

Fundraising Communications 2

Crafting Your Message

Andy Brommel

Director, Communications Consulting

December 14, 2016

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Fundraising Communications Webinar Series, 2016-17

How do we **tell our story**
in a **fundraising** context?

Fundraising Communications Webinar Series, 2016-17

1

Defining Your
Case for Support

Oct 5, 2016

What are we
trying to
communicate?

2

Crafting Your
Message

Dec 14, 2016

How do we
express it?

3

Engaging
Volunteers
With Your Case

Feb 15, 2017

How do we get
our **volunteers** on
message?

4

Fundraising
Materials
That Work

May 10, 2017

What **materials**
do we need to
produce?

5

Campaign
Case Dev. &
Communications

Jul 12, 2017

How do we
convey a strong
campaign
vision?

Ask Questions!

*through GoToWebinar
or by e-mail*

We'll answer them in a follow-up video

Why Messages?

Making Messages

Building With Messages

Part 1

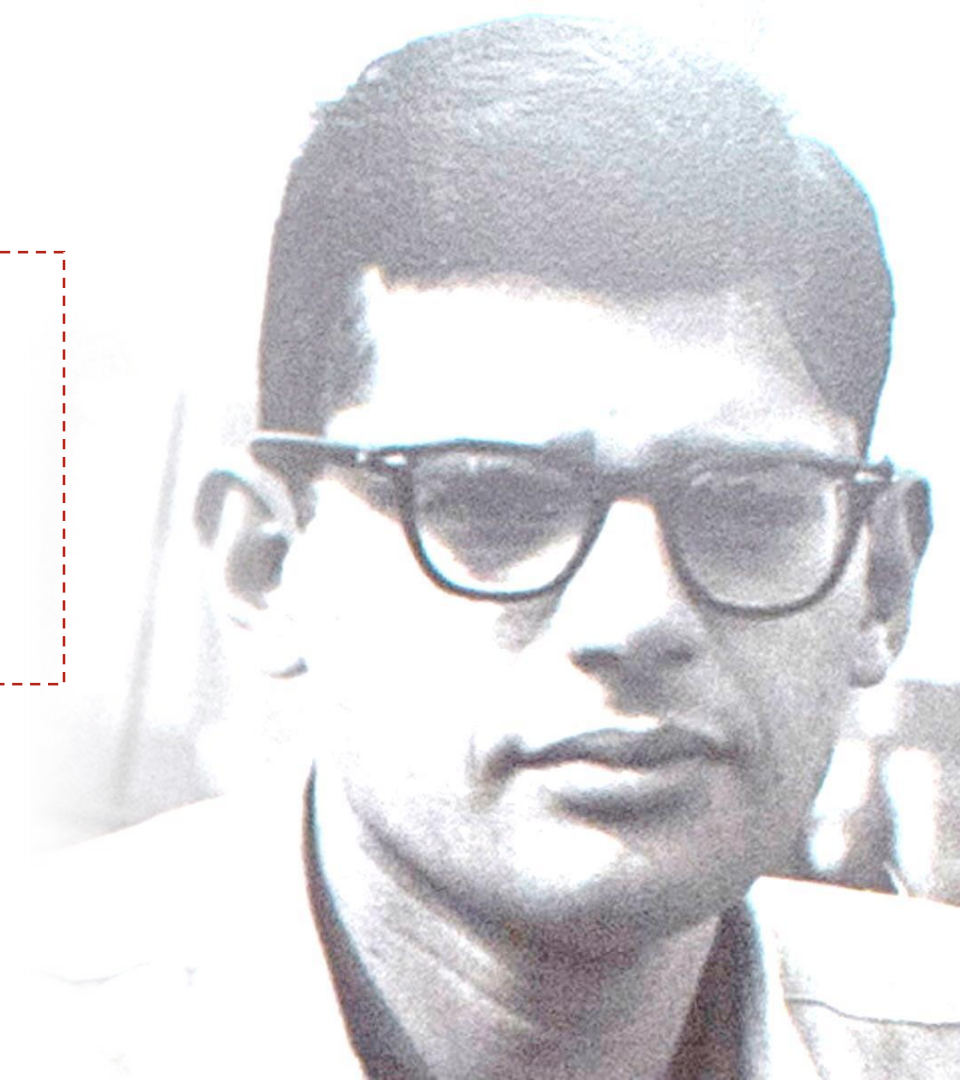
Why Messages?

