



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

Processing information and knowledge for dissemination

Allan Dow

FAO Regional Communication Officer

24 August 2016



Key Messages



What are key messages and why do you need them?

Messages are the words that help you deliver your narrative.

Messages help you focus your communication which is critically important. Why is focus so important?

Without focus, your narrative gets lost in a sea of daily information – easy to ignore, easier to forget



Zero Hunger

There are nearly 800 million hungry people in the world.

Nearly two-thirds of them are right here in Asia.

The world produces enough food for everyone – it is a moral imperative that everyone has enough to eat, always.

The only acceptable number of hungry people in our world is zero.



Tell them what you're going to tell them...

Tell them what you're telling them...

Tell them what you told them...!



Can you repeat that please?

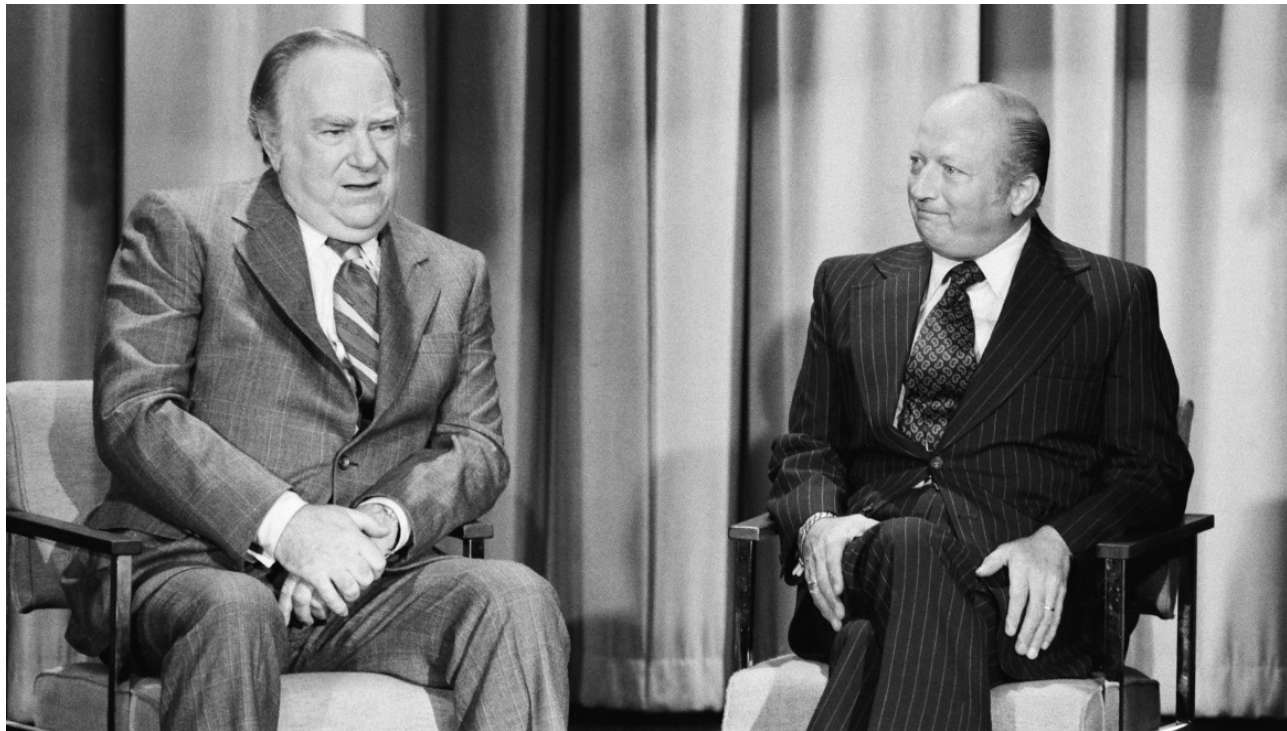
“There’s a simple rule: You say it again, and you say it again, and you say it again, and you say it again, and you say it again, and then again and again and again and again, and about the time that you’re absolutely sick of saying it is about the time that your target audience has heard it for the first time.”

— Frank Luntz

(source: <http://www.jrmyprtr.com/great-key-messages/>)



Speaking (and Listening)





What did you say about hunger?

There are nearly 800 million hungry people in the world.

Nearly two-thirds of them are right here in Asia.

The world produces enough food for everyone – it is a moral imperative that everyone has enough to eat, always.

The only acceptable number of hungry people in our world is zero.



Developing great key messages

1. Know why you need them

2. Understand frames, have your narrative, and know the basics of persuasion

3. Creating your key messages

- Three features of great messages
 - Appeal to emotion (use active words)
 - Be careful with numbers
 - Be willing to adapt
 - Remember the rule of three
 - Test them
-



Be careful with numbers

If numbers will help you tell your story, use them. But know that your audience probably won't remember them if you're precise. Instead, say:

- ✓ More than 80% — not 82%
- ✓ Two-thirds — not 67%
- ✓ Almost one hundred years ago — not 95 years ago
- ✓ More than 6,000 people — not 6,300 people

Use number sparingly!



Stock issues template

Problem | Blame | Cure | Consequence

P: Our forests are dying. We're losing 10% globally each year and that's harming the environment

B: Forests are being replaced with crops by companies in search of profit

C: Working with governments and local communities we can find alternative income generation

C: We can regenerate forest lands and reverse the damage



Test your key messages

This is critically important. If you don't test your messages you can't be sure that they work. This is where research becomes a critical part of developing communication.

A one hour session with volunteers who represent your audience will give you some ideas about what messages work and what messages don't. You may find there were misunderstandings or even misinterpretations. Your language may be too aggressive or a bit boring. Testing helps you get it right.



The ‘call to action’

This is the ultimate in messaging. It goes beyond information sharing. This is ‘the money shot’ of any advocacy campaign. It puts the “YOU” into the narrative.

TV Advert: In Ethiopia, one child dies each hour from hunger. It is a crime against humanity in a world where there is enough food to feed everyone. WFP is here and we’re trying to help. But we need your help too. Just 20 dollars would feed a family of four for an entire month. Please help us help them. Call now.



What did you say about hunger?

There are nearly 800 million hungry people in the world.

Nearly two-thirds of them are right here in Asia.

The world produces enough food for everyone – it is a moral imperative that everyone has enough to eat, always.

The only acceptable number of hungry people in our world is zero.



THANK YOU!

allan.dow@fao.org