



Section 6: What will your messages say?

- What is the purpose of this message?
- How will you match the message to the behavioural levers?
- How will you make the message memorable?
- How will you make the message actionable?
- How will you construct your post?

Section 6-

Creating a Message Strategy - What will your messages say?



6A



What is the purpose of this message?

Importance ★★ ★

Time ★★

Cost ★

Summary

Each message you post should have a reason behind it. Knowing the objective, it will support and to whom it's directed will guide the message content and style of delivery.

Why is it important?

Social media is not just a one-and-done task, especially when it comes to behaviour change. Your success builds slowly, one message at a time. *Each message serves a purpose and builds an impression.*

Your social media objectives, along with the relevant priority audiences, guide your overall messaging strategy. The bulk of your SM4BC messages should address the key behavioural levers of change you identified as being most important to your audiences' decision making and will be driven by the overall message concepts you develop next. Your messages should be created to do one or more of these:

- Reduce barriers and make it easy to take action
- Tie the things your audience cares about to the behaviour
- Use social influence, such as norms and social support, to encourage them
- Provide a call to action

For each of the levers of change (i.e., a specific barrier, motivator, etc.) for your audience, create a message map to *guide you in the themes to cover as you build your social media messages*. This consists of at least three key messages addressing the lever, and three to five supporting points with information that clarifies and expands on the messages.





Key Considerations:

1

What is the desired outcome of your message? What do you want people to do, think or feel as a result of it? Not every message will have a call to action. Some of your messages may be intended to educate or change attitudes, or to create a specific emotion that increases the likelihood of change over time.

2

Who is the message intended for? Knowing the audience helps you tailor the message based on their needs – in terms of language, behavioural levers, local factors, social network used, etc.

3

Not every message must be laser-focused on one of the levers of change. Your social media activities create a relationship over time with your audience. This means that, in addition to posting behaviour-related messages, you also need to engage with your audience interactively, and that may include more spontaneous posts (in a purposeful way) based on what's happening on a given day. And though things like posts about your organization's activities may not necessarily tie into one of your behavioural objectives, they can bolster your credibility as an information source.

4

Pretesting messages with your priority audience is an important part of the behaviour change communications process. You can do this via research methods like focus groups or individual interviews, or even online surveys. Check to make sure the messages are understandable, appropriate, and relevant to your audience.



Action steps:

1

Create a message map to guide your content development.

2

Before you develop a social media post, identify the desired outcome, based on the relevant levers of change or other social media engagement objectives.

3

Be mindful of each priority audience and its specific needs as you compose your messages for them.

4

When possible, pretest your core messages with members of the priority audience.

For more information:

- [SBCC for Emergency Preparedness Implementation Kit – Develop Message Maps](#)
- [How to Create a Messaging Map for Social Media Engagement](#)
- [How to Use Ideas, Messages, and Themes to Build Your Content Strategy](#)
- [How Social Media is Redefining the Meaning of 'Message'](#)
- [How to Define Your Key Messages](#)

Example: Message Map

For example, if one of the barriers to creating an emergency stockpile of food is the cost, the message map might look like this:

Audience:		Low income urban renters	
Lever of Change:		Barrier - I can't afford to buy a stockpile of food.	
Key Message 1	Key Message 2	Key Message 3	
An emergency supply of food does not have to be expensive.	You can create your emergency stockpile slowly over time.	Stockpile foods you would likely eat anyways.	
Supporting Facts	Supporting Facts	Supporting Facts	
You can buy in bulk.	Every time you go shopping, just pick up one or two extra items for the stockpile.	Rotate out the foods that are close to expiring into your everyday pantry.	
Buy store brand items to save money.	When there is a sale, or when you have coupons, buy multiple items for your stockpile.	Learn to cook and can foods you would otherwise buy premade when the vegetables and fruit are in season and cheap.	

Staple items that are the building blocks of meals cost less than premade, processed foods.	Set a weekly stockpiling budget and stick to it.	Get to know the prices of foods you usually buy so you will know when a sale is a good deal to stock up.
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6^B How will you match the message to the behavioural levers?

Importance ★★ ★

Time ★

Cost ★

Summary

Depending on the lever of change you will be addressing in your message, use the specific behaviour change approaches for each that will be most powerful via social media.

Why is it important?

