



Advocacy &
Communication
SOLUTIONS

ARIZONA OHIO WASHINGTON, DC WWW.ADVOCACYANDCOMMUNICATION.ORG

ADVOCACY & COMMUNICATION SOLUTIONS, LLC

Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) Training May 17 - May 18, 2017

Lori McClung, President and Scarlett Boudier, Vice President

ACS: Who We Are

- Established in 2004
- Woman and minority owned and led
- Award-winning national firm headquartered in Cleveland, OH with offices in Columbus, OH, Washington, DC & Phoenix, AZ
- Core clients are nonprofits, government and philanthropy



ACS: What We Do

ADVOCACY

- Government Relations
- State Lobbying
- Federal Lobbying
- Advocacy and Lobbying Training
- Situation Analysis
- Plan Development & Implementation

COMMUNICATION

- Media Relations
- Strategic Communication
- Analysis & Planning
- Crisis Communication
- Message Development
- Communication Training

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

- Long-term Advocacy Planning
- Long-term Communication
- Planning Organizational Strategy

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Facilitation Training
- Spokesperson Training
- Organizational Development
- Advocacy and Lobbying Training
- Communication Training
- One-on-One Coaching
- Collective Impact
- Tools and Research



ACS: Our Areas of Expertise

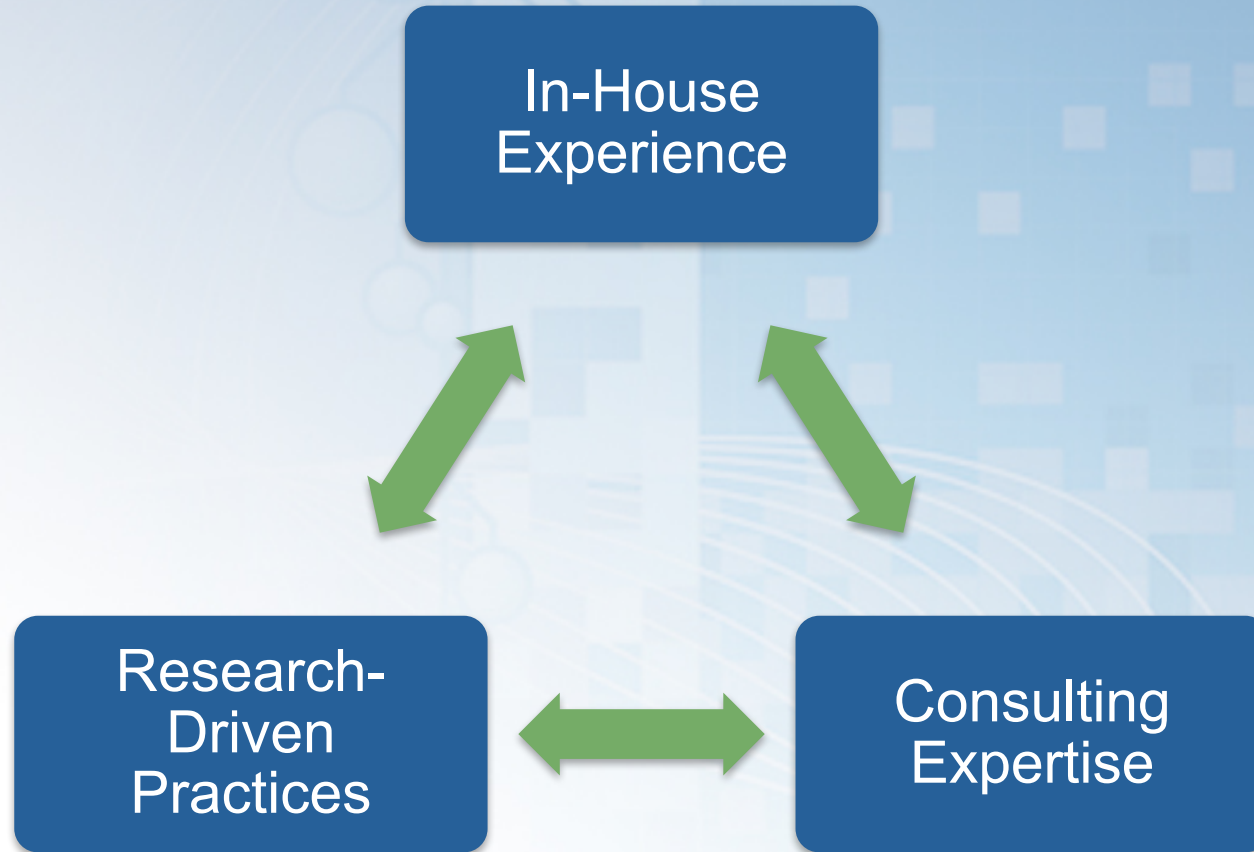
- Early Childhood
- K-12 Education
- Workforce Development
- Medicaid
- Health and Human Services