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First thought,
best thought.

Alan Ginsberg



*First thought,
best thought...*



Think of an organization you have
personally supported.

Why should a person give money to that organization?

As quickly as possible, write down the major reasons
or contributing factors that come to mind.

Don't polish it up. Just write it how you would say it.

Food Pantry



Poverty on the North Side is actually way worse than you might expect.

Food Pantry has been in the community forever, and they're one of the most active food banks in the whole city.

They're starting to do some really cool new stuff to help people get out of poverty.

Planned Parenthood



They're the biggest defenders of women's
right to self-determination.

If they weren't there, no one else could
do what they do as effectively.

The political climate is very threatening,
so I felt it was important that I do something to help.

Urban Farm & Job Training Program



First and foremost, they grow healthy food for communities that don't have as much access to it.

They run it as a job training program for people from disadvantaged neighborhoods who don't have good opportunities—and they go on to get good jobs in food service and other areas.

So it's this ingenious and really effective way to take on two serious problems with one program.

Observations

Everyone listed 3-5 things.

Everything they said was pretty simple.

Some of them were pretty compelling.

If people can only
recall 3-5 things about
your case for support...



How do you make sure
they're the **right** things?

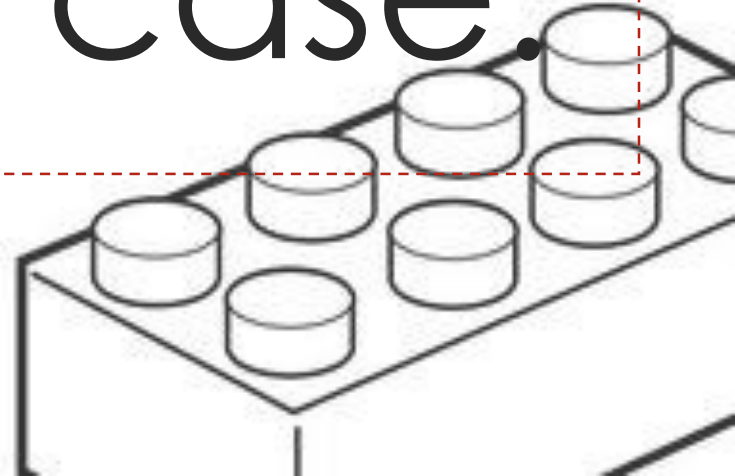


Messaging!

It's the **most overlooked** discipline
in fundraising communications.

It's the **cheapest** way to make
everything you communicate **better**.

Strong, well-defined messages
are the building blocks
of a strong case.



Your Case for Support:

It's the **set of messages**

So what is a **message**
anyway?



Why Messages?

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Part 2

Making Messages

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What is a message?

A message is
**a statement designed to
move an audience.**

A statement designed
to move an audience

Alzheimer's disease is the
defining public health challenge
of our time.

