

COMMUNICATIONS

WHAT IS ESSENTIAL AND
WHAT JUST WASTES YOUR TIME?

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DEFINE 'COMMUNICATIONS'

[Your Organization] seeks a _____ to _____.

Groups of 4 or 5

Write a one-sentence headline for a communications director position

Do this individually, then try to combine them into a sentence that fits all members of the group

"[ORG] seeks a _____ to _____."

Debrief – we want communications to solve all our problems

DEFINE 'COMMUNICATIONS'

Marketing

Advertising

Brand strategy

Digital Strategy

Social Media

Writing

Fundraising

Public Relations

Media Relations

Graphic Design

Creative

Promotions

Groups of 4 or 5

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"[ORG] seeks a _____ to _____."

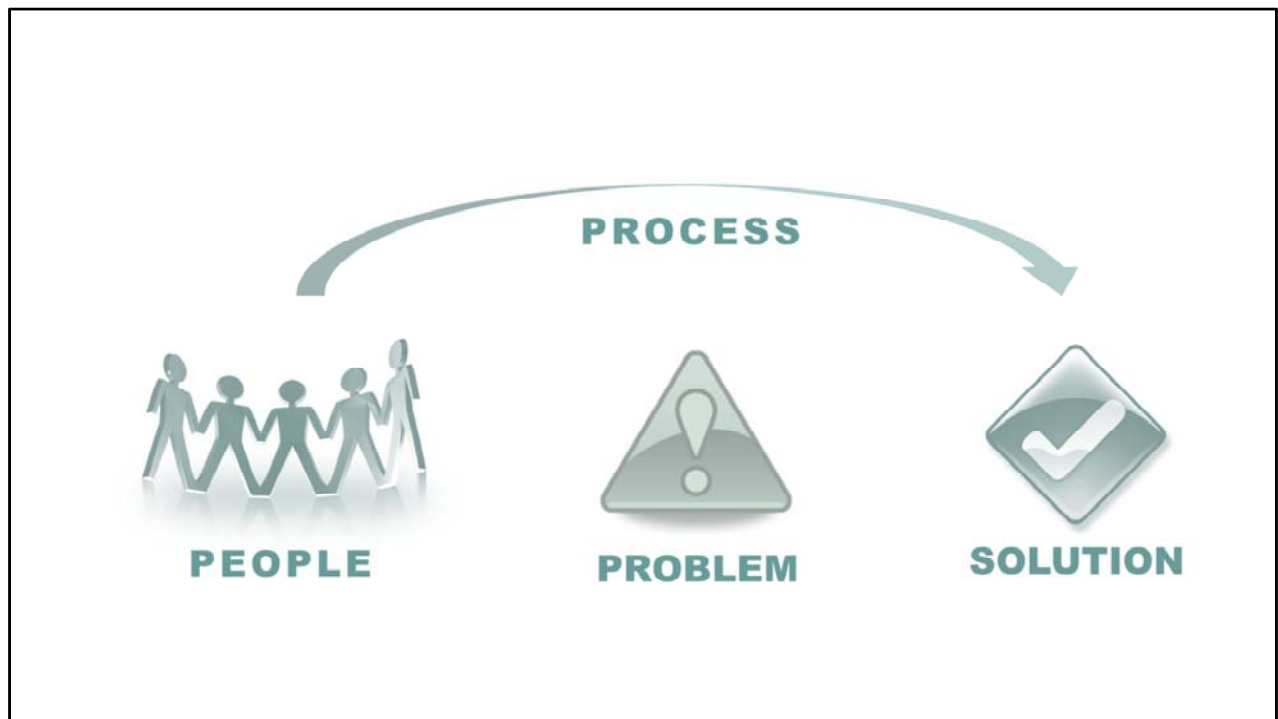
Debrief – we want communications to solve all our problems



Shaun introduction slide

COMMUNICATIONS

MARKETING





WHAT PROBLEM ARE WE SOLVING?

Volume of work



What PROBLEM are we solving?

Not that you aren't raising money you should, or that you aren't reaching your media exposure potential. These are symptoms of the real problem. The question is WHY are these things true?

