



# STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

CRAFTING A PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY THROUGH INTENTIONAL CHOICES

# TODAY'S AGENDA



- Announcements
  - Module one will be opened this weekend
  - Course Calendar will be updated
- What Strategic Communications means
- Debbie Davey's Flowchart
- MassDot Signs: Class activity
- Grammar Lesson: Negative/Positive Emphasis
- Homework

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# WHAT IS STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS?

AND WHY IT MATTERS



**DEAR MADAME:  
MORE PEANUTS, OR ELSE.  
STRATEGIALLY YOURS,  
SQUIRREL**

# WHY DOES IT MATTER?

- In Unit 1, we'll be crafting our professional identities through the development of specific documents: resumes, cover letters, and a LinkedIn profiles.
- These documents allow us to practice the idea of Strategic Communication and how it applies to technical communication.
- Remember: "strategic communication" means **persuasive communication**



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# STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS



# DAVEY'S FLOWCHART

SIMPLIFIED

## STAGE ONE

### **Identify the Problem**

- What is the problem that needs to be solved?
- What is the expected result? (goal)

## STAGE TWO

### Identify the Communicators

- Who are the messengers?
- What are their ethos? (credibility/authority)
- Who is responsible for the message? (owners)
- Who approves the message?
- Who reviews the message?

## STAGE THREE, PART ONE

### Identify the Audience

- **Sponsors:** Leaders/influencers who support the message
- **Champions:** Anyone with a vested interest in message
- **Early Adopters:** Anyone who supports the message in its early stages
- **Impacted:** Anyone who will be most affected by the message
- **Resistant:** Anyone who resists the message

## STAGE THREE, PART TWO

### Assess the Audience

- Level of influence on message
- Willingness to support the message
- Main audience: most closely interested in message
- Other audiences: other/casual receivers of message



## STAGE FOUR

### Develop the Message

- Stage Four is the result of Stages One through Three

Primary:

- Identified the problem & goal
- Identified the needs of communicators & audiences

Secondary:

- Identified any additional messages needed to support main message
- Identified the needs of communicators & audiences



## STAGE FIVE

### Potential Q&As

- Groups: audiences from Stage 3
- For each audience: identify possible questions and generate answers



## STAGE SIX

### **Specify Type & Method of Communication**

- Groups: audiences from Stage 3
- For each audience: identify the most effective type & method of communication and build your message through those platforms

## STAGE SEVEN

# Specify Performance Evaluation Methods

### Data Collection:

- Method/tool
- Timing frequency
- Participants

### Data Analysis:

- Patterns
- What worked
- What didn't work
- What can be reused



## STAGE EIGHT

# Identify Ongoing Messaging

## Continuing Communications

- Ownership: who is responsible
- Frequency: how often
- Persistence: what messages continue



## STAGE NINE

### **Unification: the SC Action Plan**

Understanding what needs to be communicated, who your audiences are, how best to communicate with them, how you'll determine the effectiveness of your message, etc.: in effect, how Stages Four through Eight were developed.



LET'S THINK...

