

How do you identify and communicate your messages?

April 2013

Messaging is one of those things that always seems to need a little attention.

What is "messaging"? Simply put, it's a statement of what you're doing, why you're doing it, and how you bring value to the party.

Messages are both clear and easy: they clearly describe what your company does and are easy for everybody in the organization to understand and communicate. It's liberating to know who you are and why you're good at what you do.

In my first job out of college, all employees who worked with the public were trained to cover the organization's three to five most important messages in every verbal or written contact with potential customers. Everybody was on the proverbial same page. It was wonderful.

On the other hand, if a company describes itself as "a client-focused organization that provides excellent service and innovative solutions", it's hard to know if it's a swimming pool maintenance company or a public relations consultant. (Promise me that if I ever say something like this, you'll take me into a corner and remind me of the importance of clear messaging).

What are some ways to identify and communicate your messages?

1. **Be clear** and precise about who you are and what you do, avoid adjectives, and talk about the things that make you unique. Fit this information into three to five bullet points.
2. **Audit** your existing written and verbal communiques to see what you are saying about who you are and what you do (review your brochures, proposals, sales pitches, and the "who we are" page on your website). Make sure that what you say is consistent throughout the organization.
3. **Train** your folks on the messages. Help them understand the messages and feel comfortable saying them. Provide tools (pocket cards, fact sheets) to tell the story.
4. **Be an advocate** for your messages and do whatever you can (short of printing them on a T-shirt) to incorporate them into all of your communications.
5. **Revisit** the messages regularly to make sure they're up-to-date. If you offer a new service, make sure the messages are updated accordingly.

If you have questions or would like more information or examples of messaging, please email me (or call me at 210-601-4572).

All the best,

Gretchen Roufs

Public Relations, Public Involvement, Marketing Communications
Gretchen@GretchenRoufs.com
www.GretchenRoufs.com
Certified Small/Woman/Historically Underutilized Business Enterprise
DBE, HUB, WBE, SBE, ESBE

Feel free to pass this email along to others who might be interested.

© Gretchen Roufs. All rights reserved.