Regional Course on Communication and Advocacy for Agricultural and Rural Statistics

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# Create Persuasive Messages

UNITED NATIONS
SIAP
Statistical Institute for
Asia and the Pacific

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## The policy advocacy strategy 10 steps framework

* Part 1: Advocacy Issue
* Part 2: Advocacy Goal
* Part 3: Decision-makers and Key Influencers
* Part 4: Decision-makers' Key Interests
* Part 5: Opposition and Obstacles
* Part 6: Assets and Gaps
* Part 7: Advocacy Partners
* Part 8: Advocacy Tactics
* Part 9: Advocacy Messages and Messengers
* Part 10: Plan to Measure Success

## Learning outcomes
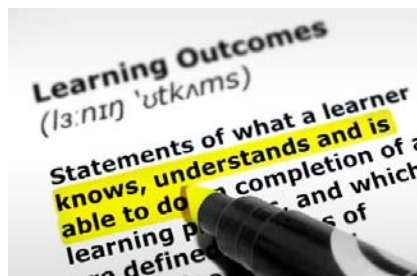


* Understand the importance of attractive and efficient messages
* Create attractive messages
* Use storytelling
* Identify potential messengers

## The 4 Elements of an Advocacy Message

A *message* translates your advocacy goal into a concise and persuasive statement about your objective that captures:

| | |
|---|---|
| What is the issue? | Why should the decision-maker care about the issue? |
| What is the proposed solution and its likely impact on the problem? | What do you want the decision-maker to do? |

## Example: sanitation



**What is the issue?**

80% of the population in country X doesn't have access to proper sanitation

**Why should the decision-maker care about the issue?**

Better health for the population and better environments

**What is the proposed solution?**

Give priority and increase the budget allocated to sanitation

**What do you want the decision-maker to do?**

Write to their political representatives

## Example of a Good Advocacy Message

* **What is the issue:** Subsidised food exports from rich countries drive small farmers in poor countries out of business. The European Union spends billions of euros to subsidise its agriculture.
* **Why should the decision-maker care about the issue:** Stopping subsidies to farmers in rich countries would help poor farmers work their way out of poverty.

## Example of a Good Advocacy Message

* **What is the proposed solution:** Our organization wants the EU to reform national and international rules governing food and farming. The subsidies that provide an unfair advantage to the richest farmers in developed countries must stop.
* **What do you want the decision-maker to specifically do:** Write to your MP now asking him to support the removal of these subsidies.
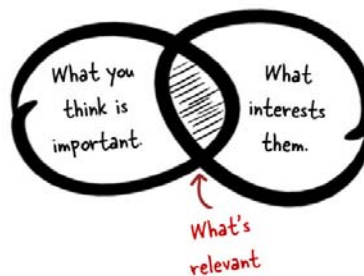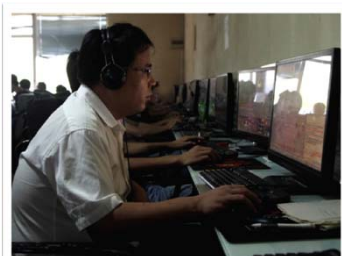
## Create a Message

Five W's

Who → What → When → Where → Why
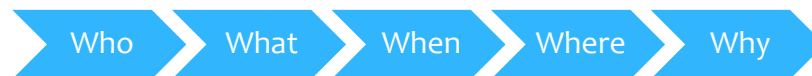
KISS > Keep It Short and Simple

What you think is important.

What interests them.

What's relevant

## KISS

**Long and Complicated**
Latest figures on information technology usage show that in the 1st quarter of 2014, two thirds of the Chinese population aged 16–74 used computers and the Internet, as in the previous year.

**Short and Simple:**

**Two thirds of Chinese adults used the Internet in recent months.**

## Create a Sticky Message

There is a common set of traits, which make the messages more likely to attract attention

| 1. Simplicity | Limit the idea to its essentials by excluding non-essential detail. |
|---|---|

**"Education builds the community"**

is a better message point than

"empowering young people to effect global change using holistic pre-professional programmes in local communities"

## Create a Sticky Message

There is a common set of traits, which make the messages more likely to attract attention

| 2.Unexpectedness | Use surprise to get people's attention and generate curiosity. |
| --- | --- |

**The Great Wall of China is the only man-made object that is visible from the moon.**



## Create a Sticky Message

There is a common set of traits, which make the messages more likely to attract attention

| 3. Concreteness | Explain ideas in terms of human action, using sensory information. |
| --- | --- |

**If the entire adult population of England turned off the tap while brushing their teeth, we could save 13 million buckets a day.**