Simply providing information is often not effective in creating lasting behaviour change, so don't rely only on fact-focused messages. Very often people know what they should do, but can't make it happen in their own lives. *To address the levers of change you've found are most relevant to your audience, your core messages will need to draw on a variety of intervention approaches.* Here are some examples of methods you could

apply through social media, each described in more detail in the Key Considerations section below:

Lever of Change:	Intervention Approach
Barriers	
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Education
Beliefs And Attitudes About Problem And Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Education ● Demonstrations ● Personalization ● Emotion ● Social modeling
Self-efficacy, Skills, Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Training ● Tips/How-to ● Social modeling ● Social support ● Examples ● Planning/Goal-setting ● Challenges
Opportunity And Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Training ● Tips/How-to ● Social modeling ● Social support ● Examples ● Planning/Goal-setting ● Challenges
Perceived Negative Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Education ● Social Modeling ● Social Support
Motivators	
Perceived Positive Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commitment ● Education ● Incentives ● Social modeling ● Habit development ● Emotion

Pleasure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social modeling ● Challenges ● Reinforcement ● Recognition ● Emotion
Identity, Aspirations, Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emotion ● Social modeling ● Social support ● Personalization
Social Factors	
Perceived Social Norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Education ● Social modeling ● Social support
Beliefs About What Others Will Think	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social modeling ● Social support ● Tips
Social Influencers, Cultural Beliefs And Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social modeling ● Social support
Social Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Challenges ● Recognition ● Social support
Windows of Opportunity	
Times Locations Events States of Mind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reminders ● Tips ● Social support ● Planning ● Habit development





Key Considerations:

Here are brief explanations for the intervention approaches described above:

Approach	Description
Challenges	Using game-like activities to motivate people to change their behaviour
Commitment	Asking the person to affirm, publicly or privately, that they commit to performing the behaviour
Demonstrations	Showing how the behaviour should be done
Education	Providing facts and information about various aspects of the problem, its consequences, and the recommended behaviour
Emotion	Using appeals to what people care about via words, images, music and other methods
Goal-setting	Setting a personal goal of achieving a specific behaviour
Habit Development	Repeating the behaviour in the same context until it becomes a habit
Personalization	Finding ways for people to put their own spin on the behaviour or adapt it to their specific situation
Planning	Creating a plan for implementing the behaviour
Recognition	Acknowledging someone's contribution or achievement publicly
Reinforcement	Offering an incentive (e.g., a digital gift) or other encouragement when people do the behaviour
Referrals	Pointing to resources or services that can help someone take action



Action steps:

1

For each behavioural lever of change you identified for your priority audiences, refer to the chart to find the specific approaches that will be most helpful in making that change.

2

Use the message approaches as a jumping-off point for thinking about what types of themes and posts you could create on that topic.



Key Considerations: Continued

Reminders	Providing a cue to do the behaviour at a particular time
Social Modeling	Showing peers or influential people who have engaged in the behaviour as examples to emulate
Social Support	Enabling others to provide encouragement and assist with problem solving related to the behaviour
Tips	Offering ideas for how to carry out the behaviour more easily
Training	Providing how-to instructions or skills on how to perform the behaviour

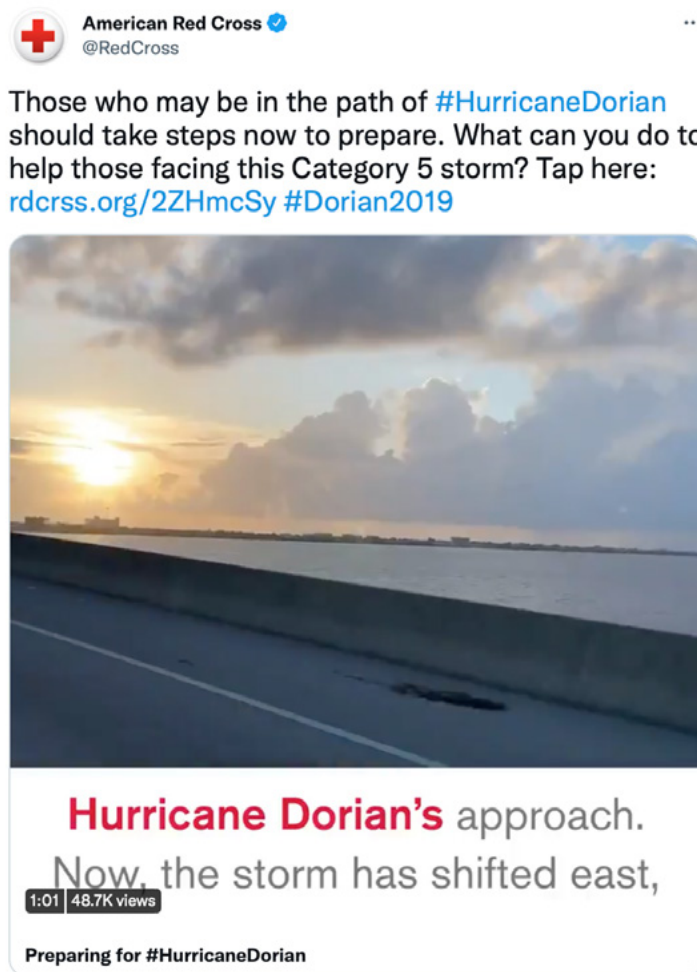
For more information:

