



MESSAGING EXERCISE: BUILDING YOUR MESSAGE

Key Questions to Consider (Candidates):

- What issues are most important to the voters in this district?
- More specifically, what issues are the most important to those voters whose support I will need to win — those whose support I do not already have?
- What issues do I care about most and will I want to champion once I am elected?
- On what issues am I a credible messenger?
- What issues have been debated in previous elections in this district?
- Why would I be the best representative for this district?
- Why am I the candidate who is best qualified to understand the concerns of voters?
- What am I already known for that I may wish to build upon? What is my reputation?
- How am I different from my opponent?
- What obstacles related to my background or experience will I need to overcome? Should I proactively address them in my message?



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Key Questions to Consider (Elected Officials):

- What issues are most important to the constituents in my district?
- Are most constituents in agreement on these issues? If not, what issues are the most important to those whose support I do not already have?
- What objections to the policy/reform/issue do they raise, and how can these be addressed?
- What promises did I campaign on? What did I pledge to do once elected?
- On what issues am I perceived as a credible messenger?
- What are the outcomes of previous reform debates or similar initiatives in my district?
- How can I convey an understanding of the concerns of constituents in my district?
- What am I already known for that I may wish to build upon?
- How is this policy/initiative different from alternatives being proposed or opposing parties' initiatives?
- What obstacles related to my background or experience will I need to overcome? Should I proactively address them in my message?

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Key Questions to Consider (Civil Society/Advocacy Campaigns):

- What are the core issues that need to be addressed?
- What issues are perceived as the most important to those whose support I will need to win — those whose support I do not already have? This may be decision makers, potential partners, stakeholders, beneficiaries, etc.
- What issues does my organization/cause prioritize and how do they relate to the issues I identified above?
- On what issues am I/my organization perceived as a credible messenger?
- What issues have been debated in my country?
- Why is our organization addressing this issue? How is our advocacy campaign different than past initiatives?
- What are we already known for that we may wish to build upon?
- How is our reform agenda/policy/draft legislation, etc. different from the other alternatives? Why would it matter to our target audience if it doesn't succeed?
- What obstacles related to the issue/cause/organization, etc. will I need to overcome?
- What are the likely objections to the campaign and should we proactively address them in our message?