Developing the Graduate Education Message

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Successfully Creating Messages is an Art as Well as a Science

- Avoiding several fundamental and instinctive barriers --- without sacrificing credibility & personality
- By-passing “talking points” (and over scripting) which have hidden and fatal flaws
- Using a geometric message strategy that achieves content focus, organization and parity
- Adopting the “ATM” approach in responding to questions
Messaging ... Overcomes Organizational & Individual Communication Barriers

- Staying on the “same sheet of music”
- Punching through 21st Century clutter
- Not being defensive and falling into quicksand
- Moving beyond the “Silver Bullet”
- Deflating difficult situations
- Having something to say ... instead of “ooops”
The Information in Talking Points Usually Exceeds the Audience Absorption Capacity

Messages Are Either a 3-Legged Stool or a 4-Legged Chair
Talking Points Have Several Fatal Flaws that Decrease a Speaker’s Effectiveness
The Word Test Highlights Several Important Aspects Of Messaging

Sleep?

% R

time →
The “Triangle & Box” Messaging Strategy Assures Equality, Non-linearity AND Focus

- ≤ 12 word message
- ≤ 7 word conclusion

MESSAGE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP
Domino’s Pizza Messages For You Tube Response

Sincerely Apologize for You Tube “Prank” by Two Employees
- Thank members of on-line community
- Store owner has been financially hurt
  - Damage to brand – Dominos hurt
  - “Sickens me”

An Isolated Incident in North Carolina
- Looking at all hiring practices
- Make sure it won’t happen again
- Auditors in stores

Tremendous Pride in Serving Customers
- 125,000 people in 60 countries
- Messages and support
- High quality “day in and day out”

Customers Trust Is Most Important

Taking It Incredibly Seriously and Took Immediate Action
- Two team members dismissed, felony warrants for their arrest
- Store “shut down and sanitized” from “top to bottom”
2nd Hand Smoke Kills Hundreds of Kansans & Costs Taxpayers $$ Millions /Year
- Cigarette smoke contains 4,000 toxins and is a known carcinogen
- 290 deaths/yr in Kansas attributable to 2nd hand smoke
- Leads to >2,000 heart attacks and >$21 M in hospital costs
- Medicaid costs to tax payers is >$20 M each year
- 25% of indoor workers are not protected

Vast Majority of Kansans Recognize 2nd Hand Smoke Danger & Support Action
- 94% believe 2nd hand smoke harmful
- 73% of adults support some type of indoor smoke-free policy
- > 33 cities and 2 counties have or are considering indoor air ordinances
- Legislators have predicted eventual passage --- what are we waiting for?
- 80% of population doesn’t smoke

A Policy that’s Beneficial, Workable & Sustainable
- Surgeon General : smoke free policies don’t impact on hospitality industry
- >36 states --- including neighboring ones --- have smoking restrictions
- Studies of policies in CO, OH, KY and MT show reduced heart attack hospital admissions and less smoking
- Zagat survey: only 3% would dine out less because of smoking restrictions

Stop a Serious Threat
Protect an Important Right

Statewide Indoor Smoke-free Policy Protects Everyone’s Right to Clean Air
- Uniformly prohibit smoking in most places that the public can gather
- When private property involves a public business, health and safety standards are everyone’s right
- Create a level playing field across KS ---now a patchwork of unequal restrictions

MESSAGE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP
Using The Strategic Box/Triangle Messaging Under Q&A Requires The ATM Technique

Answer/Address Transition Message
BP Messaging On May 5th *Today Show* Interview

**Pursuing Two Options to Stop Leak/Spill**
- Fixing blow-out preventer is like performing heart surgery 5,000 feet below the surface
- Install device that acts like the hood of your oven to capture the spill

**Unprecedented Failure of the Ultimate Safety Device**
- Not designed to fail
- Many barriers

**Not Our Accident, Responsible for Clean-up**

**Massive Operations Underway**
- Sub-surface, surface and shore
- 100s of ships and skimmers
- Using dispersants at 5,000 feet --- first time and working
- Using C-130s

MESSAGE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP
Seeing The Question: 5 Types

**Direct** (Factual)

**Attack** (Against Facts/ Interpretation of Events/Actions)

**Emotional** (Concerning/Implying Injuries, Fatalities, Families, etc.)

**Quicksand** (Attacking Off Topic, Speculating, Guaranties)

**Irrational / Irrelevant** (Off topic pontification)

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Stay

Jab & Go

Slug & Go

Hug & Go

Touch & Go

Pick & Go
Steps for Message Development

Your goal...What you want them to do...not do...accelerate...reconsider...etc.

- Identify three or four “topics” that should be addressed.
- These topics can be oriented to audiences, issues, etc.

- List as many potential points as possible within each topic.
- Do not edit or reject anything at this point.

- Eliminate points which are:
  - Defensive
  - Too complex
  - Potential quicksand
  - Potential to be misunderstood
  - Not salient to the listener

- Combine points that are stronger together.
- Eliminate those that are redundant.

- Within each topic identify the point or points that are the most salient to the audience.
- Form messages to be concise and active.
- The refinement process can cause the messages to be reduced to 3 or increased to 4.

- The middle is essentially the conclusion, theme or action.
- Reflects the speakers mindset and ties the messages together.
- It should only be a handful of words --- 5 to 8.

- Brainstorming points that made it through the filter and not used in the messages become supporting points.

- Best supporting points
  - specific examples
  - analogies
  - colorful phrases
  - Clichés
  - Personal experience
  - Statistics
What the last slide says ...

- Select “topics” in a box format
- Brainstorm under each topic (be aggressive)
- Filter results of brainstorming
- Craft messages for each topic
- Establish middle
- Add in supporting points
- Review and modify as necessary
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