

Plan Your

2020 Comms Calendar

January 15, 2020

Agenda

- Introduction
- Program
 - Defining your audience
 - What belongs on your comms calendar?
 - Mission-focused messaging
 - Yearly themes
 - Quarterly story search
 - Monthly topics
 - Weekly habits
 - Daily maintenance
- Questions

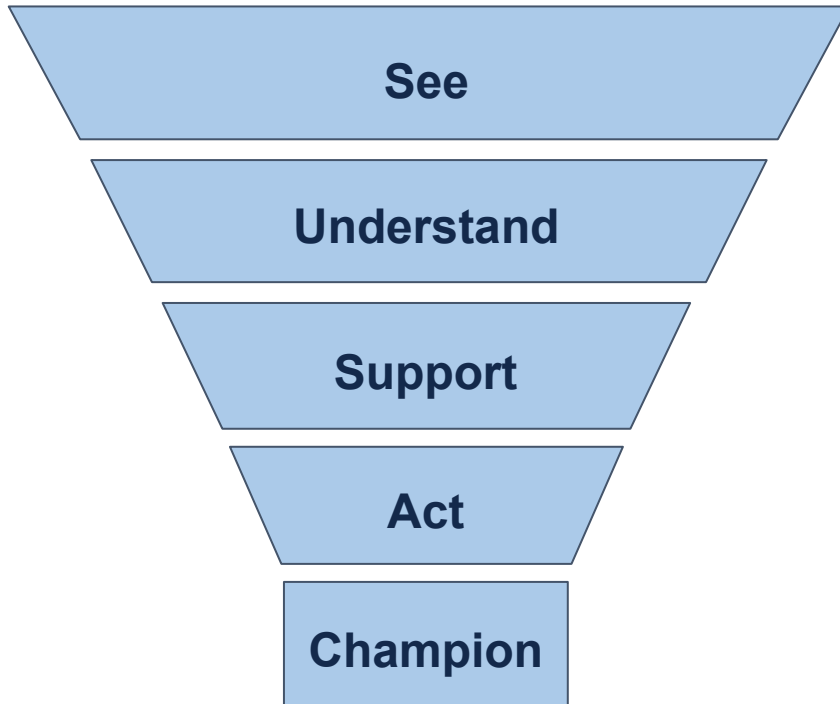


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Defining your audience

Stakeholder Engagement Funnel

Turn community members into collaborators



- Your comms help move stakeholders to action
- Stakeholders make a decision or take an action to move between levels
- You have to make the call to action clear & compelling
- Desired action will vary based on stakeholder



Stakeholders

- **Veterans, service members, family, caregivers, and survivors**
- **Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs)**
- **Military Service Organizations (MSOs)**
- **Benefits Providers**
- **Educational Service Providers/Organizations**
- **Employment Service Providers**
- **Financial Service Providers**
- **Healthcare Providers**
- **Housing Services**
- **Legal Services**
- **Volunteer/Nonprofit Organizations**
- **Government Representatives**



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**What belongs on your
comms calendar?**

Special Dates

- **Holidays**
 - **Federal holidays**
 - **Considerations for inclusivity around religious holidays**
- **Days of remembrance**
- **Months of recognition or celebration**
- **Deadlines for major opportunities**
- **Dates of major events for the collaborative *and* all partners**



Types of Comms



Speeches, announcements, and talking points



Social media posts



Emails and e-newsletters



Blogs and articles



Snail mail and printed literature



Types of Comms

Date	Type	Story	Audience	Sender	Call to action
1/15/2020	Email Newsletter	Meet our team	New webform subscribers	Beth	Volunteer with us!
1/15/2020	Social post	Equine therapy program	All	Example Veterans Collab	Register today!
1/21/2020	Blog	How Example Veterans Collab Tackled Seasonal Unemployment	All	Andy	Join our employment working group!



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**Mission-focused
messaging at
every stage**

Real-world comms lesson 1

Strive Partnership, Cincinnati

“Focus on the ultimate goal you seek to achieve”

- Strive started by talking about adults involved with the effort
- Transitioned to talking about the kids:
 - “Better results in education for every child, every step of the way, cradle to career”
- Strive Partnership noted increased understanding and excitement following this shift



Real-world comms lesson 2

United Way of Greater Cincinnati

“Don’t assume everyone understands or supports your cause”

- You and your partners are informed and invested
- Be prepared to share an entry-level introduction to what you do

“Just when you’re getting tired -- people are finally getting it so you have to double down”

- Prepare to re-engage stakeholders
- Progress updates



Yearly

Mission-driven comms start with your organization's "why"?

- Together with your collaborators, pick one to three themes for the year
- Your theme is the *thread* that unites all the stories and content you share through the year



Quarterly

Take the time to surface success stories

- Ask collaborative partners to share their wins (even small ones)
- Get permission to tell stories as required
- Try to elevate an inclusive mix of stories so your constituency feels connected to them



Monthly

Each month, take a moment to plan for the month *ahead*

- Ask yourself:
 - What holidays or special days are there?
 - Does this month honor a particular identity?
 - What major events do we have this month?



Weekly

Pick a time to draft, proof, and schedule the week's content

- Refer to your theme and topics when drafting
- Remind contributors to send photos, quotes, and other updates (you don't need to create all the content alone)
- Remind your collaborative partners to amplify any important messages



Daily

Monitor regularly and engage

- Check the news to see if anything has happened that will impact your stories
- Monitor, monitor, monitor
- Engage with your audience authentically
 - Reply to emails
 - Like and/or respond to people's comments



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**What questions do
you have?**