

# Communicating Up, Down and Out into the Field

June 1, 2016

# Today's Agenda

1	Welcome & Introductions	9:00-9:30
2	Communications strengths & weaknesses	9:30-10:30
3	Walking Break	10:30-10:45
4	Communicating Up	10:45-12:15
5	Lunch	12:15-1:00
6	Getting the Message Right	1:00-3:00
7	Planning and Goal Setting	3:00-3:45
8	Wrap Up, Next Steps	3:45-4:00

# Today's Objectives

By the end of the day all participants will...

Understand their **communications strengths, weaknesses** and areas where their peers can be a resource

Be equipped with **strategies to communicate** with their colleagues and leadership

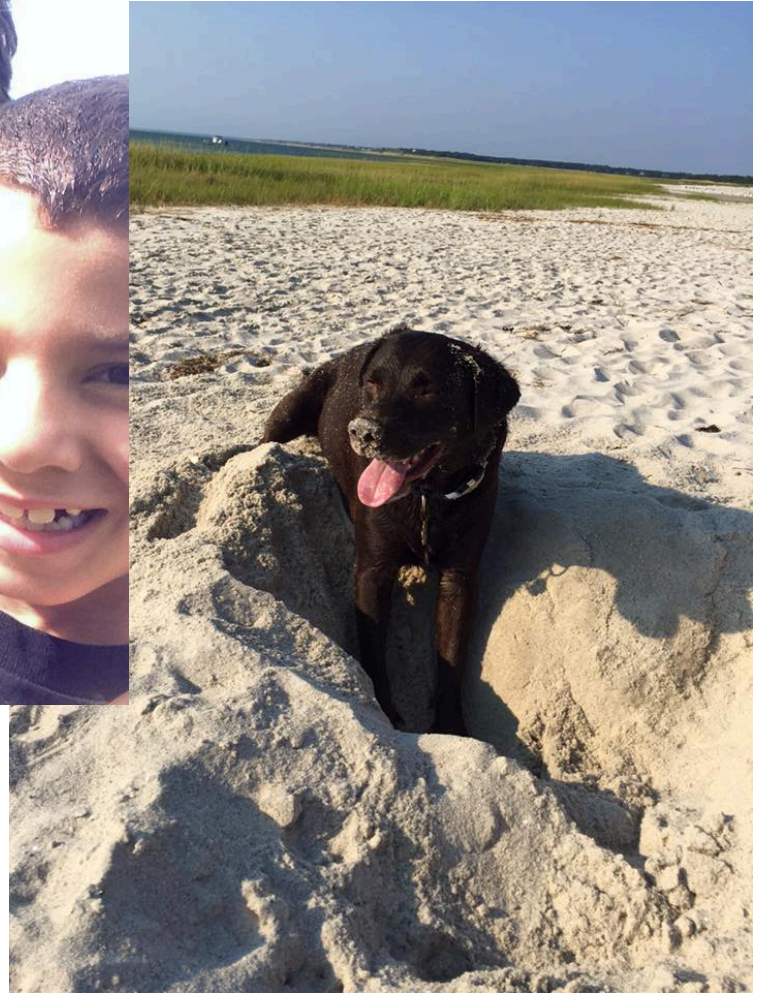
Know their **three key messages** to convey and have a plan to deliver them

Set **communications goals** to achieve before the next convening

# Let's define how we will work together today

- Hide your cell phones
- Treat this as a safe space (“What happens in Baltimore stays in Baltimore”)
- If you don't comment, safe to assume you agree
- What else?

# Who am I and why should you listen to me?





Massachusetts Department of  
ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY  
EDUCATION



education**first**  
experience | quality | results



# Now that you know me, who are all of you?

Turn to the person beside you and spend a few minutes comparing notes on 3 questions:

What's your  
**name?**

What do you  
do? (**not just  
your title**)