ACS Geographic Client Focus



ACS: The Difference



Today's Agenda

- Strategic communication: what it is and how best to use it
- Building your communication infrastructure and prowess...strategically
- Messaging
- Leading from the middle



LET'S GET STARTED!

Extroverts

- Think while speaking...or not at all
- Are energized by interaction

Introverts

- Speak up when prompted
- Write down thoughts based on agenda in advance
- Round-robins



Icebreaker

- How do you work best?
- How do you communicate?
- How do you want others to communicate?
- What challenges have you had based on those preferences?
- SOLUTIONS
- SHARE with others



Survey results

Timing: now—Spring 2018

Audiences

- Internal: agency leadership, peers, other colleagues
- External: stakeholders, grantees, advocate groups, etc.

Challenges

- Communicating to those with little time or knowledge
- Capacity
- Complexity



Strategic communication

IS...

Is NOT...

Strategic vs tactical

The ACS experience....learn from mistakes



Strategic Communication Planning Framework



Strategic Communication Planning Framework

CONTEXT

1. Landscape
2. Goals
3. Assets, capacity, current practices, data & research

PLAN

4. Target audiences, strategies, tactics, messages, messengers, and materials

IMPLEMENT

5. Action plan, timeline, and measurements
6. Implement, training, support, and evaluation



Context

Context Activity

1. Landscape
2. Goals
3. Assets, Challenges, Capacity, Current Practices, and Data & Research



Plan

Planning Activity

4. Target audiences

- Strategies
- Tactics
- Messages
- Messengers
- Materials



Audience

- Meet people where they are
- Recognize all types of stakeholders
- Advocacy and communication begin at home

*“You must work as closely with your opponents as with your supporters”
(from Leadership on the Line)*



Implement

5. Action plan

- Timeline
- Measurement

6. Implementation

- Training
- Ongoing Support
- Evaluation



Time to Journal!

1. Where has communication saved you?
2. Where has communication failed you?
3. What scares you the most about proactively engaging in internal communication?
4. What is easiest for you in communication?
5. What excites you in communication?



Internal communication challenges

- Effectively and efficiently communicating with those who are too busy
- Educating without insulting colleagues about the significance of early childhood.
- Communicating the needs of the field to those who don't know or understand the field

**THINK STRATEGY AND TACTICS:
NOT MESSAGES**



Network Mapping

- OVERALL GOAL
- GOAL OF THE MOMENT
- TECHNOLOGY AND PERSONALITY REMINDER
- MAPPING QUESTIONS



Developing effective messages

You place yourself on the line when you tell people what they NEED to hear rather than what they WANT to hear (*Leadership on the Line*)

Science says: stories are fundamental to build empathy

Reality says: emotion and personal belief

1. Do more than present the facts
2. Meet people halfway with stories
3. Avoid solution shutdowns
4. Tap into new tools



Messaging

**What do we mean by
“messaging”?**



ACS Messaging Tips

Tips to Remember:

TIP 1

Mission is not message.

TIP 2

Concisely and clearly define the work you do.

TIP 3

Avoid industry jargon.

TIP 4

Explain why it matters.

TIP 5

Meet people where they are.

TIP 6

Demonstrate why they should care and consequences of inaction.



ACS Messaging Tips

TIP 7

Don't just tell people the problem, tell them the solution and invite them to help implement the solution.

TIP 8

Use positive language.

TIP 9

Be concrete.

TIP 10

Tie to a popular issue.

TIP 11

Demonstrate outcomes.

TIP 12

Use simple language to describe your idea.