**That's enough to fill 72 Olympic sized swimming pools.**

## Create a Sticky Message

There is a common set of traits, which make the messages more likely to attract attention

| 4. Stories | Tell stories that engage people's imagination. |
|---|---|

**You only use 10% of your brain.
What would happen if we would use its full potential …**

## Sticky Messages Are …

| 1. Simple | Limit the idea to its essentials by excluding non-essential detail. |
|---|---|
| 2. Unexpected | Use surprise to get people's attention and generate curiosity. |
| 3. Concrete | Explain ideas in terms of human action, using sensory information. |
| 4. Stories | Tell stories that engage people's imagination. |

## Not sticky!

**Are messages interesting or made interesting?**

**Not sticky:**

"The US Department of Agriculture recommends that a normal diet contain no more than 20 grams of saturated fat each day. According to lab results, the typical bag of movie popcorn had 37 grams."

## Sticky Message!

**Sticky idea**

A popcorn bucket at a movie theatre contains more fat than a bacon-and-eggs breakfast, a Big Mac and fries for lunch, and a steak dinner **combined**."
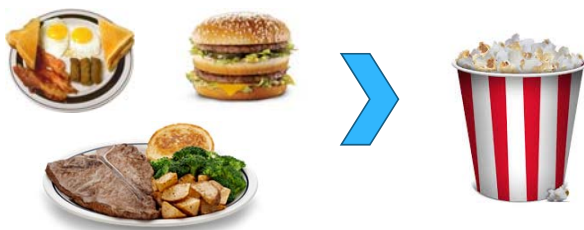
## Message Points

Message points say what you want your audience to act upon or learn: *"If nothing else, I want my audience to understand **this** after hearing my story."*
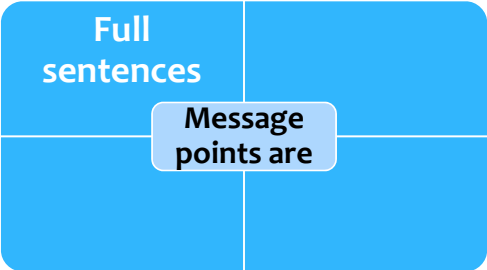
Message points

## Message Points

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**Full sentences**

**Message points are**

**"Our streets should be safe for our children"** is a good message point. **"Safety"** is not a key message.

## Message Points

Message points say what you want your audience to act upon or learn: *"If nothing else, I want my audience to understand **this** after hearing my story."*

| Full sentences | Statements |
|---|---|
| **Message points are** | |

**"The first step is to encourage community member to act"** is a good message point. **"What's our first step?"** Is not a message point, it's a question.

## Message Points

Message points say what you want your audience to act upon or learn: *"If nothing else, I want my audience to understand **this** after hearing my story."*
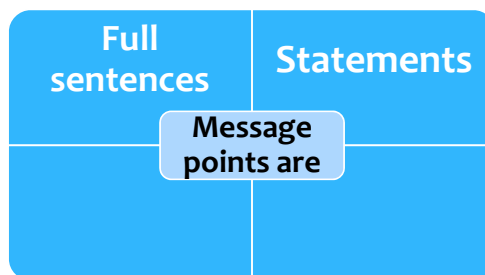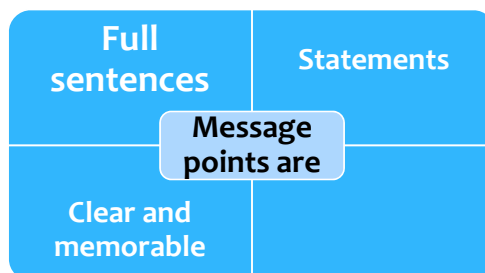
| Full sentences | Statements |
|---|---|
| **Message points are** | |
| Clear and memorable | |

**"Education builds the community"** is a better message point than "empowering young people to effect global change using holistic pre-professional programmes in local communities".
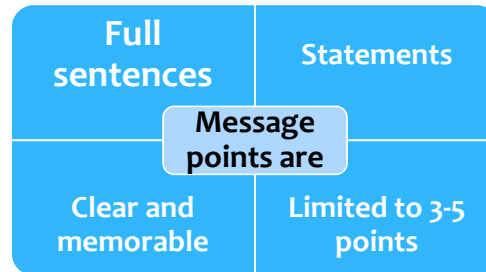
## Message Points

Message points say what you want your audience to act upon or learn: *"If nothing else, I want my audience to understand **this** after hearing my story."*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Full sentences** | **Statements** |
| **Message points are** | |
| **Clear and memorable** | **Limited to 3-5 points** |

If you try to cover seven important messages in a presentation, the audience will have trouble remembering and prioritizing them. In a media interview, it's doubtful you will have time to cover all seven.

