

10 Fearless Communications Tips for Nonprofits

1 So What?

A good news reporter answers this question in the lead paragraph of the story. Many nonprofits mistakenly assume that everyone understands the implications of their work, or the negative repercussions that could occur if they do not do their work. Connect the dots.

2 Lead in through a person.

Show the need through one person, rather than through one million people. If the problem is too large, people won't give. If the problem is personalized through the story and photo of one person, they will.

3 Keep it positive.

Rather than talking about what your organization is doing to reduce suicide, tell them the ways in which your organization is working to get people into therapy so they will feel happier.

4 Use facts and figures.

Tell people where their money goes and the results that are being achieved.

5 Use visual language.

Help people "see" the solution by using words that bring context. An example: If we recycled all the materials that could be recycled this year, it would be equivalent to taking 10 million cars off the road.

6 Eliminate jargon.

Health and human service organizations and educational institutions are notorious for using jargon or acronyms to communicate. Use layman's terms so that the public can understand the issues and your organization's unique solutions.

7 Unify messaging across the organization.

Make sure everyone from the CEO to the interns can explain the most compelling messages of an organization in a clear and concise way.

8 Become a politician.

Know what you want to say and say it, even if you aren't asked directly. You have a short window to get your message across. Don't wait to be asked.

9 Know what you don't want to say.

Understand the tripwires your organization faces and be prepared to avoid them, pivot around them, or have compelling answers to difficult questions.

10 Be fearless in your communication.

Fear is a sign to double down and speak up. If you are afraid of speaking about issues of race or economic inequality, then speaking about race or economic inequality is your mandate.

Nonprofits are charged with solving some of the greatest issues we face in society, from climate change to mass incarceration, poverty and hunger. They need to speak up, loudly and clearly, if they are to obtain the funding to do their critical work.

For more information about Fearless Communications, visit www.teakmedia.com