STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

The right message for the right people

The Leadership Conference

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Today's Agenda

Defining Strategic Communications

Framing Your Message

Defining Your Audience

Learning the Terminology

Maintaining Message Discipline

Defining strategic communications

What are we doing...*and why*?

What is the purpose of political communications?

To influence or, in the long run, change the (local/statewide/national) conversation on an issue to advance a policy goal.

Public Relations

For A Better WORLD
Advocacy Communications

Framing your message

How do I *say* this?

Framing is about **HOW** you say what you want to say...

and what you are **NOT** saying.

Framing is about ideas, about how we see the world, which determines how we act. **In politics...framing is a moral enterprise: it says what the character of a movement is**. All politics is moral. Political figures and movements always make policy recommendations claiming they are the right things to do. No political figure ever says, do what I say because it's wrong! Or because it doesn't matter! Some moral principles or other lie behind every political policy agenda."

-George Lakoff[1]

Conscious Mind v. Unconscious Mind

- 90% of how we process information is unconscious. That is where your beliefs, emotions, values, and identity live.

- 10% of how we process information is conscious. That's where reason and facts live.

If values, identity and beliefs live in our unconscious, then we must <u>speak to the unconscious</u>.

Defining your audience(s)

Who do we want to change the world *with us*?

Three Audiences

- **Big Ideas** – People motivated by values and vision. Big picture thinkers.

- **Issues** – People motivated by passion for a specific issue.

- **Specific Policy Proposals** – People who care deeply about the policy remedies

Define Your Audience(s)

Demographics

Who you are

Attitudinal

What you think or believe

Base

✓ Believe a quality education is a shared responsibility

✓ Believe in need for greater resources

✓ Favor equity (more based on need) over equality (same resources to all)

• 22% of U.S. adults

• More likely to be women, Democrats, Latino and younger

Opposition

- ✓ Believe that spending more will not improve public schools
- ✓ More likely to believe success a product of individual talent and effort
- ✓ Reject race and class-specific calls for increased resources

- ✓ 13% of US adults
- ✓ More likely to be older, white, male and Republican

Learning the terminology

What *is* a talking point?

Soundbite

Talking Points / Proof Points

Message

Narrative

Narrative

A story that helps to make sense of our world

Message

The moral arguments that help tell the story to your audience and spark action
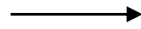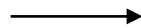
How To Frame Your Message

Shared Values → e.g. Community, opportunity, fairness, equality, safety

Problem → What needs to be fixed?

Solution → Common-sense solutions work best.

Collective Action → What do we do? or What should stakeholders do?

Message

Making sure that all children have a quality education that prepares them for the future is a responsibility that we all share—parents, grandparents, teachers, neighbors, and elected leaders. Ensuring every child in America a quality education puts them all on equal footing. But, right now, we exclude certain children from a quality education because lawmakers choose not to adequately fund schools in low-income communities. If we care about the futures of millions of children who live in households struggling to make ends meet, then making this right—investing the most in the schools that need it the most—is a duty we all share.

Talking Points/Proof Points
Data, facts, anecdotes, research that support your message and narrative

Message

Expresses a value proposition

Expresses a point of view on both the problem and the solution

Can contain facts/data, but doesn't have to.

Talking Points/Proof Points

Communicates information only

Talking Points

The foreclosure crisis has wreaked havoc on low-income and minority homeowners. A 2008 report by the United for a Fair Economy found that Black and Latino families lost between $164 billon and $213 billion as a result of foreclosures

David Card, a Berkeley economics professor, analyzed Harvard College's admissions database and found no evidence of discrimination against Asian Americans. In fact, since 2010, the share of the Harvard admitted class that is Asian American has grown by 27%.

Soundbite

A short *message* that is meant to grab the audience's attention and *stick*

27	9	3
Words	Seconds	Messages

Wall Street gambled with the economy and lost. No one went to jail and the American people had to foot the bill.

Maintaining message discipline

Why should you *stay* on message?

Sell the brownie, not the recipe

Repeat, repeat, repeat your messages

Ignore your opponent's messages

Focus on what IS, not what ISN'T

Use only three core messages

QUESTIONS?

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Thank
You.

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