

Communications Issues



A Community Service of Harley House Consultants Inc.

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Will you measure up?

Introduction

More open and transparent communications from government – we all knew that was coming with a Liberal victory in the last federal election. It is going to affect media response through the “unmuzzling” of scientists and experts; advertising; ATIP; and much, much more. It’s already happening all around us and I bet you can already feel the change.

But another emerging “approach to government” theme being underlined by this new Government of Canada (I almost wrote “Trudeau Government” – old habits die hard) could soon be affecting how all leaders in the federal communications community have to work in order to succeed.

Ministerial Mandate Letters

It’s not hard to find if you’ve read the new ministerial mandate letters.

Each of the new mandate letters has two parts; specific requirements for the addressee, mostly drawn from campaign promises, and several paragraphs of boilerplate hitting key themes every representative of the government will be expected to live by. These are not long documents, so to make the cut for repetition in all 30 public mandate letters means it’s important, and it will be done.

“I expect that our work will be informed by performance measurement, evidence, and feedback from Canadians. We will direct our resources to those initiatives that are having the greatest, positive impact on the lives of Canadians.... I expect you to...develop effective measures that assess the impact of the organizations for which you are answerable.”

It’s not necessarily targeted at you as a communications manager, but believe me, it will affect you.

Performance Measurement

Can you prove the value of what you do through performance measurement? And will you be able to show how the relevance of your work is changing to meet the requirements of this new era of Canadian government?

If history is any gage, the extreme cuts that communications shops endured through the DRAP and other recent expenditure reduction exercises say we still can do a whole lot better at proving the worth of our work.

And in the new federal communications world where less effort to control and management every media enquiry will be required or even allowed, are you staring at another round of “rightsizing” because you are apparently doing less or what you do is less important?

Don’t leave it to chance

Get in position to tell your story and clarify the value of the work you perform.

That doesn’t mean creating and collecting books full of statistics or outsourcing expensive evaluations of the performance of every announcement and program.

It does mean however taking the time and making the effort to build a smart performance measurement approach and narrative, or if you have one already, tuning it up to let your bosses know the changing value of the work you perform.

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“At Harley House Consultants Inc. we believe that effective communications involves meaningful, constructive and thoughtful engagement with internal and external stakeholders. You have to be strategically positioned to provide timely, complete, honest, open and sincere information about the policies, programs and services of the Government of Canada.”

For more information about how to improve the effectiveness of your consultation and communications strategies,

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