- Too much activity for ED to manage (Volume of work)

- Inadequate internal talent to communicate effectively (Internal expertise)

- Nothing strategic about how you currently communicate (Strategy development)



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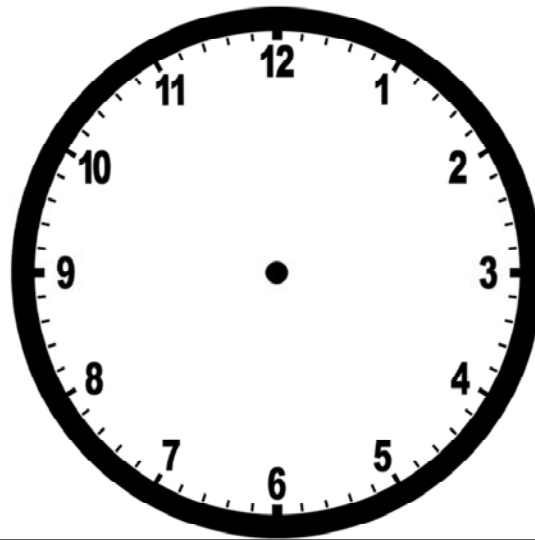
CONDITIONS FOR STAFF SUPPORT

- Work load can support full-time work, all year.
- You seek support developing AND executing strategy
- Addition of comms support is a value-add for whole org

If you don't have full time communications staff, you should consider it if these things are true.

- Addition of comms support is a value-add for whole org

Transactional



Improvement
and
Growth



FULL-TIME COMMS DIRECTOR

Daily writing tasks for mass audiences

Daily editing of public-facing messaging

Audience identification / segmentation

Campaign development and execution*

Media relations*

* If the volume of work warrants

Things you should rely on staff support to do:

- Daily writing tasks for mass audiences (speeches, donor asks, newsletters, press releases)
- Daily editing of outward-facing messaging
- Campaign development and execution, if campaigns are frequent (sequencing of campaigns, audience segmentation, message tailoring)
- Media relations, if frequency warrants it (proactive pitching, on the record, background)



CONSULTING SERVICES

Strategy development
Message platform development
Creative / Design
Crisis Planning / Reputation Management
Media strategy, targeting, materials*
Campaign execution*

* If the work is incidental

Things you should rely on a consultant to do:

- Strategy development (You want an external party challenging you on strategy)
- Message platform (When developed solely internally, they can get lost in jargon)
- Creative / design (Good design work is easy to find, but hard to employ full time)
- Media strategy, targeting, materials (if these tasks are incidental, use a consultant)
- Campaign execution (If it's an annual campaign, not all year long)



CORE COMPETENCIES

Ability to write and speak persuasively

Creative thinking

Storytelling

Understanding of key audiences

Goal setting

These are the things ANY internal staff that is doing communications needs to be able to do:

- Ability to write and speak persuasively
- Creative thinking (outside the box, the “what if we did...” person)
- Storyteller (gets how stories shape mindsets, and how public narratives shape issues)
- Understanding of key audiences that will move the needle for you (what is it you want people to do, who are those people, where do we find them, how do we mobilize them)
- Ability to set goals and measure against them



GOALS SHOULD BE...

- ...under your control
- ...reflective of growth from previous year, campaign, etc.
- ...realistic given your size, scope, reach, etc.
- ...aspirational, but meaningful.



COMMUNICATIONS RESULTS

Laser-focused on specific audiences for specific purposes
Messaging and materials reflect your unique space in the field
Measuring progress toward specific goals
Brand, materials, campaigns look and feel professional
Fully prepared for an attack on your reputation or brand

If you're doing it right, your organization will be characterized by these results.



WHAT'S WORTH DOING?

Brand positioning

Message Platform

Look, Feel, Tone

Audience identification

Audience-specific strategies

Reputation Assessment / Crisis Planning

Event planning*

*if you have to do this internally



WHAT MIGHT WASTE YOUR TIME?

Media Relations

Advertising

Reactive communications

Certain social media channels

Over-strategizing

Consider if these things are strategically indicated given your mission, vision, and audience.

- Media relations (strategize which is most important to you – earned, owned, paid)
- Advertising (what's the goal of spreading your brand?_
- Reactive communications (if you are focused only on how to insert yourself into dominant storylines, you will always be playing catch-up)
- Certain social media channels (should make sense depending on your brand goals)
- Over-strategizing (you can't predict everything, that's why you need good talent)

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