What is your  
**burning issue?**



Then the fun part: Introduce your partner to me

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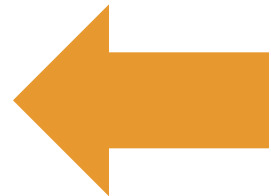
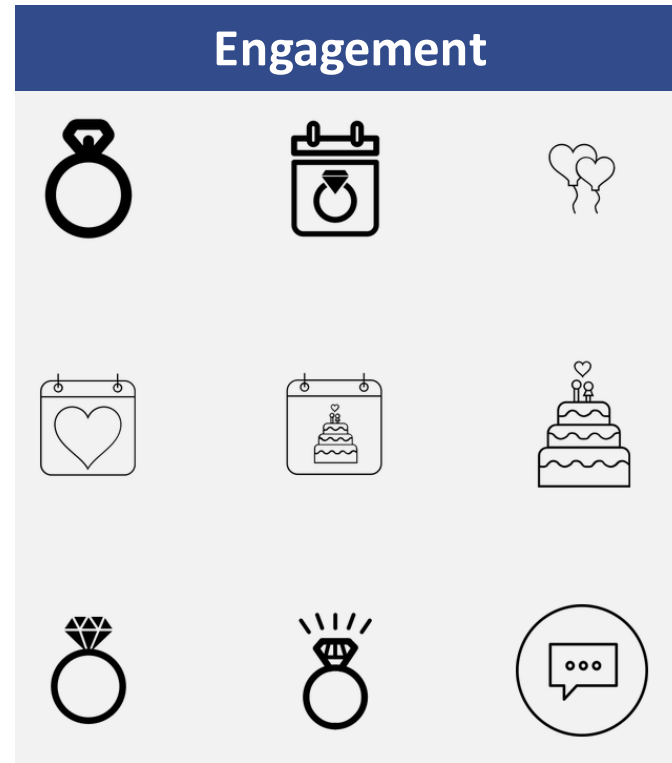
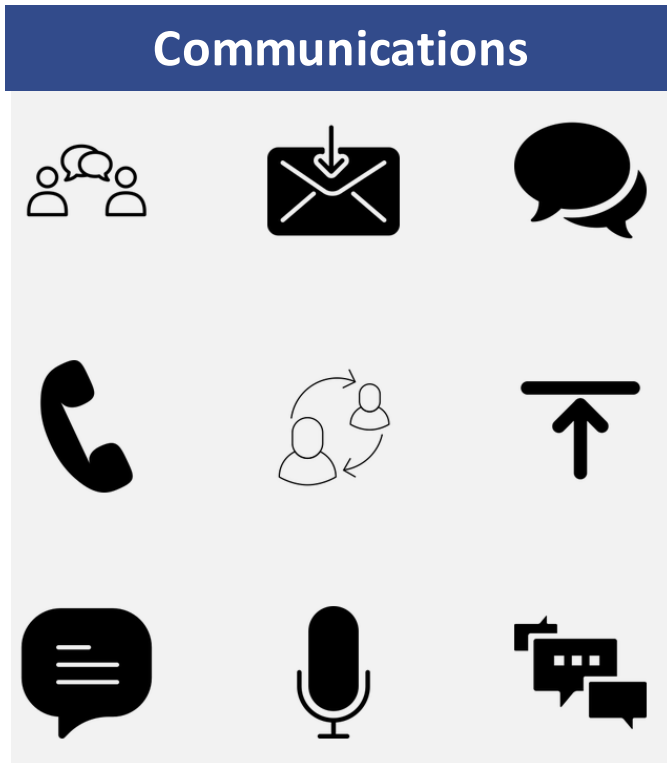
7 Planning and Goal Setting

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8 Wrap Up, Next Steps



# Communications and Engagement mean different things to different people



What do **Communications** and **Engagement** mean to you?

It's important to think about the purpose behind your efforts to communicate or engage. Why are you doing it?



# Self-Reflection: What are your communication and engagement strengths and weaknesses?

Pick a flip chart on the wall and answer these questions:

What are your  
communications and  
engagement **strengths**?

What are your  
communications and  
engagement **challenges**?

What was your **most  
successful communications  
or engagement** effort this  
year?

If you could only **improve**  
in either communications  
or engagement, what  
would it be? Why?

When you're finished, take a gallery walk and make notes  
on other people's charts to indicate issues you share,  
questions you have, and ways you can help

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# Self-Reflection: What are your communication and engagement strengths and weaknesses?

**Grab a partner and take a 15 minute walk**

Compare notes on recent challenges.

**What common issues have you faced?**

**How can you help one another?**

**What ideas can you share?**

**Entrance ticket:**

**When you return, write one thing you learned on your walk that you can use in your practice on the back wall.**

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# What does “communicating up” mean to you?





# What do we know about communicating up?

- What is communicating up?
- What are the specific challenges that make it so hard?
- How does race/gender/age fit into the issue?
- What are the best ways to counter these challenges?

**What are some of the experiences that you have had  
“communicating up” in your practice?**

## Role Play 1: Let's play one of these scenarios out

**2**

**volunteers**

**1**

**scenario**

**8**

**observers**

### **Listen for:**

- Defensive or passive language
- Missed opportunities

### **Consider:**

- How else could have been said?
- How could this have been handled differently?

## Role Play 2: Let's play all of these scenarios out

**10**

**volunteers**

**2**

**groups of 3**  
(+1 group of 4)

**5**

**observers**

- Pick a scenario
- Assign 3 roles: Person in authority, employee, observer
- While the observer remains quiet, play out the scene
- After 5 minutes, the observer provides feedback
- Rotate roles

# So what's the solution here?

- What worked best?
- What didn't work at all?
- What's the **1 thing** you learned that you can put into action immediately in your world?



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# First, the basics on messaging

Identify your audience, and decide in advance what you want them to **do, think, or feel**

Get your point across in 3 messages, and make them **short, precise and “sticky”**

Speak to your audience in a **language they can relate to** and understand

Use real **examples, data and other evidence** to make your case



# Effective messaging includes emotional, rational and logical elements

## Emotional

How do you want your target to feel?