ACS Messaging Tips

TIP 13

Use real life examples or a story.

TIP 14

Practice.

TIP 15

Repeat your messages.

TIP 16

Use data.

TIP 17

Connect messages to a positive outcome or result.

TIP 18

Give jargon the boot!



Message Creation Checklist

It is important for your message to communicate who you are, what you do, why it matters and why people should care. Once you have draft messages and a plan for sharing them, use this quick checklist to double check that you are on target and most effective in your communication.



Message Creation Checklist

Do your messages...	If not...
✓ Relate back to your communication goals?	Revisit your communication goals and make sure your messages will resonate with your target audience and accomplish your objectives.
✓ Reflect your current communication approach? It's easy for messaging to become stale or outdated.	Set aside time every year to refresh your messaging and make changes to your communication approach.
✓ Roll off your (or your messengers') tongue?	Practice messages so they become natural and can be integrated into any conversation or presentation.
✓ Avoid industry jargon?	Simplify! How would you explain it to a 5th grader?



Message Creation Checklist

Do your messages...	If not...
✓ Use positive language?	Find the upside and make that your approach.
✓ State a problem and a solution, never one or the other?	Rephrase messages to include a solution. If you don't have a solution to recommend, find another problem to address.
✓ Use data to back up points, without being overly academic?	Choose one or two compelling points and simplify the way you present them.
✓ Talk about benefits to society, not just affected children, youth, or families?	Think about what's in it for those who do not have children or a stake in the investment.



Message Creation Checklist

Do your messages...	If not...
✓ Tie to “popular” issues in your community—autism, developmental delays, infant mortality, school dropout, school to prison pipeline, or violence?	Think about how your issue relates to the issues that are topmost on the minds of your audiences? Using these issues can allow messages like the long-used brain development argument to be “refreshed”.
✓ Meet people where they are?	Put yourself in the place of your audience member. What’s most important from his or her perspective? Understand where the audience is coming from and their values and tie it to that.



Message Creation Checklist

Do your messages...	If not...
✓ Use a personal story to get the point across?	Find a story from your network and use it to bring your issue to life.
✓ Relay a simple and clear idea? Get to the point and do not try to over-explain the issue.	Help your audience understand your issue. Remember that less is more. One compelling sentence always trumps a ho-hum paragraph.
✓ Use the right messengers?	Identify the people who can influence your target audience and incorporate them in your messaging strategy.



Develop and practice your message

Scenario 1: Communicate the value of high-quality early care and education to internal **and** external audiences

Scenario 2: Communicate internally **and** externally about changing funding priorities.

Scenario 3: Communicate about the value of a high quality workforce to internal **and** external audiences. Why is it important to children and providers? (state specific: tie to QRIS, credentialing, etc.)

JAZZERCISE!



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Challenging communication

Racial bias

Private quiz

Gender & racial bias

Where does gender or racial bias come up in your work?

What does it look like?

How does it affect others?

How are you involved? Or not?



Let's Journal

Thinking about what we have discussed in racial and gender bias in communication, what could you do differently in your work?

Who and/or what organization or agency does a good job of communicating about early care and education? Or about other issues? What can you learn from them and apply to your work?

GOOD MORNING!

RECAP AND REFLECTIONS

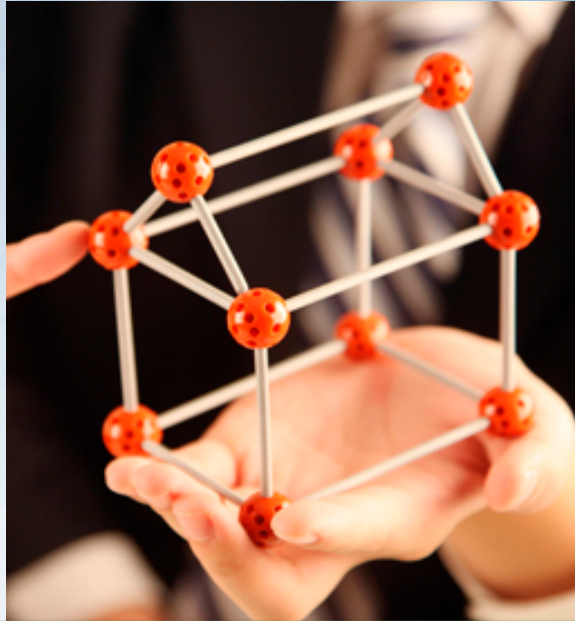


Framing and Pivoting

- What is Framing?
- What is Pivoting?