- For more information on behaviour change documents go to the: [CEA HUB](#)
- [Theory & Techniques Tool for Linking Behaviour Change Techniques and Mechanisms of Action](#)
- [The Behaviour Wizard](#)

Example:

Lever: Perceived Social Norms

Approach: Social Modeling



<https://twitter.com/RedCross/status/1168245925594247173>



Lever: Windows of Opportunity
Approach: Reminder + Tips



<https://twitter.com/nemabahamas/status/1167785110663507973>

6c How will you make the message memorable?

Importance ★★

Time ★★

Cost ★

Summary

Social media posts come and go. Your messages need to be designed to get people interested so they'll remember the content and be inspired.

Why is it important?

Social media trades in the currency of attention. Your posts will be appearing in your followers' streams as just one of many others, so making your message stand out is critical. What are the characteristics of a memorable message? It must be:

- **Relevant** – addressing the things that your audience cares about
- **Timely** – taking social context and timing into account
- **Original** – not just the same idea that people have already seen many times

The way you frame your message can make it easier to understand and more compelling. Using the

framework from the Heath Brothers' excellent book *Made to Stick*, consider how you might present the core ideas to make them:

- **Simple** – Boil the concept down to its essence to make it as understandable as possible. For example, people don't generally need to know the complicated mechanics of a tsunami, but they do need to know in the event of an earthquake to head for higher ground.
- **Unexpected** – Surprise people! This could be by sharing a fact that goes contrary to what they would expect or by showing a situation from an angle they never thought about. What if instead of a parent saving a child from drowning in a flood, a child saved their parent based on something they learned in school?
- **Concrete** – Use the five senses to make an abstract concept real to people. Showing people, a packet of sugar and salt, with a bottle of water, is much easier to understand than the term "oral rehydration solution."
- **Credible** – Give your audience reasons to believe that what you say is true. A doctor may make a good spokesperson. Someone whose child died from the measles because they didn't get vaccinated is an even better messenger to promote immunizations.
- **Emotional** – Draw on your audience's emotions to help them remember your key point. Tie the issue to what they care about, such as building on people's identity and values. A community that values self-sufficiency as part of their identity will likely respond to a message tying that characteristic to disaster preparedness.
- **Stories** – Use stories, real or fictional, to bring in all of the previous approaches to make the core ideas more memorable and to see the behaviour in action. A short video of someone telling their own story of how the preparations they made in advance led to their survival in a disaster is much more compelling than an academic paper coming to the same conclusion.



Key Considerations:

1

When you create social media content, think about what emotion you want the message to evoke: hope, belonging, trust, urgency, self-confidence, etc. These will likely be dictated by the behavioural lever of change you're working with.

2

Don't post on social media with the intention of making your content "go viral." That's an outcome that you have little control over beyond creating content that's compelling and share-worthy.



Action steps:

1

Using your message maps, think about how you can make the ideas relevant, timely and original.

2

Also consider which *Made to Stick* elements you can use to create memorable, understandable social media posts.