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*This is your overarching message*

## Rational

What do you want your target audience to think?

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*These are your 3 key messages that you want people to remember*

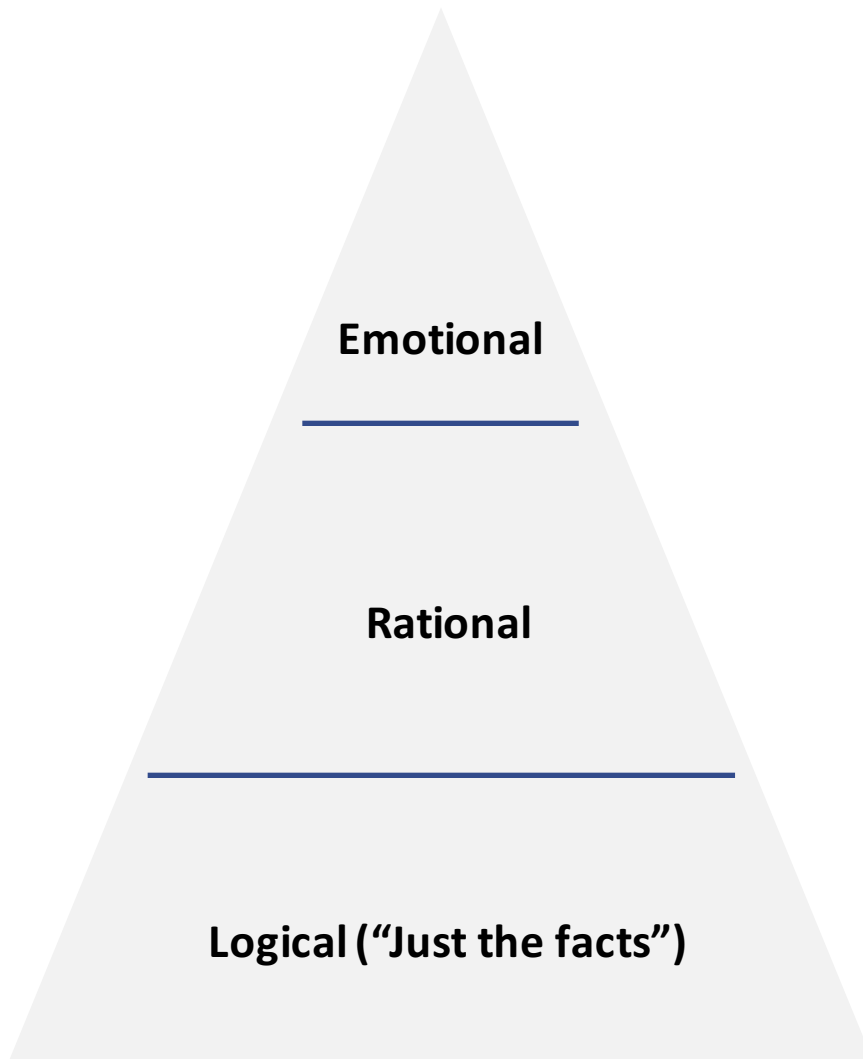
## Logical (“Just the facts”)

What details do you want your target audience to know?

*These are your proof points that back up your rational message*

# The three types of messages work to support one another

**Aim for something like this:**



## **Emotional**

- Rational
  - Logical
  - Logical
  - Logical
- Rational
  - Logical
  - Logical
  - Logical
- Rational
  - Logical
  - Logical
  - Logical

## For example:

All children have the potential to achieve great things, and it's up to us – as the adults – to help them get there.

1. In the past, we have had different academic standards in every state, and too many state standards have not prepared students for college or careers.
  - a) Data on remediation
  - b) Data on college completion
  - c) Data on employability of students who don't earn a degree
2. The Common Core State Standards will provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so that teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them.
  - a) Example of what this means
  - b) Details on data
  - c) Details on how teachers feel about this

# Your turn: What are you trying to reach, and what do you want to say?

Think about your burning issue: **Who do you need to reach?**

Develop **3 key messages** directed at that audience that will help to resolve – or at least explain - your issue

Share your issue, your audience and your draft messages with a partner. **Refine.**

# Your turn: Practice your elevator pitch



You just stepped  
into an elevator  
with your boss ...

... you have  
something  
important to say...

... and you only  
have until the 12<sup>th</sup>  
floor to say it.

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# Now that you know what you need to say, craft your plan

Think about what can you **realistically accomplish** in the next 3-6 months?

Draft your 3-6 month **action plan**, including your action steps, timeline, potential obstacles and solutions

Plan your **immediate next steps**: What can you begin next week?

Commit to **at least one thing** you can do before this group meets again in August



## Use a simple planning template structure

Action Step	Challenge	Solution	Deadline
Finalize messages	Uncertain of approach	Share with XYZ for feedback	June 15

When you're finished, take a gallery walk to see what other people have planned.

**See a good idea? Steal it and add it to your plan.**

So ... now what?





**Thank you!**  
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