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Building Bridges with Community Leaders and Influencers

This document summarizes key strategies discussed during the September 15, 2022, workshop on using trusted communications tools and approaches to engage community leaders and influencers. It builds on workshop content through additional tips and tricks requested by local health department representatives participating in Year 2 of NACCHO’s Rural and Frontier Local Health Department COVID Workforce Capacity Building Project

A Collection of Vocabulary, Worksheets, Strategies, and How-To’s— Don’t Start from Scratch, Start Here!

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# Communications Vocabulary

*Below is a list of nice-to-know communications terms that may come in handy when interacting with the press or other communications teams.*

* **Clips:** A prepared list of stories that are of interest or relevance to an individual or organization
* **Holding Statement:** Pre-approved language that can be given to the press if they call
* **Audience:** The person or people you want to communicate with
* **Google Alerts:** A free content detection and notification tool offered by Google that sends email alerts to subscribers to sum up the activity around search terms and present new results
* **Fact Sheet:** A one-page document that provides basic information on a specific topic in an easy- and quick-to-read format
* **Talking Points:** A set of clear, easily remembered phrases that outline a proposal, project, or idea
* **Landscape Analysis:** A very basic set of audiences and channels to reach them that are relevant for your particular activity (e.g., finding key audiences to reach and how to reach them with what message)
* **Off the Record:** Whatever the journalist is told cannot be reported
* **Not for Attribution:** Whatever the journalist is told can be reported so long as it is not attributed to the person who said it
* **FAQ / RTQ:** Frequently asked questions (FAQ) / response to questions (RTQ) – a resource that outlines anticipated questions from audiences on a particular subject with given responses. Generally prepared in advance of an announcement.
* **Media Avail:** Press teams’ jargon for a “press conference”
* **Channel:**A system or method that is used for communicating with other people (e.g., email, fax, PTA meeting)
* **Channel Mapping:** An exercise to identify key audiences and the channels most effective to reach them
* **Out-of-Home:** A type of advertising that people interact with outside of their homes (e.g., bulletin board, public transit)
* **Infographic:** A representation of information in a graphic format designed to make the data more easily understandable at a glance
* **Press Release:** A written or recorded communication directed at members of the news media for the purpose of announcing something ostensibly newsworthy. Often used as the “official” statement that other communications products like social media messages or speeches refer back to

# Communications Mapping Tools

## Audience and Channel Mapping Tool

**Core** **Message:** *What information do you need to relay to your audience(s)?*

**Summary of changes/ask/materials:** *What information/request are you asking of your audience(s)?*

Definitions for the table below.

* **Audience:** The person or people you want to communicate with
* **Channel:**A system or method that is used for communicating with other people (e.g., email, fax, PTA meeting)
* **Communications Product:** The chosen medium to send the information

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Audience | Channels | | | | Communications Product/Output |
| *Ex: Schools* | *Ex: School officials* | *Ex: PTA meetings* | *Ex: ESL teachers* | *Ex: Emails / Staff Inservice* | *Ex: Social media message* |
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## Trust Mapping Tool

**Community Leader/Influencer Group:** *Who is your audience?*

**Situation:** *Where are they when they are receiving the information? What else is occurring at that time or in that space?*

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**Associations:** *What is the message being sent associated with (e.g., certain people, places, ideas, political views, companies)?*

**Cultural Frames/Schema:** *What are the broad values that will frame the reception of your messaging (e.g., religious belief systems, national belief systems, ideas like “good people work hard” or “parents know what is best for their children”)?*

**Physical Signals:** *What are the physical sensations people are going through at the time of receiving the information (i.e., if people are tired, busy, hungry, they are less likely to be receptive to the message you are trying to send)?*

**Emotions:** *How are people feeling, in general and about the topic of your message, when they are taking in the information?*

# Communications Strategies

## Strategies for Mitigating Conflict

The LARA technique was created from and informed by social work, conflict resolution, and mediation as a way to engage in conflict empathetically and invite diverse perspectives in an effort to create shared meaning. It builds respect and common ground between people in conversation, allowing you to explore your differences more openly and honestly.

LARA stand for:

* **Listen** carefully.
* **Affirm** a feeling or value you share with the speaker. This not only makes the person feel heard and understood, but also builds common ground between you.
* **Respond** directly to the concerns or questions the speaker has raised.
* **Ask** questions or add information. Open-ended questions help you gain a better understanding of the other person’s perspective.

