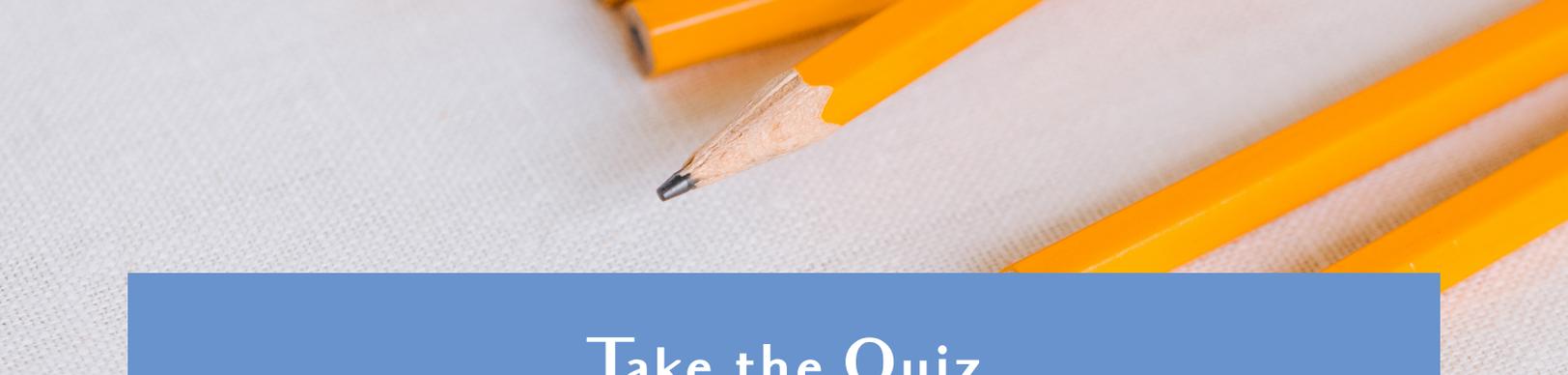




Is Your Business At Risk For These Common Corporate Messaging Pitfalls?

HERE'S HOW TO AVOID THEM

(Take the Quiz!)



Take the Quiz

During times of economic, social, and political volatility, having a robust and fully formed corporate messaging strategy can make all the difference between whether an organization thrives or merely survives.

With public opinion constantly shifting, organizations face an increasingly complex landscape where their values, actions, and words are under closer scrutiny. **Thoughtful and consistent messaging helps ensure your business can stand as a source of stability, trust, and integrity amid uncertainty.**

If you're anything like most leaders right now, you, and perhaps your communications team, are so caught up in the day-to-day "busy-ness"

that you don't have time to focus too heavily on whether you are saying the right thing to the right group at the right time—and in the right way. **But it's important to take a step back to ensure you are.**

Strong corporate messaging serves as a foundation for stability and clarity, and empowers companies to navigate a complex environment with integrity and purpose. Strategic, clear messaging is especially valuable for demonstrating commitment to core values and maintaining trust with employees, stakeholders, and the broader community.

It's time to get clear on what corporate messaging pitfall you might be falling into so that you can *course correct*.



This quiz will help to diagnose what you're facing – and give you tips for what to do about it – so you can craft clear, transparent messages for the stakeholders critical to your success, your organization's financial health, and your future.

Your Corporate Messaging *Pitfall Diagnostic*

For each of the questions below, select the letter that most represents you. **Don't overthink it. Go with your initial, gut response even if two or more answers sound like you.** Strive not to look at the **answer key** until you have completed the quiz for maximum accuracy.

Afraid you're answering based on what you want to be rather than what you authentically are? Have a trusted advisor or employee fill this out, and see if their answers are in line with yours.

1. A colleague from a different organization drops in on one of your cross-departmental, all-hands meetings. What would they observe?

- a. Different departments communicating in varying tones or styles.
- b. Team members struggling to understand the overall message and business goals, and expressing confusion about expected behaviors and priorities.
- c. Discussions about drops in efficiency, projects taking longer than promised, and/or deadlines being missed.
- d. Ideas discussed sound repetitive, predictable, or lack creativity and innovation.

2. Your organization is creating external messaging about a new project or initiative for the business. During the review process, what situation is most likely to occur?

- a. Your organizational leaders have difficulty agreeing on a unified message to release to the public.
- b. There is no clear process for delivering feedback, which delays the delivery of the messaging.
- c. There is minimal feedback or engagement from staff.
- d. You receive feedback from staff that the messaging seems incomplete, insensitive, or out-of-touch.

3. When you engage with the public using messaging – whether via customer service, social media, organizational announcements, or newsletters – which of the following responses do you receive?

- a. Stakeholders or members of the public report receiving contradictory information.
- b. Stakeholders or members of the public confuse your organization's messaging with that of another's.
- c. You receive complaints about a lack of response to staff questions.
- d. The messaging has low engagement metrics, such as few shares, likes, or comments on social media, or reduced interest in newsletters.

4. When you release internal communications regarding updates, strategic changes, and policy shifts, which one of the following scenarios is most likely to occur?

- a. Staff report receiving a variety of responses from managers in response to their questions.
- b. Different departments develop their own interpretations of the news, which are often contradictory.
- c. Staff members do not engage with their managers or others about the updates.
- d. Staff responds critically to how and when the news was delivered.

