



FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES

SPEAKING SO THEY HEAR YOU

Hollywood, FL
August 16, 2024
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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS



Part 1: Message Development

Part 2: Staying on Message

Part 3: Communication During a Crisis

Part 4: Apologies

Part 5: Social Media

Part I: MESSAGE DEVELOPMENT + DEPLOYMENT



SOME NUMBERS

4,000

12



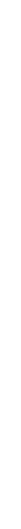
Let's go
places.



TOYOTA



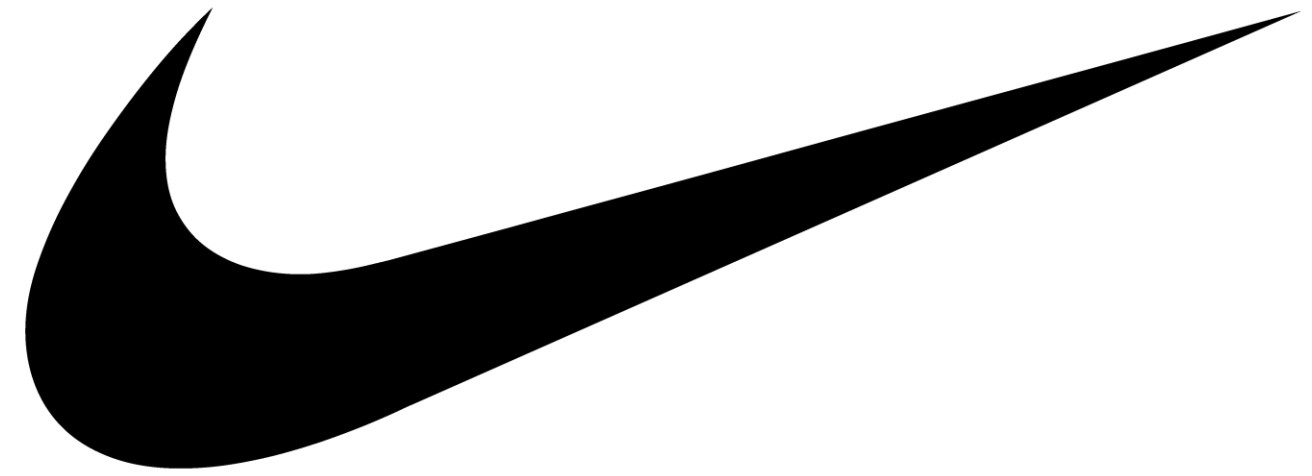
More saving.
More doing.



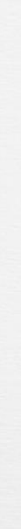
Save money.
Live better.



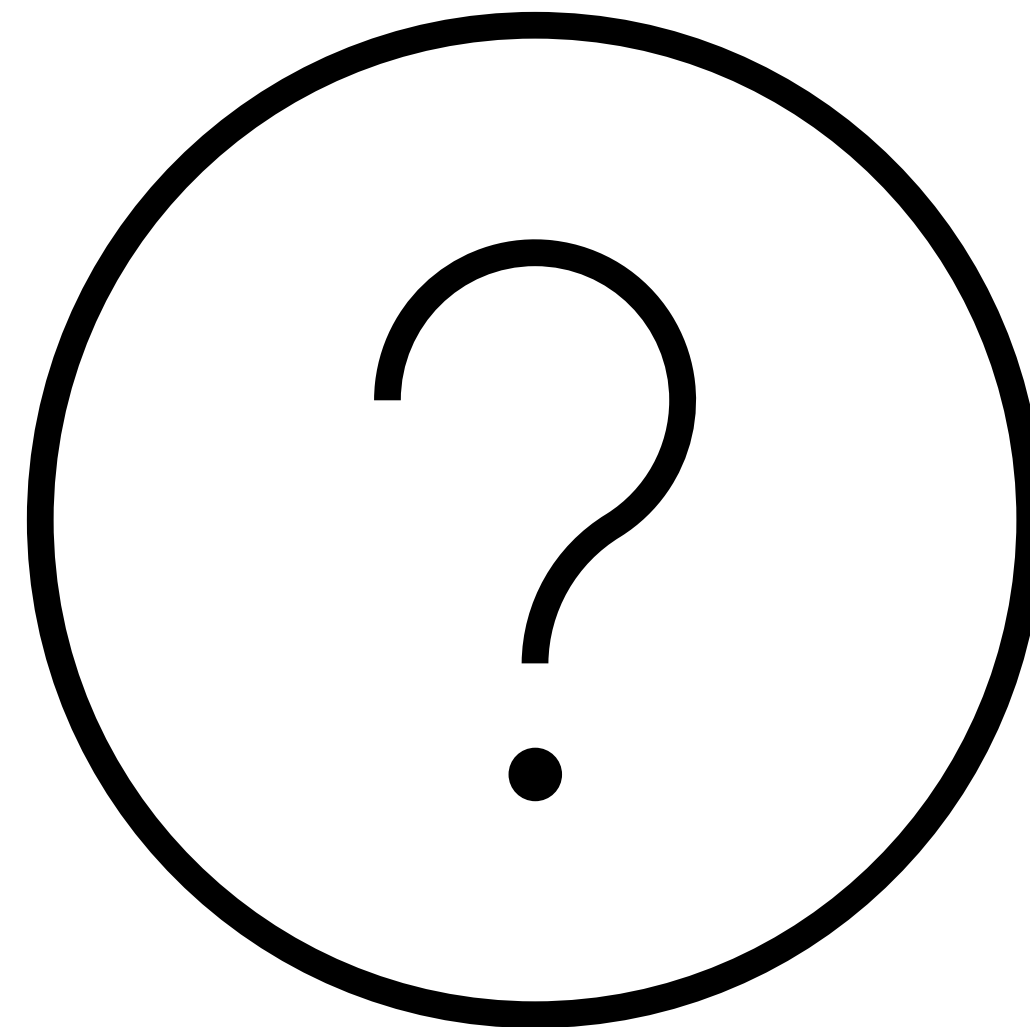
Of course you got this right.



