



Communication Strategy Workshop

Sydney Coastal Councils Group

with

Anne Howard

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Who am I?

- Former Strategic Marketing Communications academic at University of Canberra
- 20 years as a professional communication analyst and adviser to government agencies, universities, NGOs and industry clients
- Author: Connecting with Communities: How local government uses social media to engage with citizens, published 2012 by ACELG
- A director of Howard Partners Pty Ltd since 1999
- Forthcoming publication on strategic communications (due for release 2014)





www.howardpartners.com.au



**Innovation, Ingenuity
and Initiative**

The adoption and application of new
ideas in Australian local government

- **Communication strategy experts**
- **Public policy and management analysts and advisers**
- **Program review and evaluation**
- **Innovation and economic development consultants**

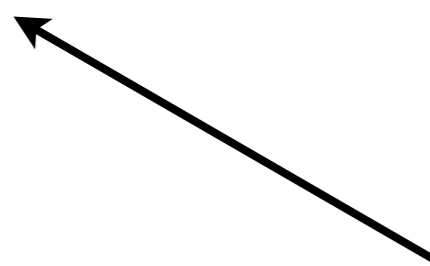
Example of recent work in local government innovation, published by the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG), October 2012

Aim of Workshop

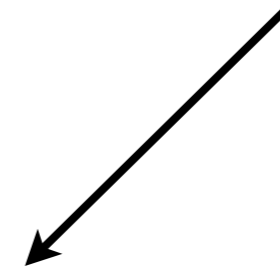
- **Create an awareness of how to develop a communication strategy**
- **The basic elements and why they are important**
- **How to implement a strategy**

At a minimum communication requires

sender + message + channel + receiver (effect)



+ feedback



Need to communicate from the receiver's point of view

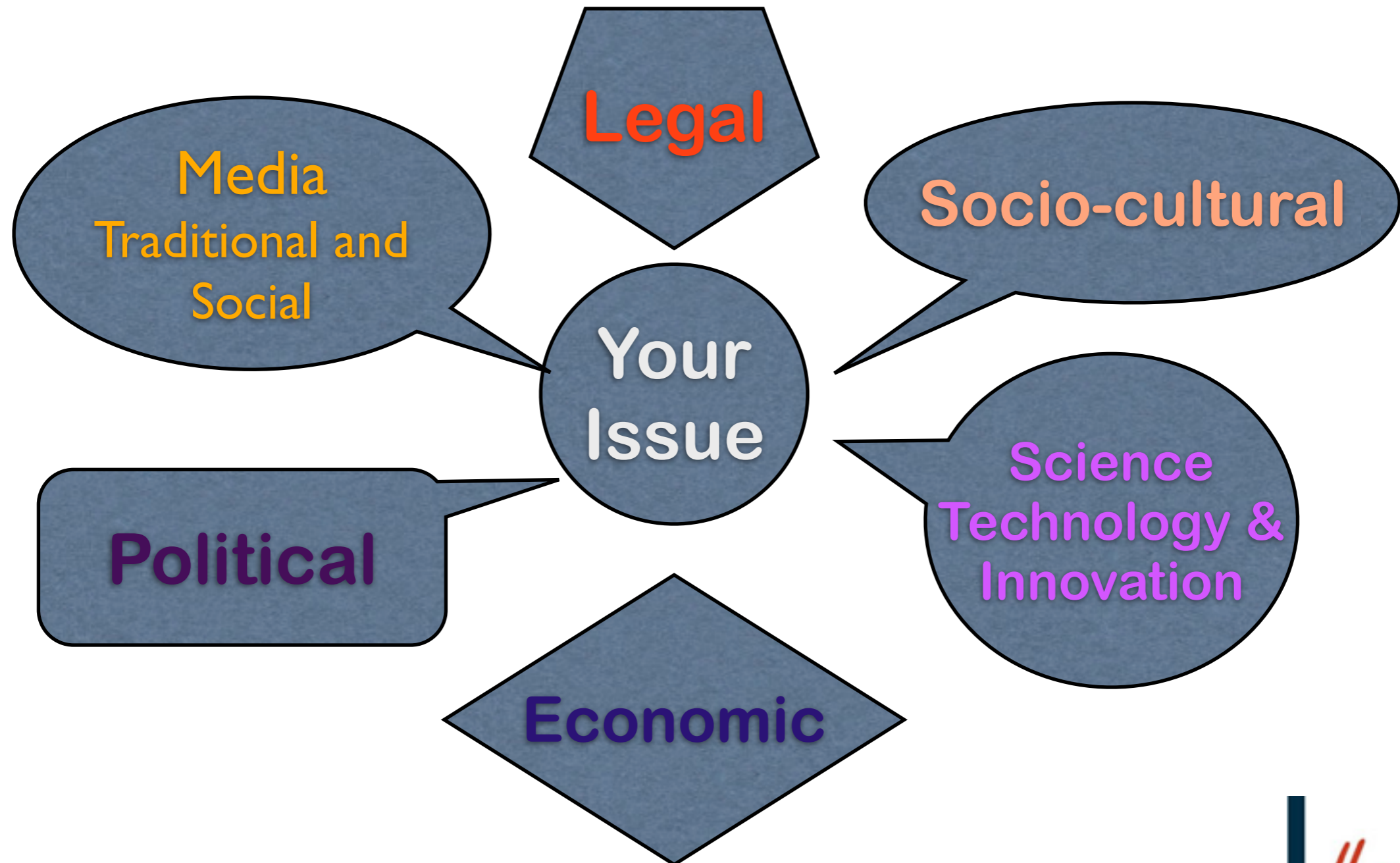
Need to know **why** we are communicating - is it to:

- Create awareness?
- Build understanding?
- Gain consensus?
- Educate?
- Change attitudes and behaviour?
- Engage your audience?
- Consult and gain feedback?
- Develop mutual understanding
- Etc

Problem Definition

- **NB first step! What is the current situation? What intelligence do you have? What do you need to collect? What analysis has been done?**
- **Helps decide what your strategy needs to address**
- **You need to ensure you fully understand the context of the issue or the situation**
- **Undertake background research and ask the who what when where & why questions**

Environmental scan



Society adopts technology at different rates

Rogers' bell curve



Goals and Objectives

- What is your **goal** - what is the end outcome you want to achieve?
- Objectives support the goal. They must be written in specific terms - not as generalisations
 - time specific - set actual deadlines
 - aimed at a particular target public
 - measurable - state how much change will occur
 - realistic and achievable
- This is how we measure our success!

Tactics

- **Tactics are the individual activities that together achieve objectives**
- **Tactics are designed to attract attention of target audiences and media**
 - E.g. A tactic might include securing a 'star' spokesperson who will appeal to target audience to provide added credibility
 - E.g. A tactic might be to launch a report containing evidence
 - E.g. A tactic might be to have the Minister in a cage with a monkey at the Zoo!

Target Audiences

- Identify all stakeholders - (depends on what you are trying to achieve - don't forget internal audience)
- Segment into primary and secondary audiences (there is no such thing as 'general public')
- **Know your audience very well. This is CRUCIAL!**
 - What is their attitude towards the issue?
 - Will (Does) it affect them? If so, how, why?
 - How do they like to get their information? When?
 - Who are their key influencers/opinion leaders? Etc.

Ask yourself:

**How well do you know your
target audiences?**

**If you don't know your
target audiences, how can
you communicate with
them?**

Messaging -

- Messages develop from understanding of goals, objectives and target audiences
- Messages must be credible & relevant to the target audience
- Include facts/evidence to support key messages
- Keep it simple, be consistent

Budgets & resourcing

- **Communication efforts require financial and human resources**
- **Activities need to be costed**
- **Budgets will guide type of communication program possible**
- **Resourcing needs to include allocated roles and responsibilities - keep records and constantly monitor progress**

Channel selection

- How are you going to reach your target audience and engage with them?
- Huge choice available of channels and media
 - includes mainstream media - broadcast and print, website, social media, direct mail, email, eNewsletters, seminars, face-to-face meetings, videos, brochures, posters, reports, surveys, etc.
- Selection will depend on how and when the target audience wants to receive information and interact

mobile
social
local



All are becoming
mainstream!

Timing & Scheduling

- **Timing and scheduling of messages and the various activities depend on what you are trying to achieve, your target audience, demands of the medium, etc.**
- **Includes such things as art and design, copywriting, editing, web management, media relations, social media, printing, advertising, event management, etc.**
- **Also includes managing relations with collaborators, suppliers, etc.**
- **Planning tools such as GANTT or CPM (critical path method) are typically used by communications professionals**

Implementation

- **Project management is essential (timing, scheduling, budgeting, human resourcing, etc.)**
- **Requires strong communication**
- **Coordination**
- **Meeting deadlines**
- **Flexibility**

Monitoring & Evaluation

- How will you know if the communication program is going along according to plan?
- Build in measures to monitor progress - to minimise risk
- How will you evaluate your program?
(Hint: Look back at your objectives)



Thank you!
Anne Howard

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