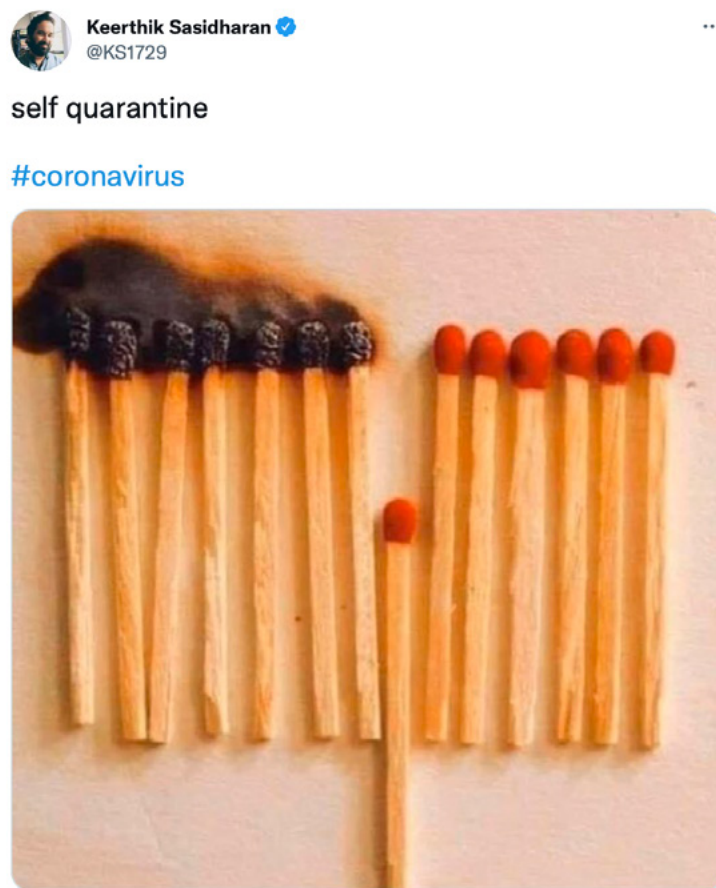
For more information:

- [The Six Principles to Make Your Ideas Stick](#)
- [Which Messages Go Viral and Which Ones Don't](#)
- [Are You Repeatable & Retweetable?](#)
- [How to Use Behavioural Triggers to Spur Social Media Actions](#)

- [Storytelling for Behaviour Change](#)
- [Social Media 101: How To Use Storytelling](#)

Example:

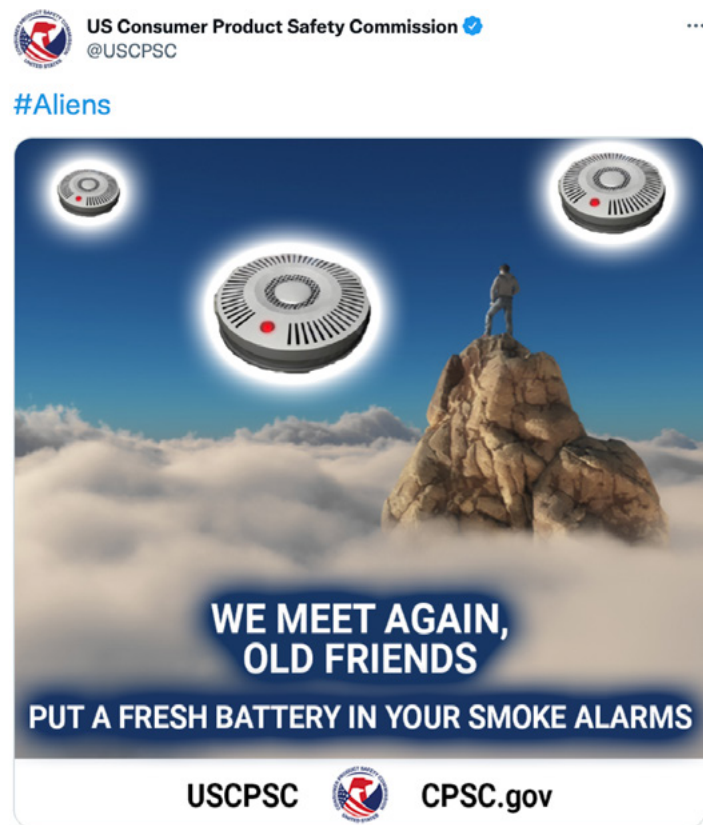
Simple



<https://twitter.com/KS1729/status/1236848918849294336>



Unexpected



<https://twitter.com/USCPSC/status/1255226075254263813>

Concrete



https://twitter.com/ali_noorani_teh/status/1231800964945862661

Stories



LOS PRIMEROS AUXILIOS PARA TODOS CRUZ ROJA CHILENA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ypYUMJGeU4>

Credible

ONEMI Chile
22 de enero de 2020 · 🌐

Ante las Alertas Meteorológicas emitidas por la **Dirección Meteorológica de Chile** que pronostican precipitaciones y tormentas eléctricas en el Norte del país, ten en cuenta las siguientes recomendaciones 👉