Part 2: STAYING ON MESSAGE



WHAT MAKES A GOOD MESSAGE?



WHAT MAKES A GOOD MESSAGE?

- Clean
- Clear
- Concise
- Consistent



TAKE YOUR LAPSS

- L** Listen to the question
- A** Acknowledge the questioner
- P** Pivot with a positive statement
- S** Speak on your message/frame

Staying on Message

1. Listen



Staying on Message

2. Acknowledge

- *Thank you. I am so glad you brought this up.*
- *That's a great question and thanks for asking it.*
- *Thank you for bringing up this very important issue.*

Staying on Message



3. Pivot

- *“It is critical to remember...”*
- *“What’s really important here...”*
- *“It is vital to understand...”*
- *“We must remember...”*

4. **S**peak on your message

Staying on Message

Clear

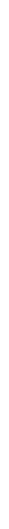
Consistent

**YOUR
MESSAGE**

Concise

Coherent

And about that
second S...



Staying on Message

5. **S**top talking



Part 3: COMMUNICATION DURING A CRISIS



Three types of crises: Whose fault is it?



Three types of crises: Whose fault is it?

1

Not yours

NOT CROSS • DO NOT CROSS • DO NOT CROSS

UTION • CAUTION • CAUTION

ARNING • WARNING • WARNING



Three types of crises: Whose fault is it?

2

Kinda yours

NOT CROSS • DO NOT CROSS • DO NOT CROSS

UTION • CAUTION • CAUTION

ARNING • WARNING • WARNING



Three types of crises: Whose fault is it?

NOT CROSS • DO NOT CROSS • DO NOT CROSS

UTION • CAUTION • CAUTION

ARNING • WARNING • WARNING

3

Totally yours

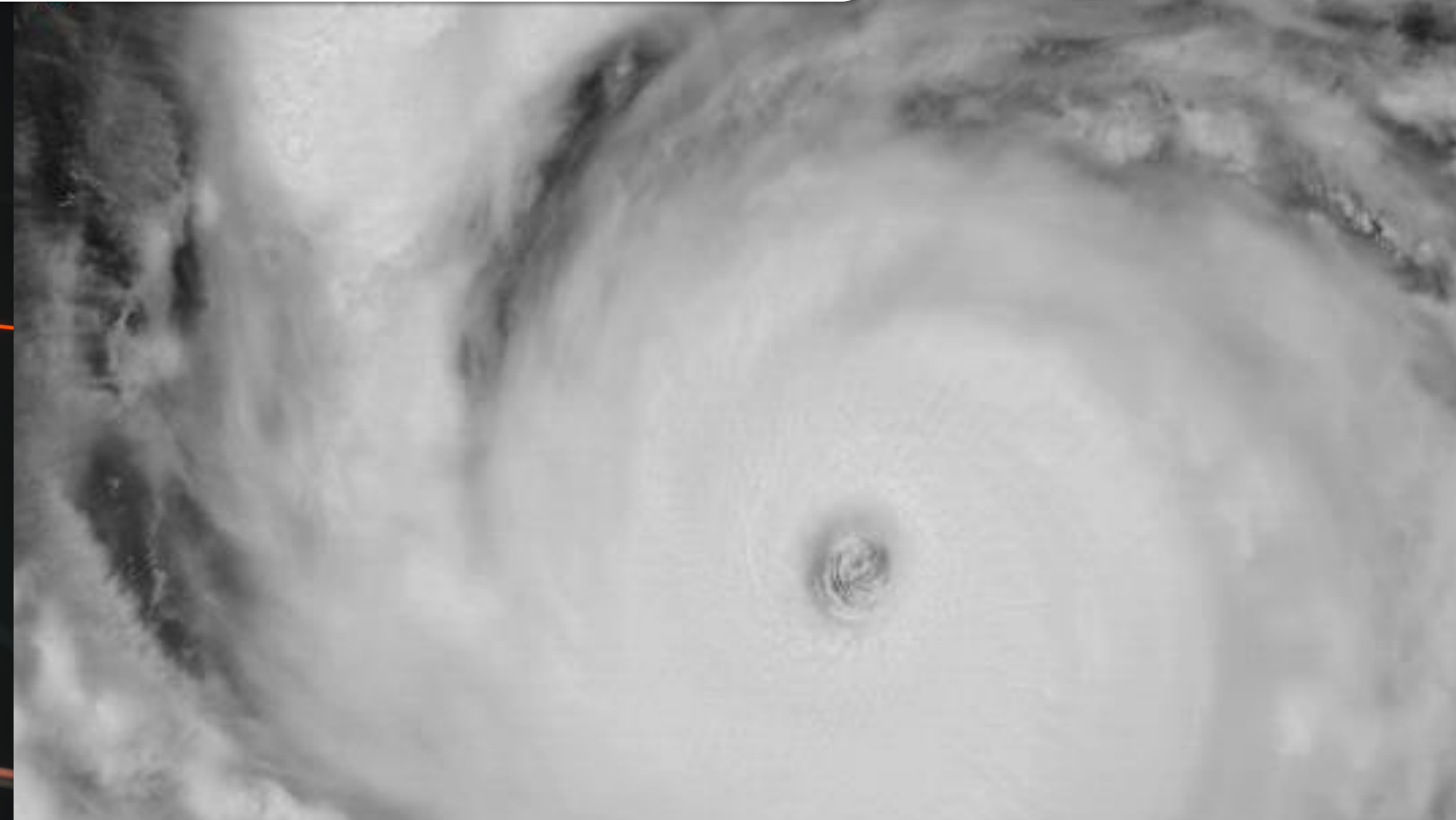
Totally your fault:

