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# Awareness is not the end: Crafting an effective communications strategy

## Strategic Initiatives

Friday, Oct. 28, 2:45 p.m.





# Your facilitators

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Winkler Community Foundation  
Executive Director



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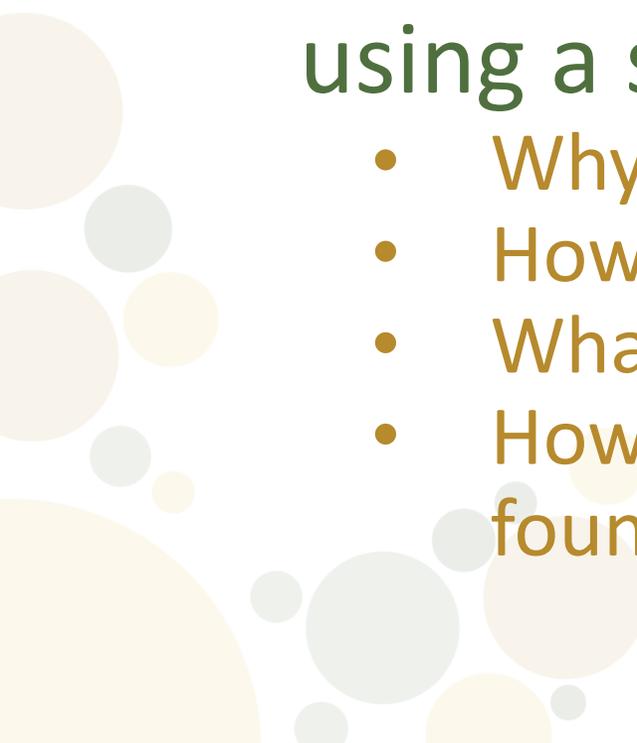
The Winnipeg Foundation  
Capacity Building Consultant

**Nancy Mak**

The Winnipeg Foundation  
Communications Associate



# Our approach

- The fundamentals: cellphones and washrooms
  - The goal: create a *fun, safe and engaging* space.
  - The format: share knowledge and experience using a structure of:
    - Why is this important?
    - How do you do it?
    - What is the outcome?
    - How can I apply this learning with my community foundation?
- 



# Our philosophy

- *You* are the expert of your community and your community foundation.
- Please share *thoughts, knowledge, and experiences* so that we can all learn from each other.





# What's the difference between community awareness of your foundation and engagement with it?

Take a worksheet and **write** down your answer.



# Myra Peters

## Winkler Community Foundation



# Definition: Communications strategy

- A plan for **communicating with** your target audience.
- Goal: to build a relationship (must be two-way).
  - Be relevant.
  - Show your target audience why they should care about you; show your target audience you care about them.
- Intentionally move along the relevancy continuum.
  - Awareness => Understanding => Appreciation => Engagement

# Why is a comms strategy important?

- Strengthen relationships with community.
  - And that's what a foundation is all about!
- Build awareness & relevancy on your own terms, clarify messaging.
  - Help board, staff, stakeholders, target audiences talk about you and your work.
- Helps you to know yourself.
  - Critical to know who you are to effectively communicate outwardly.
- Provides a road map.
  - Facilitates decision-making (but you do need flexibility).



# What's the difference between community awareness of your foundation and engagement with it?

Reflect on original response.

How might you adapt your  
response?

# How to craft a comms strategy

- Step 1 – Identify your audience.
  - Who do you want to strengthen or build a relationship with?
- Step 2 – Identify your goal/objective.
  - What do you want them to do, feel, learn, etc.
  - Where to land (or move) along the relevancy continuum?
    - Awareness
    - Understanding
    - Appreciation
    - Engagement

# How to craft a comms strategy

- Step 3 – Craft your message
  - Create opportunities for engagement
  - Use stories
  - Consider tone – positivity goes a long way
  - Write clearly and simply. Get to the point quickly

How are you generating two-way communication?  
Are you relevant in the eyes of your audience?

# How to craft a comms strategy

- Step 4 – Deliver your message
  - Reach your target audience where they are
    - Confirm capacity before you start
  - Write for the medium you're using
- Step 5 – Evaluate your efforts
  - Qualitative
  - Quantitative
  - Be flexible, seek feedback

# Best practices

Communications strategies are cross functional!

- A letter to your donors is a comms strategy.
- Each donor/audience wants to be addressed differently. What works for some, won't work for others.
- Know your capacity.

# The outcomes of a comms strategy

- Transparency and insight into the work of the community foundation, which builds trust
- This is evidenced through increased engagement of community foundation efforts by all stakeholders.
  - Social media engagement, attendance at events, inquiries to the foundation, donations, grant applications, etc.



# Crafting an effective communications strategy

Are newspaper articles on your foundation an effective tool in your comms strategy?  
What are their strengths and weaknesses?



# Crafting an effective communications strategy

How can we use stories to effectively engage our community?  
Which mediums would you use, and why?





# Crafting an effective communications strategy

## Exploring YOUR challenges:

- What is your biggest challenge with respect to establishing a stronger relationship with your community and how could a comms strategy address that challenge?

Discuss in group. Share with all.



# Shared reflections

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**Crafting an effective communications  
strategy**

Strategic Initiatives

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**What's one key takeaway or "AHA"  
that you want to remember?**

**What are you curious about now?**



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**Thank you**

**Endow Manitoba** is an initiative of The Winnipeg Foundation