RECOMENDACIONES PARA LLUVIAS ALTIPLÁNICAS - ZONA NORTE

- ✓ Reconoce riesgos como la **activación de quebradas** secas e inactivas y probables **crecidas de cauces**.
- ✓ Si llueve, **aléjate de quebradas** o sectores bajos, es probable que escurra agua con sedimento, con alto poder de arrastre. **No intentes cruzar**, incluso en vehículo.
- ✓ Conduce con precaución, **calle y caminos** podrían estar con **barro o resbalosos**, dificultando la conducción.
- ✓ Evita salir de casa o conducir con **vientos fuertes, polvo y arena en suspensión** impiden una buena visibilidad.
- ✓ Evita internarte en **zonas montañosas** sin el conocimiento y equipamiento necesario, especialmente cuando el **pronóstico meteorológico** no lo permite.
- ✓ Mantente informado sobre el **estado del tiempo** y tome las **precauciones** necesarias.

60 3 comentarios 26 veces compartido

Compartir

<https://www.facebook.com/OficinaNacionalDeEmergencia/posts/2973526049344802>





CICR
@CICR_es

...

Recuerda hablar con los adultos mayores de tu familia. El riesgo de contraer [#coronavirus](#) [#covid19](#) es mayor para ellos y pueden estar preocupados o confundidos.

Para más consejos sobre cómo cuidar de tus seres queridos, consulta [@IFRC_es](#) y [@opsoms](#) ➡️❤️

[@mariasemilla_](#)

Translate Tweet

A DISTANCIA PERO SIEMPRE JUNTOS



https://twitter.com/CICR_es/status/1242605185513512964



6^D How will you make the message actionable?

Importance ★★

Time ★

Cost ★

Summary

Be strategic with the language and concepts you use to make your message easier for people to understand and act upon.

Why is it important?

The language you use in your social media messages can make a big difference in how well your audience understands what you intend, and in whether it will motivate them to take action. Know your audience's literacy and education levels, and levels and write to match that.

Here are some tips for writing on social media to spark action:

- Write in a conversational style so you sound like a person, not a press release.
- Be as specific as possible when you tell people what to do.
 - No: "Stay out of a thunderstorm."
 - Yes: "If you are outside during a thunderstorm, seek shelter immediately in a fully enclosed vehicle or building."
- Speak directly to your reader – use the word "you" rather than talking about what people in general should do (if culturally appropriate).
- Use the active voice, not passive.
 - No: "The community was flooded by the raging river."
 - Yes: "The raging river flooded the community."
- Keep messages short and simple.
- Use positive action words.
 - No: "You should not wait to call the Fire Department."
 - Yes: "Call the Fire Department immediately."
- Use plain language without jargon, acronyms or "text speak" abbreviations.
- Focus on one key message or theme per post. Avoid more than three different components to the message.
- Ask questions! By invoking curiosity about the answer, people will be more likely to read the rest of your post, watch your video or click the link.

For disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction messages in particular:

- Repeat the same core messages (presented in different ways) consistently over time.
- Whenever possible, use evidence-based information to inform message development.
- Be careful to avoid fueling fear and anxiety.
- Emphasize the effectiveness of the recommended actions.
- Reinforce the audience's self-efficacy in carrying out the activities.
- Address both all-hazards preparedness and content for the specific disasters that are most common in your location.



Key Considerations:

1

What is the call to action in your message? Ultimately you want your audience to engage in the desired behaviour. But before they get there, interim steps might be to click a link to your website, to subscribe to your SMS reminder messages, to watch a video, to join a movement, to share the post...

2

Think about why someone would want to share your post with their friends. Is it relevant, interesting, useful, fun? Making it shareable means that it will spread to more people, increasing your audience.

3

Tailor your posts to match the style of each social network, in terms of how people communicate and what they post about. One platform, such as TikTok might use short videos, where you can demonstrate an action, while another like Twitter is more text-based, focused on reading and having conversations.



