

## DEMOCRACY NARRATIVE + MESSAGING APPLICATION WORKSHEET

**T**his worksheet is designed to help create customized communications tools and resources that effectively persuade and inspire your stakeholders and audiences to take desired actions. **Part 1** will guide you in considering your messaging goals, the stakeholders and audiences who can best accelerate progress toward those goals, and your audiences' context(s) before developing messages and communications. These questions are evergreen and can guide any of your communications. In Part I, you may find that there are questions that you do not have the answers to. That's okay. Just detail what you know, or seek input from someone who might have insights into those questions.

**Part 2** offers a guide for developing a message framework that is relevant to your context and audiences, and provides opportunities for layering in the local examples, stories, and data that will bring the message framework to life.

### PART 1: Planning

The questions below can and should be utilized before developing any communication that leverages your messaging.

Once you have developed the first draft of your messaging (as outlined further in Part 2), you will want to review your answers to these questions and confirm that the draft reflects them — or refine the communication so that it will be more effective.

**1.1 Goal for your messaging:** What do you want your messaging to help accomplish, e.g., what changes in understanding and/or actions? (Your responses will inform the call(s) to action you will craft in Part 2.)

**1.2 Stakeholders and audiences:** Who is in a position to take the actions necessary to accomplish this goal? For a speech or conference, think about who will be in the audience.

**1.3 Communication channels/messengers:** What communication channel(s) will be most effective for reaching your intended stakeholders and audience? Who is the most effective (i.e., trusted) messenger for this communication? Or, who is the person already identified as the messenger (e.g., the person delivering a speech or presentation)? What are the strengths and limitations of the communication channel?

Communication Channels	Messengers

**1.4 Stakeholders' and audiences' values:** Based on what you know from research — or can surmise from experience — identify which of the following core values are likely to be most motivating to your prioritized stakeholders and audiences.

✓	CORE VALUES	✓	CORE VALUES
	FREEDOM		SAFETY/SECURITY
	FAIRNESS		HONESTY
	FEARLESSNESS/STRENGTH		PROSPERITY
	REPRESENTATION		FAMILY/BELONGING
	RESPONSIBILITY		

## PART 2: Message Development

This worksheet is designed as an example of how to apply the narrative and message framework to a particular issue or communication you are crafting. In completing this worksheet, refer to the core message below:

This country was built on the **right** to **have our voices heard**, to **make our own decisions**, to be **treated fairly** by the justice system, and **to vote** in **free** and **fair** elections. These **freedoms** are at the heart of **our** democracy and **our security**. But they require **checks and balances** on power and government that is **open**, **honest**, and **responsive to the people**. **Our country** hasn't fully lived up to these **freedoms**. But, a **strong democracy isn't afraid** to admit that and **do the hard work** of **being better tomorrow than it is today**.

Using this core message for inspiration, use the tips below to craft a draft message framework for your use. You might wish to use color coding for your draft text to highlight the words and phrases that evoke the core values you identified in Section 1.4 above.

This worksheet can be used both generally and to address specific issues, including those at a local level. As you use this worksheet, think about stories and examples you can reference throughout that relate to people’s lives. Also, consider what language(s) or dialect(s) are most relevant to your audience.

In crafting your message framework, be sure to refer to the Guidelines for Effective Communication found on page 15 of this guide.

TIPS	CORE MESSAGE (the summary)
<p><i>What is the most important idea you want your audience to remember?</i></p> <p><i>Include it here, trying to be as clear and direct as possible, making sure to frame the issue in ways that are relevant to your audience.</i></p>	

TIPS	CHALLENGE
<p><i>How would you define the problem or challenge you seek to address? Think of the tangible ways this problem impacts your stakeholders and audiences.</i></p> <p><i>Describe the situation here in ways that would be relevant to your audience. Consider references to local examples, if relevant.</i></p>	

TIPS	SOLUTION
<p><i>How can this problem or challenge be resolved in ways that reflect the identified core values (e.g., freedom, fairness, honesty, etc.)?</i></p> <p><i>Think about describing the solution in ways that would be perceived as relevant by your audience.</i></p> <p><i>Be sure to reference things the government can/should do, as well as actions that people might take to be part of the solution.</i></p>	

TIPS	BENEFITS
<p><i>How would your stakeholders and audiences benefit from your proposed solution? Identify benefits that are both tangible (e.g., access to health care or housing) and intangible (e.g., promoting freedom or fairness, access to opportunity, etc.).</i></p> <p><i>Think about ways people would benefit both individually and collectively.</i></p>	

TIPS	CALLS TO ACTION
<p><i>What specific, tangible, and realistic actions can your stakeholders and audiences take, and/or what can they demand of their government to help manifest the solution described above?</i></p> <p><i>Consider actions that can be taken both individually and collectively.</i></p>	

Once you have completed your message framework, use it to inspire the content of your communication. You might find it useful to periodically review this worksheet and make adjustments or refinements over time, based on your use of it and response to it from your audiences.