

SAY SOMETHING WORTH TALKING ABOUT.





Strategic Communications

Headquartered in Raleigh

B2B and B2C Clients

Everyone deserves to be understood.

Make the complex, simple.

Smart. Helpful. Trusted.



TODAY'S GOAL

Share best practices and techniques for
successful message delivery and media
interactions

OPPORTUNITY

- Build awareness.
 - Clarify a position.
 - De-escalate a situation.
 - Create understanding.
 - Build goodwill and brand affinity.
- Prepare for inevitable.
 - Build confidence.
 - Connect with audiences.
 - Tailor messages.
 - Create consistency.

Prepare & Control

- 1. Do your research.**
 - Outlet, reporter, etc.
- 2. Think through the format and the setting.**
 - What's possible and comfortable?
- 3. Allow for time to prepare and practice.**
 - Anticipate questions and plan answers.
- 4. Serve as a resource.**
 - Provide supplemental material.

Key Messages

Key Messages

The most important three points.

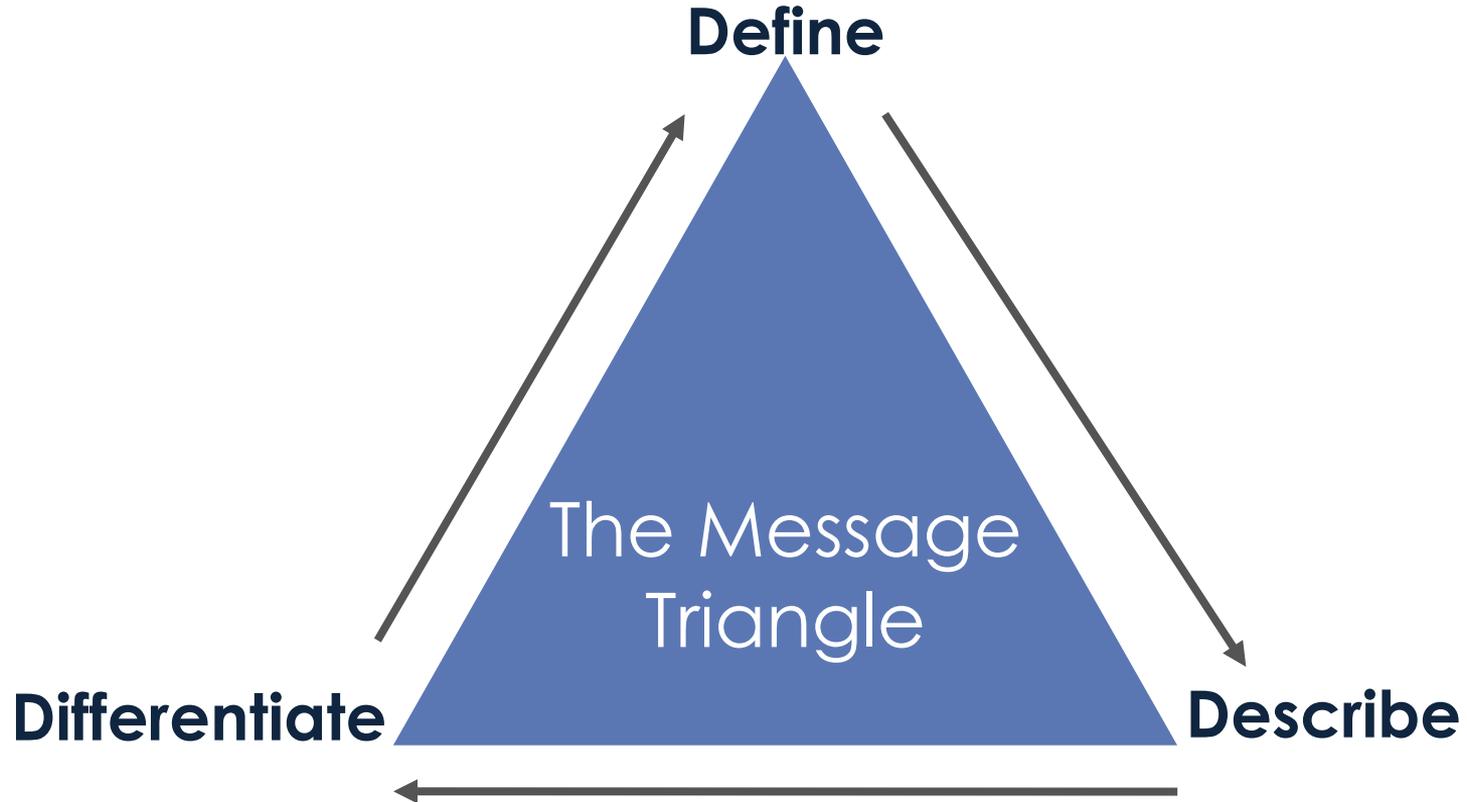
Short, simple and memorable.

