RAISE Texas Summit 2023
MAR 2 - 3 at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas
CONNECT TO EFFECT: BUILDING AN EQUITABLE FINANCIAL ECOSYSTEM FOR TEXANS
Strength-Based Communications Training Session
Today’s Agenda

Section 1: (3:30-4:00) 30 mins
What does “strengths-based” even mean?
● Definitions
● Group exercise

Section 2: (4:00-4:45) 45 minutes
● Individual exercise, Q&A / discussion
● Improving planning & process

Section 3: (4:45-4:55) 10 minutes
● Q&A & survey
Section 1

Definitions, Examples, Exercise
When you understand your strengths, you can move from a position of simply surviving to thriving.

- Dr. Byron McClure
How you talk drives how you raise...

It shouldn’t be taken for granted.

Strength-based messaging:

● Relies on impact via first-person stories supported by data

● Informs and connects your audiences to your mission

● Emphasizes collaboration and flexibility

● Leading from strengths means you’re leading the conversation not responding
Arguments vs. Arguments: What's the Difference?

...and how you don’t.

Deficit thinking and language hurts.

Deficit-based messaging:
- Centers what an individual, group, or community needs (and therefore currently lacks)
- Focuses on problems to be fixed
- Can perpetuate stereotypes and misinformation
Our award-winning program is designed to help troubled and at-risk youth ages 14 to 17 and young adults from 17 to 21 years. We didn’t design this course for serious juvenile offenders, but rather to be an early intervention for teens who may have started down a self-destructive path, but who have not yet burned any vital bridges.
At Food Bank, we know that hunger is not just an individual experience; it’s also a community-wide symptom of unequal access and barriers to employment, education, housing and health care. That’s why our work to build community connections that help everyone access nutritious, affordable food is so important. And that work is most effective when people like Elisa are in the lead — those who have faced hunger and know what it takes to build stronger communities.
Let’s get to work

Rewrite Description 1: 5 minutes
Share Examples: 5 minutes
No Fake Flowers

- We aren’t making problems go away by using different language
- We’re challenging ourselves to move from charity work to systems work
- We’re challenging ourselves to find and explain our place within larger systems
Section 2

Improving your org’s communications
Your Baseline Value Proposition Exercise
Exercise

Define your value

- Open a blank document
- Answer these three questions in three simple sentences maximum each:
  - What does your organization do?
  - Who does your organization work for?
  - Why is your organization best positioned to do this work?
Questions to Ask

- What makes us unique?
- What are our organization’s strengths?
- How do we use our strengths to get results?
- How can we reframe challenges to be seen as exciting opportunities?
- What meaningful measures would indicate that we are on track to achieving our goals?
- What meaningful stories bring our data to life?
- What resources are needed to implement our most vital projects?
Planning & Process

Tips and Tools for Success
Communications Strategy

• I know.
• But it’s important.
• You need a North Star
• Communications should help you achieve your organization’s goals
Business Goal:
- Gain 5% overall increase in funding in one year.

Business Objective:
- Increase donations from individual donors by 10%

Communications Tactics:
- Add fundraising requests to monthly newsletter
- Share link to donate via social media
- Add donation link to all social media profiles
- Create 3 videos to share on social media
Business Goal:
- Gain 5% overall increase in funding in one year.

Business Objective:
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Communications Goals:
- Increase awareness of mission and impact to donors.
- Increase attendance to annual fundraiser.

Communications Objectives:
- Earn 50% increased engagement* from monthly donors in one year.
- Increase traffic to donation page by 25% annually.
- Sell 5% more tickets to annual fundraiser.

Communications Tactics
**Business Goal:**
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**Communications Objectives:**
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**Original Communications Tactics:**
- Add fundraising requests to monthly newsletter
- Share link to donate via social media
- Add donation link to all social media profiles
- Create 3 videos to share on social media

**New Communications Tactics:**
**EMAIL:**
- Send fundraising emails to top donors focused on fundraising goals, impact, invitations for site visits (*cadence, reporting*)
- Introduce email referral program to help existing donors invite new donors in their network
- Develop emails from beneficiaries, board members, leadership
- (*and yes*) Add fundraising request to monthly newsletter
**Communicate with Purpose**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>How</th>
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<td>Why are you communicating?</td>
<td>What do we want to say and to whom?</td>
<td>How will you reach your audiences?</td>
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Social Media

Use it or lose it.

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<th>Social Media</th>
<th>Twitter</th>
<th>LinkedIn</th>
<th>Instagram</th>
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<td>77% of nonprofits worldwide have a Twitter Profile. 21% tweet less than once weekly, 18% tweet once daily, 18% tweet one tweet every other day.</td>
<td>56% of NGOs worldwide have a LinkedIn Page. 68% post less than once weekly.</td>
<td>50% of NGOs worldwide have an Instagram Profile. 30% share less than once weekly.</td>
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Streamline what matters.

01. Plan
What is your most important message every month or every quarter? Plan for the entire year - this is your drumbeat content.

02. Develop.
Write the content for each of these priority messages in advance. Organize yourself in a spreadsheet or use a social media planning tool like Buffer or Hootsuite.

03. Execute.
Revisit the content so that you’re relevant and consistent with changing times and new information.

04. Measure.
What worked well? What didn’t? Why not? Develop some theories to test about your content and test them in your next planning session.
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<th>Give</th>
<th>Connect</th>
<th>Learn</th>
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<td>How often are users landing on your donate page? How clear is the donate CTA?</td>
<td>How easily can users find your email newsletter and/or social channels to follow your brand? How many options do people have to stay in touch?</td>
<td>Do people visit your blogs, reports, or media pages? How prominent are these pages? How often is content added?</td>
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Less is more.

**01. Plan**
What parts of your website are static, and what parts are in need of updating. Create a calendar and process internally that matches data collection with website updates.

**02. Develop.**
Think about website content as your home base. This is about what users need and want to know, married to what you want to tell them.

**03. Execute.**
Manage your editorial calendar with strict allegiance. Add content to your site regularly in the form of blogs, media updates, and impact data.

**04. Measure.**
Where are users going on your website most often? How are they getting there? Why do you think they’re going there? Create theories and implement ideas to test.
Less spam, more results.

**Smart Lists**
Make lists that make sense for your organization. Perhaps by donor level or geography or interest area.

**Relevant Content**
We all know the difference between a valuable email we look forward to reading and then the others. The key here is finding out what's valuable and interesting to your audience segments.

**Integrated**
Remember that calendar we started with? Email has to be part of that planning. All of these channels have to work together for your audience to get it.
Inbox inventory.

01. Plan
What are your audience segments and what do they care about? Plan your content by putting yourself in their shoes.

02. Develop.
Write emails in a way that’s tied to your brand voice but still allows for skimming and quick comprehension. Develop your sending cadence per audience.

03. Execute.
Once you have your email plan and schedule, be sure to send those emails consistently. This gives you the space to test and evaluate your performance.

04. Measure.
Email platforms allow you to gather and analyze data from best time to send to click reports to A/B testing. If this is new to you, start small by learning the definitions.
You need a bigger toolkit.

- Project Management: Asana
- Design: Canva
- Email: Mailchimp
- Donor Management: Bloomerang
Tools Don’t Solve Problems.

- Team needs to think through the what, how, and why for tools to be effective
- Make your operating dollars as effective as possible
- Measurement is the key
- Relieve yourself from the chaos
Questions?
D. Gandhi Communications

Let's Get To Work.

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