

Communications Issues

A Community Service of Harley House Consultants Inc.



Issue 22

Messages that Stick

Introduction

Considerable time is invested in formulating and obtaining approval of key messages for communications strategies and products (speeches, news releases, advertising, print and electronic media). The challenge is to write a message that sticks. A message that sticks is a message that is:

- Interesting
- Understood
- Remembered
- Believed
- Retold

I heard it from a friend of a friend

We have all heard an urban legend story. They tend to start off with; I heard it from a friend of a friend. These urban legends work because they are naturally sticky, just like conspiracy stories. The oldest class of naturally sticky messages is the proverb – a nugget of wisdom that often endures over centuries and across cultures.

If we understand what makes messages naturally sticky, we would be in a better position to draft better messages.

The Six Principles of SUCCES

There are six principles to the formulation of better messages:

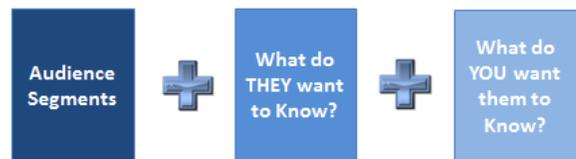
1. Simplicity
2. Unexpectedness
3. Concreteness
4. Credibility
5. Emotions
6. Stories

Applying the SUCCES template to messages as they are drafted helps the writer adopt a more systematic approach to creativity. Research has shown that highly creative ads are more predictable than uncreative ones. Adopting templates in message formulation leads to more effective messaging.

Audience Profiling

We all know the importance of being aware of what our listeners care about so we can tailor messages for them. However, this approach does not place enough emphasis on communicating the organization's priorities. Adopting an audience profiling and packaging template is a simple but effective means of meeting both the organization's and audience's objectives.

Audience Profiling and Packaging



EQUALS = Messages that Stick

To aid communicators in developing messages that stick, Harley House Consultants has developed the “**De-Mystifying Messages**” course. During this one-day course on March 25th, participants are introduced to a series of tools that assist in drafting messages that will resonate with target audiences, while at the same time meeting the needs of senior managers and central agencies. By adopting these approaches to message formulation, participants can improve the effectiveness of their communications messages and increase the rate of message approval.

For more information about how to draft messages that stick:

- go to www.harleyhouse.com,
- click on: [De-Mystifying Messages](#),
- email Dale Harley at dale@harleyhouse.com or
- call 613-882-5684.