Tailored to the audience.

Don't wait to be asked the "right" question.

Incorporate your messages whenever possible.

Key Messages



Best Practices

Best Practices

DEMONSTRATE EXPERTISE

Provide specific facts and figures.

Keep it uncomplicated.

Use descriptive language. Tell a story.

SPEAK CONCISELY & SUPPORT CLAIMS

80% of impact results from how you speak, not what you say.

Answer the question first; give background or examples second.

Best Practices

USE LAYMAN'S LANGUAGE

Be prepared to explain the basics.
If you use technical terms or acronyms, define them.

PROTECT REPUTATION

Don't speculate.
Stay positive.
Don't provide proprietary information.
Don't talk about competitors or opposition.

Best Practices

TAKE CHARGE & KEEP CONTROL

Be okay with silence.

Don't feel pressured into instant responses.

If you're asked more than one question, pick one to answer.

Don't repeat a negative or hostile question.

Best Practices

"NO COMMENT" IS A NO-NO

Saying little is better than saying nothing.

It's perfectly acceptable to refuse to answer.

If you don't know the answer to the question, say so.

NOTHING IS "OFF THE RECORD"

Treat all time spent with the media as an official interview.

Answer questions cautiously.

If you don't want it reported, don't say it.

Offhand comments are fair game.

Best Practices

BODY LANGUAGE

Keep your movement and facial expressions in check.

Place your hands in your lap or on the table.

Use hand gestures if natural but stay within personal space.

VOCAL CUES

Inflection. Pace. Pause. Project, don't protect.

Best Practices

PREPARE & PRACTICE BEFORE (AND FOR) EVERY INTERACTION

Train and practice at least once a year with all spokespeople.

Use mock scenarios for awareness and improvement.

Identify issues, watch and practice to improve.

Develop tailored key messages, allow for personalization.

Anticipate questions, prepare answers and rehearse.

Set and manage expectations.

Control Techniques

Control Techniques

- Repetition
- Counting down
- Flagging
- Active bridging
- Soundbites

5

Repetition

REPETITION EQUALS RETENTION

- You can't repeat your key messages too often.
- Emphasize names, dates, key facts.
- Look for opportunities to move beyond "I" or "we."



Counting Down

STATE A QUANTITY & COUNT THEM

- Alerts the audience of your agenda.
- Helps you stay on track.
- You are less likely to be interrupted.
- Provides natural breakpoints in the conversation.



Flagging

EMPHASIZING & PRIORITIZING KEY POINTS

- The most important point to remember is...
- I've talked about a lot of things today. I think it boils down to these three points...
- This is the bottom line...



Blocking & Bridging

THE QUICKEST WAY TO SAY WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY

- I hear what you're saying, but the facts are...
- Here's an even tougher question...
- Thanks for bringing that up, however, the real focus should be...
- If I may, let me pick a more important point...
- It's our policy to not discuss that, but I can tell you...



BE QUOTABLE & MEMORABLE

- Short, declarative sentence.
- Seven-12 seconds in length.
- Get the most important point across first, then expand with additional short soundbites.



Wrap Up

Remember...

- Prepare.
- Take control.
- Know and use key messages.
- Adopt a bridge.
- Adopt a flag.
- Study & practice.

Q&A