When using the LARA technique, use phrases such as…

* “I sense that you feel…”
* “I agree with what you said about…”
* “Why do you think you reacted that way?”
* Use “I-statements” to frame your responses

## Strategies for Building Trust

The goal of trusted communication work is not to build agreement or compliance directly, but build the relationships needed for trust between parties. *Below are some Do’s and Don’ts when trying to build trust:*

**DO…**

* Go where information is already trusted
* Maintain a single place for all information to remain available
* Address rumors directly
* Set and communicate timelines
* Emphasize authentic connection
* Name realities directly (including emotions)
* Use leading practices for safe messaging
* Be creative about where you are putting your messages

**DON’T…**

* Give in to “explain and defend”
* Expect to be trusted
* Assume people have seen/read/understood past materials
* Assume “official channels” are the only place people are getting information
* Force similarity or credibility
* Assume saying nothing will have no impact
* Use an anonymous email, group, pronoun

# Helpful How To’s

## How to Set up a LinkedIn Profile

To join LinkedIn and create your profile:[[1]](#footnote-2)

1. Navigate to the [LinkedIn sign-up page](https://linkedin.com/reg/join).
2. Type your first and last name, email address, and a password you'll use.
   1. **Note:** You must [use your true name](https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/28422) when creating a profile. Company names and pseudonyms are not allowed, as we explain in our [User Agreement](https://linkedin.com/static?key=user_agreement).
3. Click **Join now**.
4. Complete any additional steps as prompted.
5. For pro tips and tricks to create a strong LinkedIn profile, see this [link](https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/a554351/how-do-i-create-a-good-linkedin-profile-?lang=en).

Learn more about:

* What to do if you get a message that states that your [email address is already registered](https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/5930)
* [How LinkedIn can help you](https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/111663)
* [Sign in and out of your account](https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/3061)
* [Close your account](https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/63)

## 7 Things You Can Do Today to Improve Your Official LinkedIn Presence

1. Confirm you are not using your personal email address as your public contact information
2. Set a custom URL instead of the one LinkedIn assigned (likely first-last-345682346)
3. Update your portrait and banner photos
4. Update at least your last 3 titles, with accurate dates and locations
5. Update/confirm your education entries
6. Identify 1-3 non-profits to follow
7. Follow each of your colleagues in your office, at NACCHO, and from your partner network

\*Bonus: Share a (non-political) article you read recently with 1-2 sentences of comment on why it matters to you, your job, or public health!

## LinkedIn Tips and Tricks

1. For help setting a custom URL for your LinkedIn profile, see the following link:
   * <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/a542685/manage-your-public-profile-url?lang=en>
2. For help updating your portrait and banner photos, see the following links:
   * Portrait Photo: <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/a541850/add-change-edit-or-delete-your-linkedin-profile-photo?lang=en#:~:text=Click%20on%20your%20profile%20photo,to%20change%20your%20profile%20photo>.
   * Banner Photo: <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/a568217/add-or-change-the-background-photo-on-your-profile?lang=en>
3. For help updating your LinkedIn profile information (e.g., titles, education), see the following link:
   * <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/a546603>
4. For help following others/other organizations on LinkedIn, see the following link:
   * <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/a524326/follow-unfollow-or-mute-people?lang=en#:~:text=Click%20the%20My%20Network%20icon,you%20now%20follow%20the%20person>.

## How to Set Up Google Alerts

To keep in-the-know about what is being circulated on the internet on a topic or person, including your name, or your local health department’s name, you can set up a Google Alert to automatically send you an email with every new result on your requested topic. See instructions on how to create, edit, and delete a Google alert below.[[2]](#footnote-3) For more information on Google alerts, see this link [here](https://newsinitiative.withgoogle.com/resources/journalism/fundamentals/lessons/google-alerts-stay-in-the-know/).

### Create an Alert

1. Go to [Google Alerts](https://www.google.com/alerts).
2. In the box at the top, enter a topic you want to follow (e.g., your name, the name of your LHD, the name of a community leader or influencer)
3. To change your settings, click **Show options**. You can change:
   * How often you get notifications
   * The types of sites you’ll see
   * Your language
   * The part of the world you want info from
   * How many results you want to see
   * What accounts get the alert
4. Click **Create Alert**. You’ll get emails whenever we find matching search results.

### Edit an Alert

1. Go to [Google Alerts](https://www.google.com/alerts).
2. Next to an alert, click Edit Edit.
3. If you don’t see any options, click **Show options**.
4. Make your changes.
5. Click **Update Alert**.
6. To change how you get alerts, click Settings Settings and then check the options you want and click **Save**.

### Delete an Alert

1. Go to [Google Alerts](https://www.google.com/alerts).
2. Next to the alert you want to remove, click Delete .
3. **Optional:** You can also delete an alert by clicking **Unsubscribe** at the bottom of an alert email.

1. LinkedIn Profile instructions from: <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/2964/signing-up-to-join-linkedin?lang=en> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Google Alert instructions from: <https://support.google.com/websearch/answer/4815696?hl=en>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)