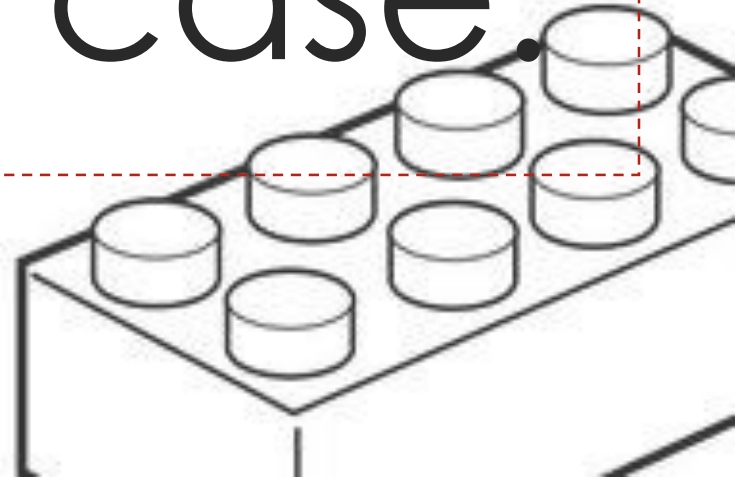
A statement designed
to move an audience

No child should miss out
on a great education
for financial reasons.

A statement designed
to move an audience

This campaign will
determine our future.

Strong, well-defined messages
are the building blocks
of a strong case.



If I started to write elaborately, or like someone introducing or presenting something, I found that I could cut that scrollwork or ornament out and throw it away and start with the first **true simple declarative sentence** I had written.

Ernest Hemingway



What makes a good fundraising message?

Makes a **compelling claim**

Creates **immediate understanding**

Works in **conversation**

Why Messages?

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A good fundraising message
makes a
compelling claim.

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To produce a mighty
book, **you must choose a
mighty theme.**

No great and enduring volume can
ever be written on the flea, though
many there be that have tried it.

Herman Melville



It all starts with **substance.**

Alzheimer's disease is the
defining public health challenge
of our time.

Push harder to get to the strongest claim.

Alongside our recent investments in capital and programs, we must also invest in our school endowment to ensure our strongest future.

The endowment is the most important investment we can make in our school's future right now.

Take a **position**.

We're building an orchestra for tomorrow.

The power of live music will never change,
but the times have—
and orchestras need to adapt.

Look for what's
interesting.

The media we have doesn't
support the conversations our
community needs.

The best messages make ideas feel **big**.

Healthcare reform is bringing a new focus on prevention, community health and affordability. For decades, we've been a leader in these critical areas.

American healthcare is going
where we've always been.

Why Messages?

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A good fundraising message
creates immediate
understanding.

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You want to write a
sentence as
clean as a bone.
That is the goal.

James Baldwin



Clarify.

We have always been recognized for our outstanding academic programs—yet we know that our extracurricular and co-curricular programs can be just as important in shaping our children's lives.

This campaign is about all the learning that happens *outside* the classroom.

One idea per message.

*(So what **is** the one idea?)*

The Annual Fund provides funding that supports a wide range of initiatives, including financial aid, faculty professional development, new program innovation, technology and equipment.

?

Your Annual Fund gift benefits every student, every day.

Your Annual Fund gift supports all the things we love most about our school.

?

Your Annual Fund is the most important gift you can make to benefit our students today.

Create a **framework** for understanding.

We're going to coordinate tens of thousands of small improvements that add up to a major impact on the whole ecosystem.

The best messages create **a-ha moments.**

Our citywide strategy is based on neighborhoods because neighborhoods are big enough to truly matter, yet small enough to truly change.

Why Messages?

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A good fundraising message
works in conversation.