Action steps:

1

Create messages using language that helps your audience understand exactly what they are supposed to do.

2

Include calls to action that will get them closer to actually performing the desired behaviour.

3

Create messages that are tailored to appropriate actions on the social networks you will post them on.

For more information:

- [CDC's Guide to Writing for Social Media](#)
- [This Is How To Write For Social Media To Create The Best Posts](#)
- [Plain Language Guidelines](#)
- [How to Design SBCC Messages](#)
- [Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication: Messages and Audiences](#)



Example:



Acción Climática

Acciones que Reflejan Humanidad



Preparate para fenómenos climáticos más extremos



Capacitate en Primeros Auxilios.



Prestá atención a alertas sobre temperaturas extremas.



Desarrollá un plan familiar para desastres.



Informá y visitá a tus vecinos en periodos de temperaturas extremas.



Doná a un fondo para desastres.



Unite como voluntario/a por la acción climática.



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cruzrojagt  #FacesOfClimateChange 

Nuestra comida, agua y forma de vida están en juego. Las acciones que tomamos hoy impactan nuestro futuro.

64w



indiradeleon Si desean talar 20 árboles en mi colonia para poner un paso peatonal y yo trato de evitarlo poniendo denuncia y oponiéndome... estoy haciendo lo correcto?

64w Reply



33 likes

SEPTEMBER 16, 2019

Add a comment... Post

<https://www.instagram.com/p/B2fc9yDIRfj/>



Horry County 911  @HorryCounty911 · Sep 5, 2019

Our area is already experiencing power outages.

Make sure your phone is charged in case of an emergency. ⚡🔌📱

#BePrepared #HurricaneDorian





1



3



5



<https://twitter.com/HorryCounty911/status/1169554475268366336?s=20>

6^E

How will you construct your post?

Importance ★★

Time ★

Cost ★

Summary

The way you present your key message and the elements you choose to include in each post can influence behaviour change in various ways.

Why is it important?

Prior to creating a post, decide on which social network(s) you will share it, so that it can be *customized specifically to fit the conventions of the intended platforms*.

Your organizational voice plays a big role in the “personality” and style of your social media outreach. While some organizations prefer to keep a neutral, businesslike tone, others offer a more fun, friendly, or even snarky, approach. Create a style guide that will help manage the design of your posts, to keep the look and tone consistent even if multiple people are involved in creating them.

Next, in what format will you “wrap” your message? Many different types of social media content offer opportunities to be creative and share the message in a variety of ways. For example, you can provide a straightforward fact-focused message, or you could share the story of a real person that makes the same point.

You can add on many options to your message to make it more effective:

- **Visuals or video** can reinforce a text-based message (and vice versa).
- A **link** will back up your call to action with the opportunity to learn more or get the tools needed to take action.
- **#Hashtags** are a way of helping people find your posts when they're looking for a particular topic or event, or to build a community of like-minded people. But go easy on the use of hashtags, unless it's common to use a lot on that social network, such as on Instagram.
- **Tags** of other people or organizations can help draw attention to your posts by the people who might be interested or able to amplify their reach.
- **Threads or ‘stories’** are a way of connecting individual posts to share a bigger message.





Key Considerations:

1

Determining your organizational “voice” on social media is a decision to make in conjunction with your marketing department or organizational leadership and should match the overall branding style that suits how you want your audience to think about you.

2

Depending on which social networks you decide to use, you will likely have differing options and emphasis on the amount of text, incorporation of graphics, and use of video. You might focus on one element or a combination to help tell your story and reinforce your message.

3

Shares or retweets of other people’s or organizations’ social media content in your feed can diversify and round out the content you offer, while building engagement with your community and partners.



Action steps:

1

Create a social media style guide that lays out details of your organizational voice, as well as any guidelines regarding the general look and feel of your posts for consistency.

2

Based on the conventions of the social media platform you are designing for, brainstorm a variety of different content formats that can help you get across each of your messages.

3

Develop a plan for the use of relevant hashtags, links and tags in your social media outreach.

