

MARTIN

Consistency Is Key

If you're making every effort to spread the word about your organization and the work it does, you probably have messages going out every day via several channels: email, social media, phone calls, flyers, community events and more. Having that blanket presence is important so you can reach as many current and potential supporters as possible. But covering a lot of ground does little good if you're not consistent with your messaging.

Start by thinking about all the points of contact you have with your audience. Now imagine each one is an actual person delivering that message as part of a program. How confused would you be as a listener to hear a speaker say something, only to have the very next one deliver conflicting information? That's why all of your communication channels need to work from the same playbook.

The bigger your organization is, the more opportunities there are to contradict yourself. Maybe it's a particularly convincing piece of data you want to share. Or a launch date for a new project. Or even something as seemingly ingrained in your culture as a mission statement. As soon as your audience reads or hears something that doesn't match up with what they already thought they knew, it gives the appearance of disorganization. If you struggle to keep your own information straight, why should they invest their time and/or money in you?

Fortunately, there are simple ways to avoid slip-ups. One way is a brand book or style guide that covers a variety of situations, whether it's how to refer to your organization or the colors approved for design purposes. You also can appoint a gatekeeper whose job is to review all messaging before it's sent. This individual should know all the ins and outs of your organization and have a razor-sharp attention to detail that won't allow small mistakes to get past them.

There are plenty of strategies available to ensure everyone is on the same page when it comes to communication. Find one that works for your organization so you can show your audience that professionalism is a part of everything you do.

