 - Inform, recruit, take action, crisis management
 - Objectives may focus more heavily on one stakeholder group; consider all stakeholders in content development
- What are your key messages?
 - High level, memorable vs. detailed, tactical
 - Incorporate storytelling elements
 - Consider equity
- Who are your stakeholders (audiences)?
 - Consider different objectives, key messages for different audiences
 - Internal vs. external stakeholders – how will you communicate with each audience?

Strategic Communications: The Plan

- **Which communications channels will you use?**
 - Newsletters, print materials, presentations, social media, earned media, paid media
 - Consider interpretations, translations, accessibility
 - Internal vs. external channels for internal, external audiences
- **What is your timeline?**
 - Consider important dates and deadlines
 - Build in time for content development and review
- **How will you measure success?**
 - Attendance or participation numbers; open rates or click-throughs on newsletters, emails, webpages; increase in interest or inquiries after earned and paid media; surveys



Strategic Communications and Storytelling: How They Collide

- Storytelling is less tactical and more emotional
- Storytelling is more effective or more memorable for some audiences
- Storytelling can help the presenter connect with the audience
- Storytelling can prompt action
- Storytelling can advance your communications goals in powerful and authentic ways

Strategic Communications and Storytelling: Elements of Storytelling

- **Who?**
 - There are people or characters (sometimes you)
- **What?**
 - There's a scene or an event (a conflict, a revelation)
- **When and Where?**
 - There's a time and a place
- **Why?**
 - There's a larger meaning or lesson that connects the story to your objective

Strategic Communications and Storytelling: Tips for Storytelling

- Make it personal (when appropriate)
- Connect to the objective
- Use data (when needed)
- Keep the story “tight and bright”
 - Balance pace with illustrative storytelling that evokes emotion; you want to get to the heart of the story (and your objective) without losing interest
- Do not exploit

Strategic Communications and Storytelling: Testimonials

- Testimonials can be powerful stories that align with your communications objective
 - How were people affected or lives transformed?
 - What need is unmet?
 - How does your organization or objective help?
- Collect stories from stakeholders
- Feature their stories in their words
- Remember: Do not exploit

Thank You!

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