

Gender Equity in Sport for Social Change

Workshop: How to create effective communication materials



What we will do today

This workshop will focus on how you can improve your communication materials by avoiding the most common mistakes NGOs make when communicating about their work.

*** this presentation is based on documents from Mission Minded
www.mission-minded.com

Most common mistakes NGOs make when communicating



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Mistake # 1

Thinking that your mission statement is your most important message and tells your audience everything about you

- Always remind people what you do and why it's important.
- Your mission statement doesn't tell your story.
- Use emotion to tell the story of how your agency makes a difference.

Mistake # 3

Thinking that people read your newsletters to hear what's going on inside you're agency

- Your audience wants to see proof that you are making a difference out in the world.
- Show **WHO** was helped and **WHY** it made a difference.
- Don't waste newsletter space with details about the administration of your agency.

Mistake # 4

Confusing features with benefits

- Features are what your agency does. Benefits are the solutions your agency provides to problems in society.
- Your organisation solves problems; talk about the problems you solve, and the impact you have, not the systems you have in place to do your work.

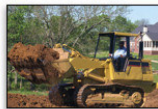
Features vs. Benefits

Profit world

People don't buy:



Minty fluoride



500 horse power S-blade



100% cashmere

People really buy:



A clean, kissable mouth



A pool to enjoy with family



A memorable valentine's day

NGO world

People do not support :

- a team of 60 Moroccan women in Amsterdam running and exercising together every week

People support:

- 60 Moroccan women able to stand up to violent relationships, able to get a job, able to go back to school and able to assure a better future for their daughters and sons.

Mistake # 5

Using photos that do not tell you about the work you do.



Mistake # 5 continued.....

Don't show:

- Group photos of your staff and Board
- Speakers standing at a podium
- People listening to a conference, workshop

Even though the people in the photo might be interesting and important, chose a photo for what it tells your audience.

Use photos of the people who benefit from your programs. If confidentiality is an issue invest photos of people who look like those you serve.

Use photos of action, faces & the difference you make with captions



Top girl scorers! Annie and Gioya have come back to the team after we built separate girls' shower and changing rooms.



"Malika avoiding a block at our last month's Rugby tournament. She and two of her teammates recently opened the first ever women-run café in the village"

Mistake # 6

Not writing good headlines and sub-headlines

Examples of typical nonprofit headlines (newsletters/ emails/ annual reports):

- Message from the Executive Director
- Program Spotlight- women and sport
- Organisation initiates its first program in rural areas
- The impact of our work

Tips on writing good headlines

***from Tom Ahern, Mal Warwick Newsletter*

“ First, write down the key points of your story. Do this fast. Don't try to polish. Then tighten it up as much you can.

It's almost impossible to write effective headlines without including a subhead. Subheads provide extra commentary and reveal twists in the story.

Don't bother chasing ultra-brief headlines. Face it: Unless your story is "Titanic sinks," you'll need more than a couple of words to tell your tale. And that's where the subheads come in: They allow you to expand.”

Mistake # 7

Letting an IT person (department) manage your website content

- Marketing and fundraising objectives should drive the look, feel, features and functionality of your site. Make things as clear, simple and compelling as possible for your audience.
- Fancy things like Flash animation can often detract from your message or the action you want site visitors to take.
- Although you can and should have more robust and detailed information on your web site than in a newsletter or annual report, your objective is still to show the results of your agency's work and make the ask for support.

Mistake # 8

Not developing a strong brand as an NGO

- Your logo isn't your brand
- Your mission isn't your brand

What is a brand and why is it important?

Brand is one of the most confusing concepts for nonprofit organisations to understand and implement.

A brand is your reputation and what you stand for.

Creates an affinity for your agency among your target audience, ensures loyalty, minimises competitive threats and help you survive negative press or public mistakes .

How to build a brand

Decide what best represents you, turn it into a consistent message and stick to it.

Think of how you want to be known (ex. grassroots, financially-efficient) and look for ways to always reinforce this distinctiveness and these values at every opportunity you communicate.

Create a visual identity (a logo, type font and a color scheme and a tagline, if you like) and stick to it also in all communication materials.

Repeat, again and again, with words, action, and images, the attributes of your brand.

Mistake # 9

Thinking that everyone is your audience

- Target your message to those most likely to respond to your work, and are pre-disposed to care about your mission.
- Know your audience. Do you have several types? What do they value? What do they care about?
- Make every communication from the point of view of your target audience.

Let's get to work!

Exercise- creating the cover story

- Brand feeling and values
- Headline and sub-headline (s)
- Photos
- Key message(s)