5. At conferences or industry events, company representatives report which of the following feedback when they communicate your brand's mission and values?

- a. Attendees confused your organization with another.
- b. Representatives had difficulty clarifying what makes your organization's goals and values unique.
- c. Your organization had fewer staff representatives than other participating groups.
- d. Representatives reported little interaction with new organizations or participating groups.



Answer Key

Identify which letter you (and others who completed the quiz on your behalf) most selected. Based on those answers, read more about the corporate messaging pitfall you might be experiencing and tips about what you can do about it. And if you have a mix of letters, be sure to read all of the descriptions that apply.

MOSTLY A'S: LACK OF MESSAGING ALIGNMENT

When different departments or teams communicate inconsistent messages, it can confuse or alienate staff and audiences, who may struggle to understand what your organization truly stands for. This misalignment weakens the brand identity and erodes trust, as stakeholders and staff may perceive the company as unfocused or insincere.

Aligned corporate messaging ensures that every touchpoint—whether in marketing, customer service, or internal communications—reinforces business values and goals, building trust and enhancing brand loyalty.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS

Create a guide that outlines key messages, tone of voice, language guidelines, and do's and don'ts. Ensure this guide is accessible to all employees, especially those in public-facing roles, so they can confidently reference it.

Collaborate with teams from different departments when developing corporate messages to capture a well-rounded perspective. This approach fosters buy-in and ensures that each team feels represented, making them more likely to align with the messaging.

MOSTLY B'S: CORE VALUES THAT LACK CLARITY

Core values directly impact the authenticity, consistency, and effectiveness of an organization's communication. A lack of clarity about the ways these values are being lived out can impact culture and, ultimately, sales.

By highlighting clear, actionable core values, corporate messaging can become a powerful tool for unifying your brand and building trust with both internal and external audiences.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS

Identify authentic values, not aspirations. Start by identifying values that genuinely reflect the organization's current culture and priorities. Authentic values resonate more with employees and are easier to implement, making them more likely to be adopted and upheld.

Communicate values consistently and reinforce core values through on-going communication in internal emails, meetings, or employee handbooks. Regular reminders help embed values into the organizational culture and remind employees of their importance.

MOSTLY C'S: LACK OF STAFF ENGAGEMENT

Disengaged employees are less likely to embody, support, or communicate your organization's values and vision effectively. When engagement is low, employees may feel disconnected, leading to inconsistent or indifferent messaging that can confuse customers and stakeholders.

Engaged employees act as brand ambassadors. If they understand and believe in the organization's mission, they are more likely to communicate the company's message with authenticity and enthusiasm.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEM

Hold messaging sessions where you can gather input from employees across all levels and departments to understand what they believe the organization stands for. This inclusivity helps ensure that values are representative of the entire workforce, increasing buy-in and relevance.

MOSTLY D'S: ABSENCE OF INCLUSIVITY

The absence of inclusivity in developing corporate messaging can create significant issues for your brand's credibility, reach, and relevance. When messaging lacks input from a wide range of staff, it is in danger of one perspective, typically one from leadership, dominating how an organization is perceived.

With a broad view of perspectives, companies can seize opportunities to connect meaningfully with a wider range of stakeholders, strengthening brand loyalty and trust. Often, junior members can have the most accurate solutions or suggestions because of their day-to-day experience.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS

Create a review process where messaging is evaluated by people from a variety of backgrounds within your organization. This helps catch unintentional biases and ensures the messaging is realistic, accurate, and believable.

Craft messages aligned with business goals and consider the broader impact they may have on various audiences to ensure they serve a strategic purpose even as they help people feel seen and heard. Recognize that certain topics, like social issues or current events, may impact different communities in different ways.

What if your organization focused on creating messaging that reflected its unique vision and goals, as well as viewpoints from a wide-range of staff?

What would be the impact if your organization uncovered opportunities to embed core values into policies, practices, and messaging to strengthen its brand and leadership?

ThinkBeyond Public Relations can help!



About ThinkBeyond Public Relations

We've supported clients—including MDNow, Cendyn, Enclustra, YWCA, and the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County—to use powerful and effective communications to strengthen their brand and grow in ways they may have never imagined.

Our Fractional Chief Communications Officer services enable organizations to work more strategically so they can reach, engage and motivate their most important audiences wherever they communicate, market or sell. As a Step into Your Moxie® Certified Facilitator, we equip business and nonprofit leaders and their teams to speak up about the issues and ideas important to them, to have daring conversations, and to feel more empowered to move people to take action.



About

Jennifer R. Hudson

In my 25+ years in corporate communications, I've developed and implemented strategic communications programs and facilitated workshops on corporate messaging and core values, vision, and mission for global companies, emerging businesses and nonprofits.

I focus on the big picture, helping your communications team integrate new messaging strategies even as they manage daily operations. I can help you uncover and craft clear, transparent messages for the stakeholders critical to your success about the company's financial health and future plans.

YOUR NEXT STEPS

Jennifer R. Hudson and ThinkBeyond Public Relations would love to help you communicate your organization's brilliance using great strategic frameworks that connect communications efforts to business goals.

Contact us at www.wethinkbeyond.com/contact/ to schedule an initial conversation.