- Sewage treatment spill
- City hall corruption
- Employee embezzlement
- Infrastructure failure





But...they are ALL your problem!





After the crisis:

1

Get the facts

2

Get the facts

3

Seriously, get the facts



After the crisis:

1

Get the facts

2

Be the first to speak/control the message

3

Be accessible/open/honest

4

Be willing to say “IDK”

5

Accept appropriate responsibility

6

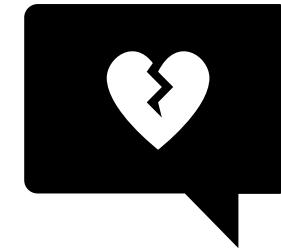
Share what you are doing

7

Don't be afraid to apologize

Part 4: Apologies

A few case studies



“We are disappointed in how some people misinterpreted the commercial.”



An aerial view of an offshore oil rig engulfed in a massive fire. A thick, dark plume of smoke rises from the burning structure. Several fireboats are positioned around the rig, directing high-pressure water jets onto the flames. The surrounding ocean is a deep blue, and the sky is a pale, overcast grey. The text "I want my life back." is overlaid in white, italicized font across the center of the image.

“I want my life back.”

A photograph showing a person lying in an airplane seat. The person's torso is exposed, and they appear to be wearing a dark-colored shirt. The seat is a standard airplane seat with a headrest and armrest. The background is slightly blurred, showing other seats and the interior of the aircraft. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, italicized font.

“I apologize for having to re-accommodate these customers”

Elements of a good apology

1. Own the mistake
2. State the error
3. Say you are sorry
4. Admit what you did wrong
5. Explain plan going forward
6. Ask for forgiveness/understanding

DO NOT



Apology mistakes

1. Qualifying the “sorry”
2. Shifting blame
3. Justifying bad acts
4. Over explaining

Part 5:

SOCIAL MEDIA

Best Practices for Local Governments



Part 5:

SOCIAL MEDIA

Best Practices for Local Governments

1. Establish Clear Communication Protocols

- A. Protocol overview: ensure all social media guidelines are publicly available and easily accessible
- B. Encourage constructive feedback
- C. Be government-y
- D. Consider legal concerns

Part 5:

SOCIAL MEDIA

Best Practices for Local Governments

2. Define Acceptable Use Policy

A. Acceptable content

- Encourage constructive criticism
- Encourage positive interaction

B. Lawyer-approved enforcement steps

- First offense: warning
- Second offense: temporary suspension
- Third offense: permanent removal

Part 5:

SOCIAL MEDIA

Best Practices for Local Governments

3. Develop Response Protocols

- A. Consistent responses
- B. Diversion tactics
 - Gentle reminder of rules with re-direct
 - Provide contact information
- C. Engage enforcement steps

Part 5:

SOCIAL MEDIA

Best Practices for Local Governments

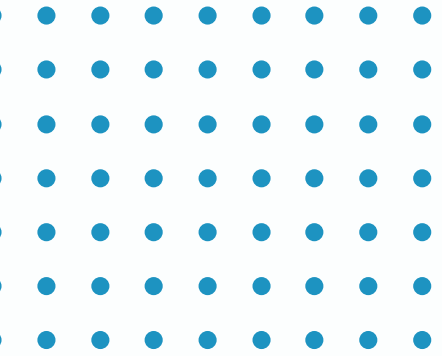
4. Implementation and Enforcement

- A. Regular monitoring
- B. Transparency in action
- C. Be consistent in your application
- D. Remember, everyone is watching

IN CONCLUSION

Key things to remember

1. What strategic communications is
2. What a good message is
3. Why you need to stay on it
4. How to stay on it
5. How to apologize properly
6. How to address the bane of your existence 😊



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Questions?

