



# Plan Your 2021

## Communications Calendar

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# Agenda

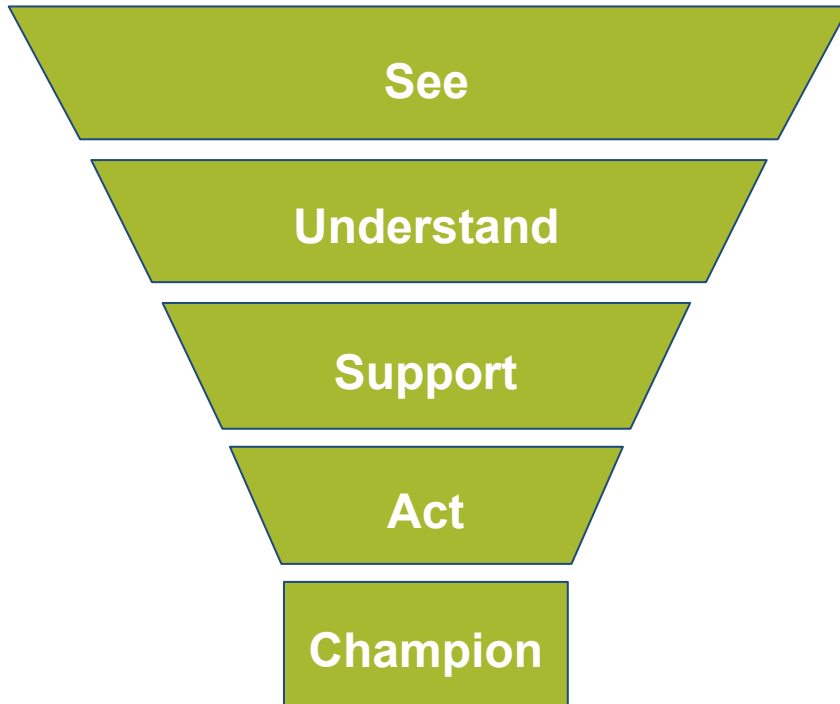
- Introduction
- Program
  - Defining your audience
  - What belongs on your comms calendar?
  - Mission-focused messaging
    - Yearly themes
    - Quarterly story search
    - Monthly topics
    - Weekly habits
    - Daily maintenance
- Questions

# 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

**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**



**Mission-focused  
messaging at  
every stage**

# 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



**What questions do  
you have?**