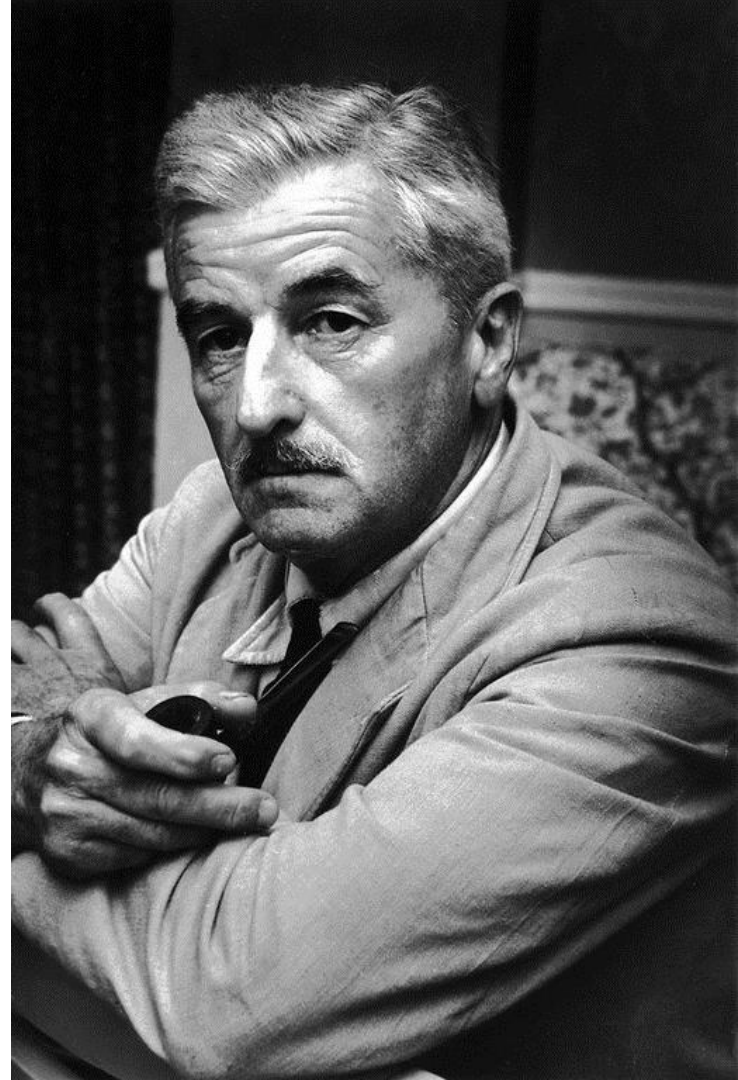
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Faulkner on Hemingway:
He has never been known to
use a word that might send
a reader to a dictionary.

Poor Faulkner. Does he really
think big emotions come from
big words?



Don't be afraid of
simple language.

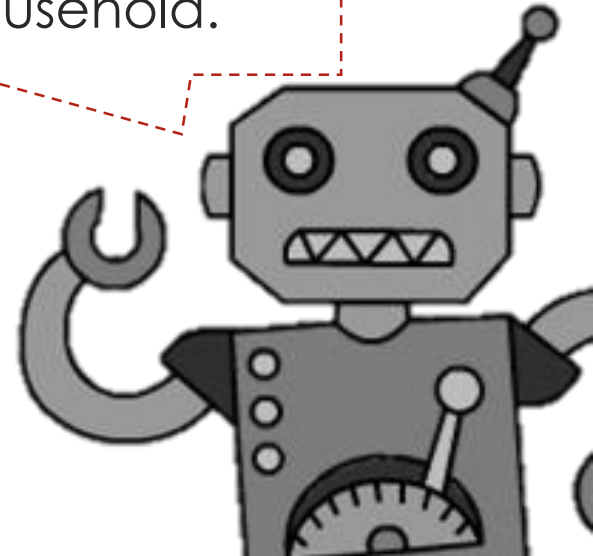
This isn't our last chance—
but it's our best chance.

Would a **human** say it?



No child should grow up in a food-insecure household.

No child should have to wonder where her next meal is coming from.

