

Road Safety Advocacy Toolkit

SELECTING MESSENGERS



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Acknowledgement



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Selecting Messengers

Why is it important?

Choosing the right messenger is as important as crafting the right message. In all media advocacy work it is vitally important to take some time to consider who will be the most credible carrier of your message. People only believe those they trust, and if they don't know or trust your messenger, the message may not resonate effectively. As a result, it's critical to put yourself in the shoes of your target audience, and think about who they want to hear from. For instance, sometimes policy skills are important, but many times having first-hand knowledge of the problem or being a technical expert, celebrity, religious leader or organizational leader may matter more.

What needs to be done?

Carefully considering your target audiences and then working through this tool will assist you in linking the best messengers with your key messages and target audiences

- When selecting messengers the first place to start is your list of target audiences. The GRSP Selecting your Target Audience tool will assist you to develop your list of target audiences. You'll also want to have your advocacy plan at hand, as well as your media advocacy action plan, to ensure you're considering your policy objectives and strategies.
- Using these resources, conduct a brainstorm exercise, identifying messengers who can influence your target audiences. Your initial list should be exhaustive. At this stage try not to limit your

brainstorm those within your organization. It's important to consider diversity when determining your messengers. Choosing multiple messengers and combining their voices can demonstrate a broad base of support for your issue. For instance, you might consider two messengers who bring different appeal: An expert on the subject matter and the other who knows the target audience. This tactic can increase the impact of your activity.

- Spokespeople from outside your organization could include:
 - Partner organizations
 - Individuals affected by a road crash
 - Key opinion leaders who are engaged in your campaign
 - Technical experts on the issue
 - Supportive decision makers, such as MPs
- For each potential messenger on your list, use this checklist of criteria to narrow down the field. Ask yourself: Does this messenger...
 - Already have an existing relationship with the audience, or the ability to appeal to them?
 - Have the ability to demonstrate knowledge and insight into the issue?
 - Have credibility with the audience?
 - Have the ability to refrain from political comments unrelated to the issue?

- Once you have a list of potential spokespeople for each target audience, narrow your list down even further by identifying the most realistic options. For instance, your Project Director may be extremely busy and not always accessible to speak to the media. Similarly, high-level politicians, like MPs, can be good messengers but are difficult to rely on since they are often unavailable.
- Fill out the tool on page 5. Don't feel you have to enter every section, just as much as you can. The more information you have the more you will be able to mobilize the right spokesperson for each media advocacy activity.
- Once you've refined your list, match the spokespeople to specific activities in your action plan. For instance, if you're planning a press conference addressing the major impacts of road crashes on communities, you may want to choose both your Project Director and a person directly affected by a road crash to serve as spokespeople. Also be sure to tailor your messages to the spokesperson delivering them. For guidance, please refer to the GRSP Developing Key Messages Tool.
- Finally, preparing your spokespeople is extremely important, particularly those messengers who are from outside your organization. The best way to prepare your spokespeople is through a media training that includes a session on key messages. Ideally this training should be held during the kick-off to your new campaign. Prior to each media activity, you should also brief your messengers and provide them with specific talking points and data tailored to their interest and relationship to the issue. The GRSP Executing Media Advocacy Tactics tool has tips for preparing and conducting interviews with the media.



Tool 4

SELECTING MESSENGERS TOOL

Use this tool to strategically select your messengers. Remember to specifically list what actions you want them to take and which of your target audiences the messenger can address. *This tool has been adapted from: UNICEF, Advocacy Toolkit, 2010*

Target Audience	Name of target audience	
Messenger (Consider several different messengers)	Individual or group that can influence a target audience.	
Position	What has the messenger said or written about this issue? Add notes from research. Where does the messenger stand in relation to support the advocacy issue?	
Power	What level of influence does the messenger have over the target?	
Knowledge	How much does the messenger know about the issues?	
Credibility	How credible is the messenger in the eyes of the target audience?	
Access to the messenger	How and when does the advocate interact with messenger? Does the advocate have the capacity to engage with the messenger?	
Access to target	How and when does the messenger interact with the target?	
Action	What will the advocacy strategy encourage the messenger to do?	
Risks	What are the risks of engaging the messenger?	



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