**Finding Your Message Strategic Worksheet**

We will be identifying issues, building framework developing messaging documents, and then creating live content that works in this content.

# 1) Identifying Issues

It’s important to get to your organization’s or campaign’s key issues.

Anyone working connected to the organization or campaign should know them and why they are important. It’s OK if you have a pantheon of issues but you should know them, rank them, and then build content and brand around them.

**We highly recommend getting to 3 main issues that you want to be the focus for at least a few months.**

You will need to score each of the issues you are thinking about and use that to distill your top 3.

**Resonates:** Is this an issue that people in community already have on their minds?

**Topical:** Is this issue likely to appear in broader media over the next few months or will you be yelling against the wind?

Yes there can be value in being a stand out but that takes entirely different content and organizing theory.

**Understandable:** Is this an issue that can be boiled down to share graphics and tweets?

**Actionable:** Is there action like petitions, calls, tweets people can engage with around the issue?

Score each issue 1-5 with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. Total the score into the Score Column

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Resonates**  | **Topical**  | **Understandable** | **Actionable** | **SCORE** |
| Issue 1Gun Violence Reform | 3 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 17 |
| Issue 2Charter Schools | 2 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 11 |
| Issue 3Climate Change | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 8 |
| Issue 4Removal of specific item from local park  | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 19 |
| Issue 5Electoral Reform | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 12 |
| Issue 6Early Vote  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Issue 7 |  |  |  |  |  |

# 2) Build Issue Framework

Now that you have narrowed down to what you think are issues that resonate the next step is to expand the framework of why this issue, why now, why your organization or candidate, and the theory of or path to change. Don’t let any of these be assumptions having them in writing will make messaging and content creating better and more clear.

**Why this issue?**

What makes it so important?

What is the community impact?

Do you have stats?

**Why now?**

Be able to answer why these issues should be at the forefront of issues?

Why is it more important than other issues? (This is real because making it a key focus means you are deciding this)

What makes it pressing?

**Why you/ this organization?**

Why are you uniquely qualified to champion this issue?

What sets you apart?

What is the opposition to you and your leadership here?

**Theory of or path to change**

How is change achieved?

How can people engage?

How will working with you lead to change?

# 3) Develop Messaging documents

Each issue should have it’s own messaging document but the language between them should feel unifying. There should be similar themes based on the archetype and draw language from there. The documents should include key phrases, two sentence description of the problem, and an expanded narrative.

**Key phrases:**

This should be the key framing words that should be used anytime talking about the issue. The should appear and reappear in all content. They should be woven into as many tweets as possible, Facebook, posts, video commentary, emails, blogs, graphics, etc.

**Two sentence description:**

Taking the key words there should be several examples of two sentence descriptions of the problem. Similar to the key phrases these should appear with some repetition in content over time. These descriptions though should not be written in a way that they need to work together. The should all be able to stand alone in a paragraph or social media headline and make sense.

**Expanded Narrative:**

Write out a multi paragraph or two of content. It’s a great way to take this work and also make actionable into a blog, email, etc. This draft should serve as an easy to model framework to use for future emails, blogs, other long form content on the issue.

# 4) Content Execution

Now that the there is an archetype, clarity on why these issues, and message frameworks that should all make its way into live content. All of this work is building on premises that this is content and the framing will resonate with people. But it’s important run it all through the engagement cycle.



**Engagement Cycle**

1. Brainstorming & Planning
2. Execution
3. Engage
4. Impact
5. Feedback

**Brainstorming and Planning:** Combine goals of content with messaging and issue framework.

**Execution:** Draft and publish the content across different mediums.

**Engage:** This is the views, opens, clicks, likes, and actions taken.

**Impact:** Are targets responding or goals being meet?

**Feedback:** By using analytics to see what is and what isn’t resonating with people. Is there something to refine or rework? Work through that and update messaging documents as needed.

**+**

**Repeat,** take the feedback draft new content, publish, and reflect until the issue is changed!