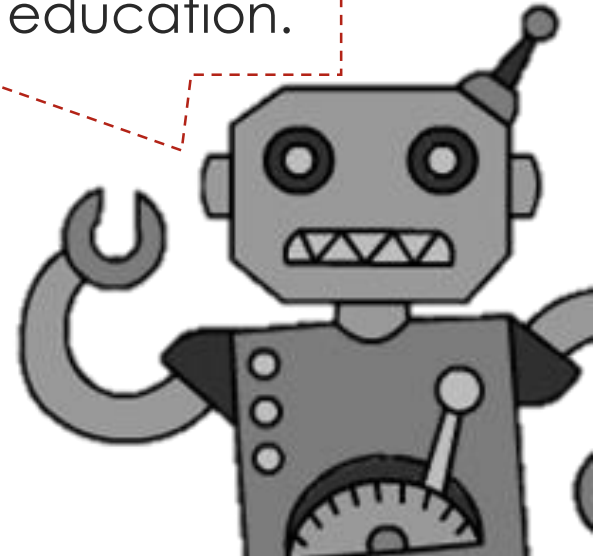


Nouns and **verbs**, my friends.



We are committed to a child-centered, transformational, holistic, experiential education.

?



Try this one with your board...

One sentence to express why we matter.

You get one adjective, max.

No commas.

Anything that makes
you overly conscious
of the language is
bad for the story
usually.

Flannery O'Connor



Why Messages?

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Part 3

Building With Messages

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Original Case Statement

According to Feeding America's Hunger in America study, there are over 100,000 food insecure individuals residing within ABC Food Bank's service area, representing an average food insecurity rate of 15.3%. This is well above the national average rate of 12.1% in 2015, and one third of these food insecure individuals do not qualify for federally funded nutrition programs. This leaves many families facing hunger and food insecurity with limited options of support, and forces them to make difficult choices every day between paying bills and buying healthy food.

Despite the significant need, our community lags behind similar metropolitan areas in the regular availability of donated food support through food pantries and food banks. The disparity is especially stark in the availability of healthy foods, fresh produce and meat—all of which require greater resources to provide, transport, keep and distribute. While many neighborhoods and communities in our region have access to local food pantries, their support is frequently limited and variable.

Through this campaign, ABC Food Bank will build on its strength to provide much greater support to its regional network of food pantries, working to ensure that individuals throughout all areas of our community can count on their local food pantry to supply fresh, healthy food multiple times each week. With a visionary investment of \$30 million over the next three years, we will take great strides in reducing our food insecurity rate, bringing it below the national average and well below the average for our peer cities.

This is the largest investment in our future that ABC Food Bank has ever made, and it will require the philanthropic support of our whole community.

Just the Key Messages

1

Hunger in our city is a far greater challenge than most of us realize.

2

Despite all of the need, we're far behind other cities in providing reliable food support for our families.

3

This campaign will transform our city from below average to a model for other cities.

4

We'll do it through the power of our network and partners to reach every neighborhood.

5

A vision this ambitious takes all of us.

Cheat Sheet for Your Board

1

Hunger in our city is a far greater challenge than most of us realize.

- Over 100,000 individuals at risk of hunger
- 15.3% of families--well above the nat'l avg (12.1%)
- 1/3 don't qualify for federal nutrition programs

2

Despite all of the need, we're far behind other cities in providing reliable food support for our families.

- Many neighborhood pantries only open 1 day/wk
- We meet 20% less of the need than other cities our size

3

This campaign will transform our city from below average to a model for other cities.

- Will bring us below the national average for hunger, and well below our peer cities

4

We'll do it through the power of our network and partners to reach every neighborhood.