## Magic Number is "3"

* Develop your story by determining **three message points** that you would like to convey to your audience.

* **Why 3**? communication research suggests that three is a basic organizational grouping that will help your audience remember what you say.

* Develop one message point for each of the following criteria:
    * Credibility.
    * Problem/situation.
    * Solution/action

## Storytelling

* Put your data or research output in a specific context
* Incorporate messages into your story
* Create emotions, transmit values, unify people around a common purpose
* Get people to act on just logic and reason alone

## Tips to Tell a Good Tale

o **Know your audience** –what are their needs and interests, what issues matter to them?
o Connecting by adding a **human element** to your story
o Appeal to **shared values** and beliefs
o **Be authentic** and speak from the heart
o **Be inclusive** and use 'we' and not 'I' , 'they', 'them'
o Feed your audience with the use of **metaphors, analogies** and make use of specific details
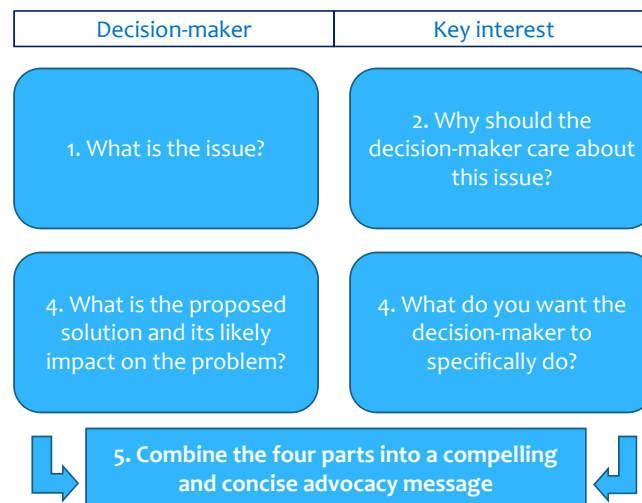o Bring your **characters to life** – appearance, occupation, department they work in

# Remember …

All four parts of your advocacy message should not be more than five to eight sentences combined and take less than three minutes to deliver

Capture the interest of your decision-maker first. Save any detailed facts, figures, quotes, stories and analysis that support your message for a follow-up discussion

# Crafting advocacy messages

| Decision-maker | Key interest |
|---|---|
| 1. What is the issue? | 2. Why should the decision-maker care about this issue? |
| 4. What is the proposed solution and its likely impact on the problem? | 4. What do you want the decision-maker to specifically do? |

5. Combine the four parts into a compelling and concise advocacy message

## Elevator Speech and Media Sheet

Situation

Audience Analysis

Story and
4 Message points

Expected
Questions

## Television Interview



* Prepare your message points
* Anticipate the questions
* Arrive early
* Be yourself
* Look at the interviewer
* Look your best

## Identify potential messengers

Who delivers your message is just as important as what you choose to say

**Leonardo Di Caprio**
**designated UN Messenger of Peace**



Address the UN Climate Summit in 2014
23 millions views on Youtube

**Beyonce**
**Ambassador of the World Humanitarian Day**



Performed "I was here" at the GA
10 millions views on Youtube

## Who can be a messenger?

* CEOs
* Celebrities
* Representatives of professional associations
* Technical experts from your organization
* Board members
* Scientists/researchers/academics
* Program beneficiaries
* Journalists

* Donors
* Voters/constituents
* Business leaders
* Government employees
* Politicians
* Farmers
* You!!!

## What makes a good messenger

* Messengers should be diverse.
* Messengers can represent a range of seniority.
* Messengers should be effective public speakers.
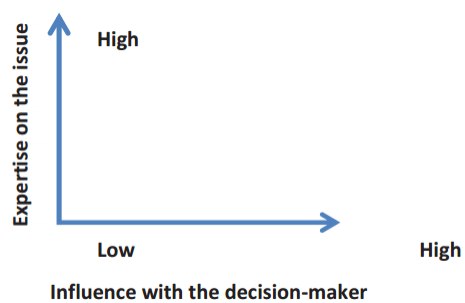* Messengers should support your advocacy goal.

## Roles of the messengers

* Influence with your decision-maker: He/she is someone to whom your decision-maker will likely listen.
* Expertise on the issue: Your messenger is informed on the issue and can speak about it easily.

## Group activity: identify advocacy messengers

Use a grid to plot the level of influence and expertise of 3 potential messenger in order to select your PRIORITY MESSENGER

Expertise on the issue

High

Low                                    High

Influence with the decision-maker

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# Top 3 Learnings?

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