What is Framing?



Framing is the way someone talks about a particular issue



Headline: “Muslim boy arrested over clock withdraws from US school”

“A 14-year-old Muslim boy has withdrawn from the Dallas high school that got him arrested for a homemade clock mistaken for a possible bomb. Mohamed said the family was still deciding where to send the children to school.”

“Numerous schools have offered to enroll Ahmed, his father said. But Mohamed said he wants to give his son a breather before making a decision. ”

“The turmoil surrounding Ahmed's case has had a harmful effect on the teen, Mohamed said, adding that his son has lost his appetite and is not sleeping well.”

[Ahmed has said](#) he brought the clock he made to MacArthur High School in Irving last week to show a teacher.”

“Officials say he was arrested after another teacher saw it and became concerned. Ahmed wasn't charged, but he was suspended from school for three days.”



Headline: *“Turns Out the Little Muslim Boy Didn’t Invent a Digital Clock, Just Transferred it to Pencil Case. Sorry.”*

“Unless you’ve had your head planted firmly somewhere dark and extremely smelly, you’ve no doubt seen all of the hoopla being made over a Muslim boy who made a digital clock and then was arrested because his teacher thought it might be a bomb.”

“Liberals wasted no time turning this into their latest pet cause, as social justice warriors online immediately created a hashtag — #IStandWithAhmed — because you can’t rail and rage against the deeply rooted — and highly mythical — racism toward Muslims that was clearly expressed in this case without a hashtag.”

“Regardless of Ahmed’s intentions, the truth of the matter is that the fury and rage over the incident says far more about us as a culture than it does about the boy who is now the center of attention, the new spokesman for equality being used by CAIR to push forward their agenda.”



Headline: “*Inventing While Muslim*”

“A 14-year-old Texas boy tried to impress his teacher with a homemade clock in the first few weeks of high school. Ahmed Mohamed’s invention landed him in handcuffs when officials at his school in Irving thought it resembled a bomb and called police.”

“A police spokesman, James McLellan, told the newspaper that while Ahmed never said the device he built was anything but a clock, officers suspect he wasn’t telling them the whole story.”

“Ahmed was led out of the school at 3 p.m., his hands cuffed behind him. He was sent to a juvenile detention center where he was fingerprinted, and then reunited with his parents. The principal suspended him for three days.”

“The Guardian [adds](#) that this is the second high-profile case involving Islam in Irving, about 15 miles northwest of Dallas. Beth Van Duyne, Irving’s mayor, “became something of a national celebrity [after she accused Islamic leaders](#) of “bypassing American courts” by offering voluntary Shariah-law mediation to worshippers.”

Telling Your Story in Your Way (Framing)



- Define the issue
- Take control.
- Tell your story.
- Tell it first.
- Tell it truthfully
- Otherwise, it will be told for you



Positioning the Elements in a Story

3 V's:

VICTIM

VILLAIN

VINDICATOR



Headline: “Muslim boy arrested over clock withdraws from US school”

Positioning the Characters in a Story

*“A **14-year-old Muslim boy** has withdrawn from the **Dallas high school** that got him arrested for a homemade clock mistaken for a possible bomb. Mohamed said the family was still deciding where to send the children to school.”*

*“**Numerous schools** have offered to enroll Ahmed, his father said. But Mohamed said he wants to give his son a breather before making a decision.”*

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Source: Associated Press. September 22, 2015



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Source: <http://conservativebyte.com/2015/09/turns-out-the-little-muslim-boy-didnt-invent-a-digital-clock-just-transferred-it-to-pencil-case-sorry/#> . September 19, 2015



Headline: “*Inventing While Muslim*”

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Source: <http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2015/09/inventing-while-muslim/405586/> September 16, 2015

**If the facts don't fit the
frame, the
facts...regardless of
accuracy...will be
discarded**



Pivoting

Pivoting helps you:

- Control your message
- Control the conversation
- Ensure your story is told your way

****NOT “spinning” or avoiding. It allows you to ENGAGE**



Rules of Pivoting

1. Listen to the question
2. Build a bridge
3. Stick to your key messages and frame
4. Never pivot more than 45 degrees-
**THAT MEANS YOU ARE
SPINNING**



Listen

- Listen to the entire question to determine if and how you will need to pivot
- It's okay to buy yourself some time if you need to
 - Think of your response while you repeat the question
 - You can pause for up to 3 seconds before answering



Build a Bridge

Avoid 'BUT;' instead use these:

1. "It's important to remember that..."
2. "The bottom line is that..."
3. "What people really need to know is that..."
4. "The thing that convinced me is that..."



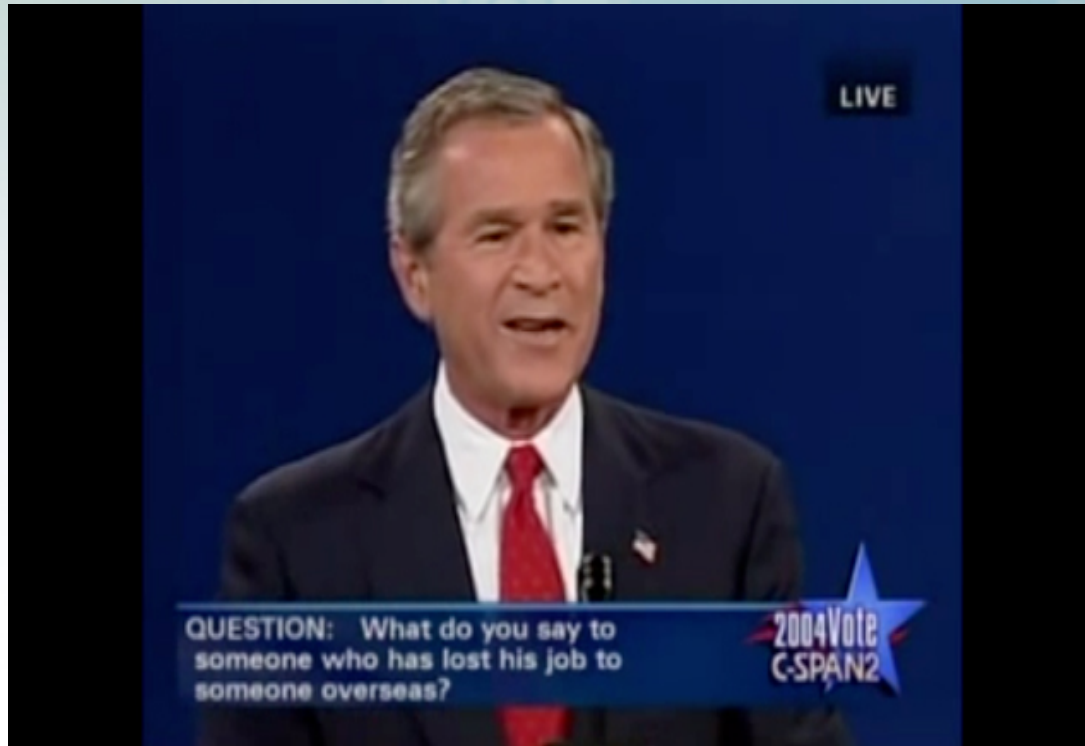
Message and Frame

- What is your agenda?
- What points do you need to convey?
- Given your audience, how is your message framed?
- Stick to your message and frame, especially when pivoting!



Pivoting In Action

Example of Pivoting:



Video Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GPOkpOipBYM#t=467>



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Never Pivot Too Far

- When answering a question—you have 3 options:
 - Answer the question directly
 - Pivot your answer to your related key messaging
 - Pivot too far



PIVOT AND FRAMING PRACTICE



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Role of Technology in Communication: It's All about the “Type”

TECHNOLOGY

PERSONALITY OF AUDIENCE

PERSONALITY OF SENDER

PURPOSE

EXPECTATION



Storytelling



“For sale: Baby shoes, never worn.”