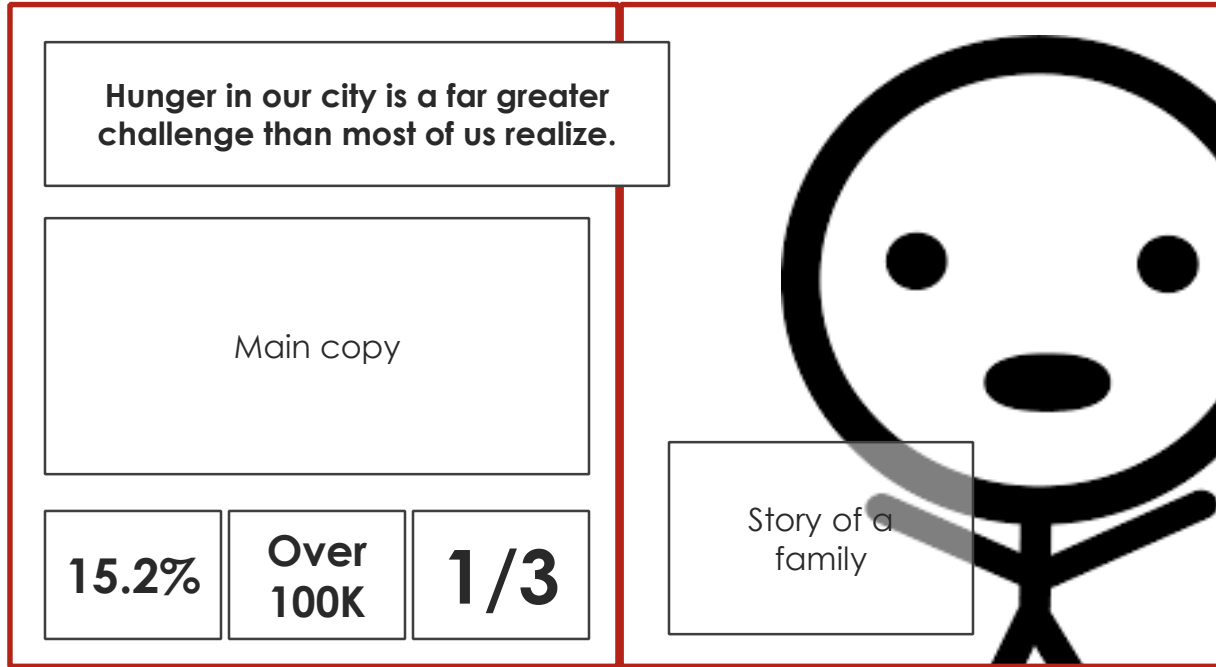
- 10M to double the capacity of our central facilities
- 5M to equip pantry partners to better serve families
- 15M to supply more food for the next 5 years

5

A vision this ambitious takes all of us.

- 30M private philanthropy goal

Brochure Layout



Video Concept



Why Messages?

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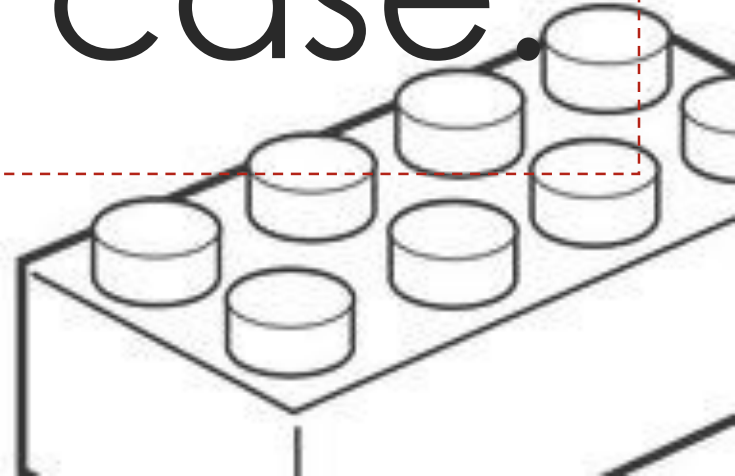
Building With Messages

Recap

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Strong, well-defined messages
are the building blocks
of a strong case.



What makes a good fundraising message?

Makes a **compelling claim**

Creates **immediate understanding**

Works in **conversation**

Words do not
live in dictionaries;
they live in the
mind.

Virginia Woolf



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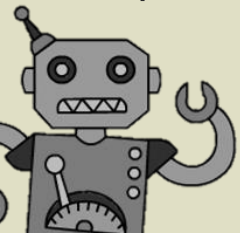
How do we
convey a strong
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Thank You

Andy Brommel

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