

Defining Impact: The Art of Communicating Planning's Value

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How to craft your message when communicating with Stakeholders?

Here are 13 rules.

1. Target communities' needs, not yours.

- Find pinpoints in communities and use them to craft your message. People don't care what your program does. They care how your program helps them.



Bike lanes will reduce GHGs and help us reach our climate goals



Bike lanes make your neighborhoods safer, healthier, and happier.

2. Conversation test:

- Read your words out loud. If you do not use these words in your day-to-day conversations, remove them. Simplify your language.



all personnel shall be sufficiently skilled



all personnel should have enough skills

3. Delete friction words

- Friction words are words like submit and register

Each one of these words creates friction by conveying “more” work than “gained” value.



register here



join the conversation

4. Show confidence.

- If you don't show confidence in your language, people won't act
- Take soft phrases and make them promising ones.



This program helps with building more housing



this program builds 400+ housing units

5. Create mental images

- Help people visualize the impacts of your program/project to their lives by using concrete descriptions



These policies will create sustainable neighborhoods



These policies will create lively neighborhoods, where you can bike and walk safely with your family.

6. Frame the language around people

- Don't brag and tell people how cool your program is. Tell them how their lives will improve with the program. Use words like you, your neighborhood, your city.



we are excited to provide \$500M for new infrastructure



your neighborhood qualifies to receive \$500M to improve its infrastructure

7. Limit overrated words

- Limit using overrated words like equity and sustainability. Instead, explain what you mean by those words.



this program puts equity at its core



all people will benefit from the new jobs created by this program.

8. Clarify the reward

- Asking people to join your workshop to learn about a program pushes them to risk their time without a clear reward. Lower their risk by explaining what they get in exchange for their time.



join the workshop to learn about XYZ program



join the workshop to learn how XYZ program creates 1,000 new jobs in your city.

9. Use “with” language more

- Don't talk at people. Speak with people.



participate in our program to shape your community



with your participation, you will shape your community.

10. Spark Curiosity

- Identify knowledge gaps to encourage people to know more.



[click here to watch the webinar recording](#)



Our webinar recording shows how you can redesign your neighborhood with your participation

11. Introduce tangible co-benefits

- People do not care about your complicated policies. They care about the co-benefits of your policies that impact their lives. Show them these tangible co-benefits.



we need to reduce GHGs (Greenhouse Gas Emissions) and create more sustainable cities



To reduce wildfires' risks to your neighborhood we need to cut on emissions.

12. Provide relevant details

- Clarity and details drive action. Use clear language and timeframe.



this program will result in creating new jobs



this program will create over 1,000 well-paid jobs in your city by 2024.

13. Use short sentences

- People will not understand or read your long sentences. Keep your sentences under 25 words.



Please submit the following documents for your application to be fully considered for this phase of the process.



Applicants must submit the following documents.

Recap: 13 Rules for communicating with stakeholders.

1. Target communities' needs
2. Read your words out loud
3. Delete friction words
4. Show confidence
5. Create mental images
6. Frame the language around people
7. Limit overrated words
8. Clarify the reward
9. Use "with" language
10. Spark curiosity
11. Introduce co-benefits
12. Provide relevant details
13. Use short sentences

MINNEAPOLIS is **GROWING**



<https://growth.minneapolis2040.com>



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An Example of Communicating Planning's Value

NPC24 Online

May 9, 2024

Triveece Penelton, AICP, NOMA
Owner and Founder

- **Penelton Interactive** works with private companies and non-profits to 1) develop better professionals and leaders and 2) improve the feeling of belonging in their offices. We provide workshops, consulting, and guest speaking. Operating from a practice anchored in **Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI)**, we use our over 20 years of engagement, planning, and facilitation experience to do the work.
- www.peneltoninteractive.com



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Putting a Selection of Nader Afzalan's “Rules for Communicating with Stakeholders” into Action

Target communities' needs
Show confidence
Frame your words around people
Creating mental images
Framing language around people
Use “with” language



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PLANNER FOR A DAY

Community members know what's needed.



Think of your
neighborhood, your
house, your room

Walk through your
home's front door and
down the streets –
What do you notice?

Travel farther out via
your vehicle, transit,
bicycle – What do you
notice?



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PLANNER FOR A DAY

Community members know what's needed.



What do you love
about your
neighborhood?

What's a favorite
memory about your
neighborhood?

If you could change
something, what would
it be?



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PLANNER FOR A DAY

Community members know what's needed.



Share your loves

Share your memories

Share changes



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PLANNER FOR A DAY

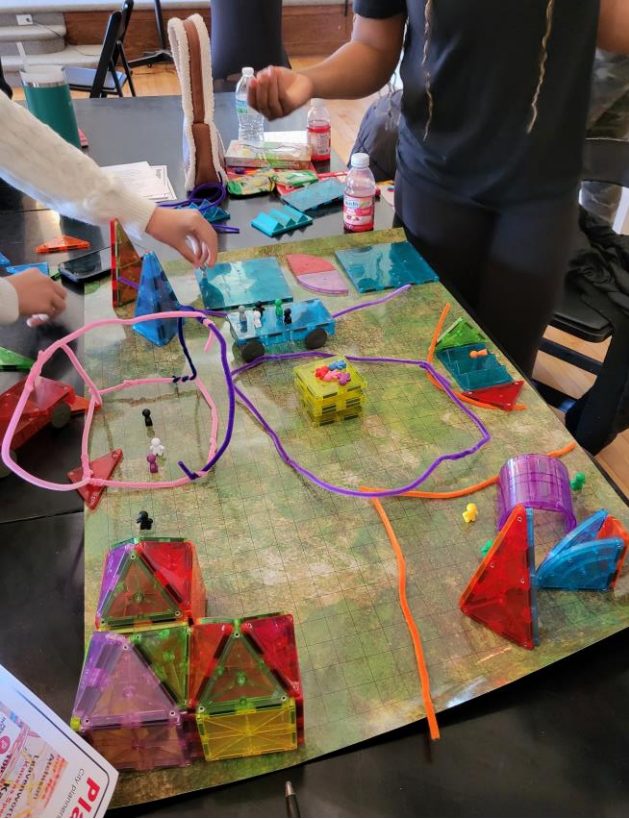
Community members know what's needed.



Select your base

Build your ideal
neighborhood

Blend your ideas with
those from others



PLANNER FOR A DAY

Community members know what's needed.

Participants

- Identify the planners and planning director
- Hear from residents
- Hear from neighborhood leaders
- Hear from the Mayor
- Hear from others in the community
- Identify what's most important
- Name the future neighborhood
- Select a spokesperson

Staff

- Take on a persona (resident, etc)
- Listen to the stories
- Catch the themes
- Record the event
- **Allow the outcomes to shape adopted plans**

Questions?

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