## Strategic Communication

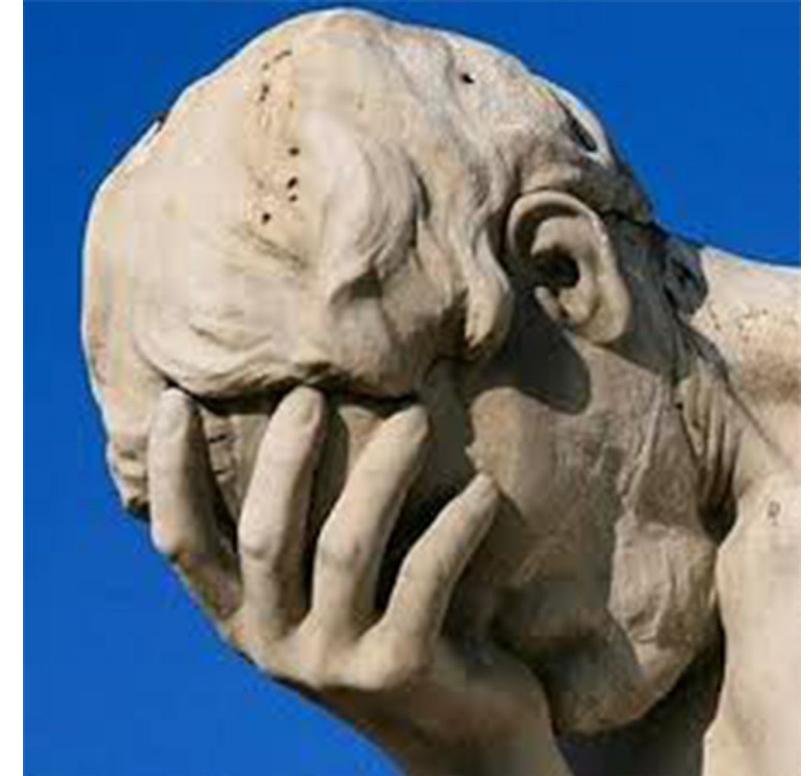
You need to write a letter to your professor, explaining why you'll be absent for a week. You have what you feel is a good reason – your beta fish has passed away, and you need to grieve his angry little loss – so you need to write a persuasive email.

Using what we know about SC, how might you approach this problem?



# CLASS ACTIVITY

YAY IT'S TIME TO WORK IN GROUPS 😊



# STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM



As you'll recall, you were asked to think about the "Make Yah Ma Proud" MassDOT sign in this week's discussion board. Today, I'd like us to think about this sign, which appeared on MassDOT signs on May 4, 2021.

With one or two of your neighbors, consider this messaging and answer the following questions:

1. Is this strategic? Why or why not?
2. Is it effective? Why or why not?
3. What suggestions do you have to improve its effectiveness as a strategic communication?

After discussing this in your group, we'll come back together and think about this sign as a class.

# GRAMMAR LESSON

BECAUSE THIS IS AN ENGLISH CLASS

I just rolled my eyes so hard...

I saw my brain

## POSITIVE EMPHASIS

In short: your communications will be more effective if you focus on using positive language instead of negative. Think about the difference in the following:

- We can assure you that you are not in danger.

*versus*

- To the best of our knowledge, you are safe.

Which one is negative? Which one is positive? How can you tell the difference?

What effect does the wording have on the message?

# NEGATIVE CONNOTATIONS

Whenever possible, avoid using words that have **negative connotations**, or meanings:

## Words that Deny:

- No
- Do not (don't)
- Refuse
- Stop
- Etc.

## Words with Negative Associations:

- Unfortunately
- Unable to
- Cannot
- Mistake
- Problem

- Error
- Damage
- Loss
- Failure
- Etc.

## PRESENTING NEGATIVE INFORMATION

Sometimes, we have to present negative information – bad news, mistakes, failures, and so on. By carefully choosing what you say, you can soften the effects of the negative information.

1. Focus on **what is** instead of **what it is not**.
2. Emphasize what you **can/will do** instead of what you **cannot/won't do**.
3. Start with **an action** instead of an **apology or explanation** (for example, how you'll fix it).
4. Avoid words with **negative connotations**.

## EFFECTIVE VERSUS INEFFECTIVE MESSAGING

Which one works better? Why?

1. In response to your question about how many coats of Chem-Treat are needed to cover new surfaces: I regret to report that usually two are required. For such surfaces, you should figure about 200 square feet per gallon for a good, heavy coating that will give you five years or more of beautiful protection.
2. In response to your question about how many coats of Chem-Treat are needed to cover new surfaces: one gallon is usually enough for one-coat coverage of 500 square feet of previously painted surface. For the best results on new surfaces, you'll want to apply two coats.



## HOMEWORK

- CONTINUE WORK ON THE DISCUSSION BOARD
- COMPLETE THE QUIZ