*Even though credibility counts for a lot,
you ultimately must make an audience
feel things to compel action.*

Statistics can actually hurt a cause

What Storytelling is not

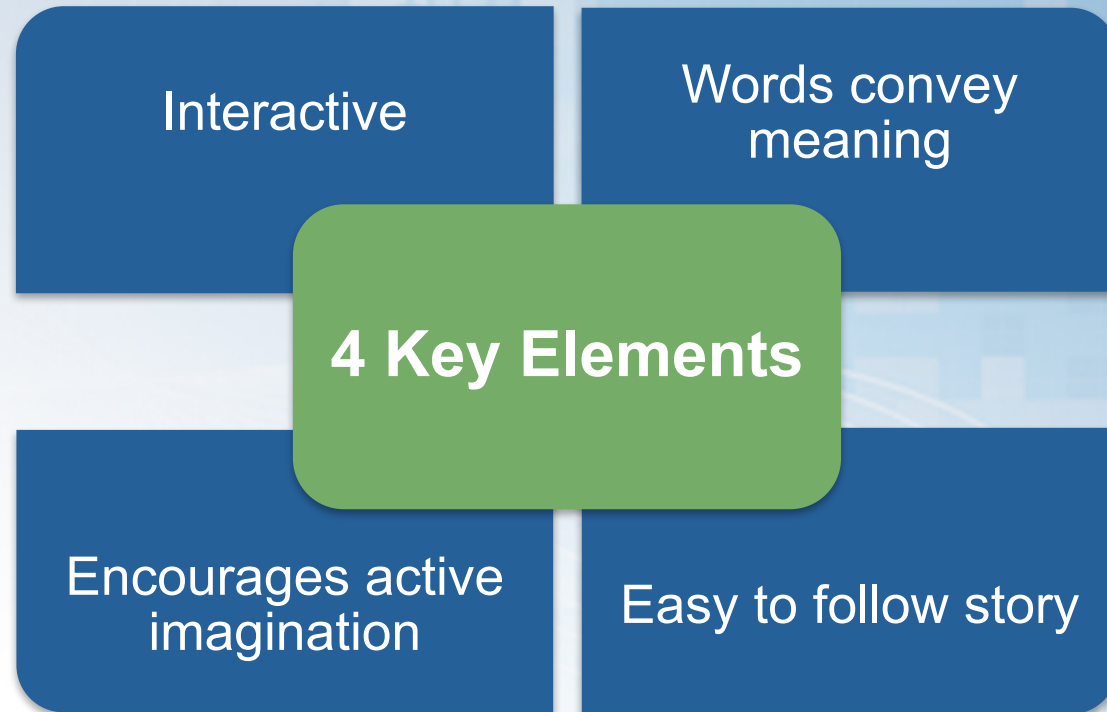


Video Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3zsM3jBwWIM>



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What is Storytelling?



Communicating Tough Subjects

What Does a Biological Anthropologist Do?

“I study old human stuff. We look at the old stuff to see when and where humans came from and why we look and act so funny instead of acting like other animals.”

—Meagan Sobel, Biological Anthropology Student

Source: <http://mentalfloss.com/article/48793/18-complicated-scientific-ideas-explained-simply>

Why They Should Care?

UNCF

A Mind is a Terrible Thing to Waste



[Mind is... video link](#)



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Let's Practice Storytelling

Active listening: Listen to the story of your partner dealing with a difficult challenge. Identify the 3 Vs and the facts, feelings, and values in the story.



JOURNALING AND REFLECTION

How will I leverage my personality type (introvert/extrovert) when communicating to someone similar or different to your personality?



Meeting Strategy

PURPOSE?

WHY IS IT CRITICAL?



Discussion

Think of a meeting that went wrong. What happened? How did you fix the situation in or out of the room?

What are some tricky personalities that you have dealt with? Think of specifics about what made this behavior so difficult for you as a facilitator. How did you handle it?

Think of a meeting where things were out of your control. What happened? How did you deal with the situation

If you could tell someone one thing that would help them be a better facilitator, what would it be?

Meeting Preparation: Time to Practice

Think about what's coming up for you in the next 3 months....

Prepare for it!



JAZZERCISE!



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LESSONS LEARNED

Refresh Action Commitments



WRAP UP AND REFLECTIONS



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Thank you!



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