For more information:

- [50 Social Media Content Ideas](#)
- [37 Social Media Ideas for Nonprofits](#)
- [How to Create a Social Media Style Guide: 10 Things to Include](#)
- [How to Use Hashtags: A Quick and Simple Guide for Every Network](#)
- [How to Use Social Media Stories to Boost Engagement](#)



Example:

Ideas for types of SM4BC content:

- **Promotional** – reinforce credibility of your organization
- **Educational** – provide facts and context related to the behaviour
- **Engagement** – use conversation starters to build community
- **News/trending topics** – show relevance of the behaviour or problem to current events or topics being talked about on social media
- **Storytelling** – share stories of real people or draw people in with a fictional entertainment education story
- **Contests/challenges** – give followers an incentive to share your post or engage in the behaviour
- **Inspirational/quotes** – offer an inspirational quote related to the benefits of adopting the behaviour
- **Humor/memes** – make your followers laugh and see things in a new way
- **Lists** – provide ideas or resources to enable the behaviour
- **Polls/questions** – gauge relevant knowledge and attitudes
- **Curate community generated content** – engage your audience in customizing solutions for themselves and share them with others
- **How-tos/Demos** – provide skills for carrying out the behaviour
- **Livestreaming videos/live chats** – interact with people in real time to answer questions, share events and build community
- **Interviews** – share viewpoints and stories from relevant social influencers or peers to provide social proof and build norms





Worksheet 6 - MESSAGE STRATEGY WORKSHEET ACCESS WORKSHEET ONLINE [HERE](#)

1.

Based on your objectives and key behavioural levers of change for each of your priority audiences, identify the main outcomes you will be creating messages to support (i.e., what do you want people to do, think or feel as a result of the messages?).

Audience	
Behaviour	
Levers of Change/Objectives	Desired Outcomes to Support
Barriers	
Motivators	
Social Influence	
Windows of Opportunity	
Other Social Media Objectives	

2. For each behavioural lever of change you've identified for each of your priority audiences, create a message map.

Audience:		
Lever of Change:		
Key Message 1	Key Message 2	Key Message 3
Supporting Facts	Supporting Facts	Supporting Facts

3.

For each of your key messages, what are some potential behaviour change intervention approaches you can use that will address the relevant levers of change for that audience? ([Refer to chart in 6B](#))

Audience:		
Key Message:		
Lever of Change	Intervention Approach	Theme/Post Ideas

4.

How will you make your messages memorable?

Audience:		
Behaviour		
Core Message		
Message Element	Ideas for Presenting the Message	
Simple		
Unexpected		
Concrete		
Credible		
Emotional		
Stories		

5.

Before you create each social media post, consider the following questions:

a) Who is the intended audience?

b) What is the purpose of the post?

- Reduce a barrier
- Promote a motivator
- Engage social influence
- Provide a cue to action
- Build organizational credibility
- Develop relationships with online community
- Other: _____

c) What is the behaviour to be changed?

5.

Before
you create
each social
media post,
consider the
following
questions:

- d) Which specific behavioural lever of change for your audience will you be addressing in this message?

Barriers

- Knowledge
- Belief/attitude
- Self-efficacy
- Skills
- Ability
- Opportunity/accessibility
- Perceived negative consequences

Motivators

- Perceived positive consequences
- Pleasure
- Identity/aspirations/values

Social Factors

- Perceived social norms
- Beliefs about what others will think
- Social influencers
- Cultural beliefs and practices
- Social connection

Windows of Opportunity

- Time
- Location
- Event
- State of mind

- Additional details about the selected lever of change:

- e) What is the basic message to be conveyed in this post?

- f) Which behaviour change intervention approach will you use to address that specific lever of change?

- Challenge
- Commitment
- Demonstration
- Education

5.

Before
you create
each social
media post,
consider the
following
questions:

- Emotion
- Goal-setting
- Habit development
- Personalization
- Planning
- Recognition
- Reinforcement
- Referrals
- Reminders
- Social modeling
- Social support
- Tips
- Training
- Other:

- g) How will you incorporate the message and/or intervention approach into a social media post (what type of content will it be)?

- h) What is the call to action (if any)?

- i) Which social network(s) will this message be posted to?

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Pinterest
- YouTube
- Blog
- Snapchat
- Tiktok
- LinkedIn
- Whatsapp
- Other:

5.

Before you create each social media post, consider the following questions:

- j) What social media elements will you include in the post?
 - Text
 - Graphic
 - Video
 - Link
 - Hashtag(s)
 - Tags
 - Thread/Stories