Strategic Communications

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Strategic & Crisis Communications

SERVING OHIO PUBLIC SCHOOLS · OSBA · SINCE 1955

Bruce Hennes, CEO

Crisis Management
Crisis Communications
Litigation Communications Support
Media Training

Thom Fladung, Managing Partner

When your school is on trial in the Court of Public Opinion...
You have a situation.
We have a strategy.

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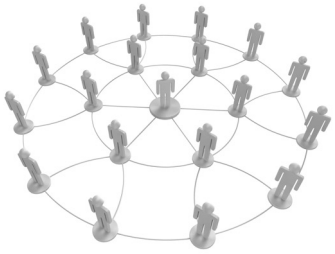
Lines of Communications



- Your Stakeholders
  - Parents, Students, Donors, Vendors, Taxpayers, Elected Officials, Key Business & Nonprofit Leaders
- Communicating with limited broadband
- Parents – we still need your help
- Keeping students & parents on-task

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Lines of Communications

- What are you doing <u>now</u> to communicate with your key stakeholders?

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Lines of Communications

- How often does the board get together?
- How does the board get together?
  - Sunshine laws?
- Who handles communications now?
- The "communications skill set"

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Stakeholder Communications

- Board/District communications with stakeholders
  - Website?
  - Email?
  - Social media?
- Transparency & timeliness
- Need for consistency across the board

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Stakeholder Communications

- **Is your messaging consistent across the board?**

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Using Email

With Broadband	Without Broadband
Illinois is extending its stay-at-home order to May 30. The state is talking about reopening industry-by-industry – and maybe company-by-company.	Illinois is extending its stay-at-home order to May 30. The state is talking about reopening industry-by-industry – and maybe company-by-company.
In Michigan, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer extended the state's stay-at-home order to May 15, and but also relaxed restrictions so some businesses can reopen.	In Michigan, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer extended the state's stay-at-home order to May 15, and but also relaxed restrictions so some businesses can reopen.
Ohio's stay-at-home order expired on May 1, and the state has begun its first phase in reopening its economy, called "Responsible RestartOhio" with sector-specific requirements for businesses to open.	Ohio's stay-at-home order expired on May 1, and the state has begun its first phase in reopening its economy, called "Responsible RestartOhio" with sector-specific requirements for businesses to open.

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Stakeholder Communications

- Reaching out regularly to stakeholders
- Department –specific requirements
- Post details “everywhere”

- Communicating about safety

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Stakeholder Communications

- Best Practices for Communicating About Safety
  - Honesty
  - Attitude & Confidence
  - Decision-Making
  - Empathy
  - Preparing for the future

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Communicating in a Crisis

The 3 V's

Villain
Victim
Vindicator

Communicating during a true crisis is different.

Communications Failures

1. Mixed messages
2. Information released late
3. Paternalistic attitudes
4. Not countering rumors in real time

Communication Steps Leading to Success

1. Execute a communications plan
2. Be the first source for information
3. Express empathy early
4. Remain open and honest
5. Update information regularly & consistently

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Communicating in a Crisis

Your messages to stakeholders in a crisis must be:

- Simple
- Timely
- Accurate
- Relevant
- Credible
- Consistent

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Communicating in a Crisis

Pitfalls to be avoided:

- Avoid jargon & technical terms
- Don't use humor
- Refute negative allegations without repeating them
- Don't assume you've made your point
- Avoid one-liners and clichés
- Discuss what you know – not what you think

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