



Communicating Your Work

As an active researcher and faculty member, you have a limited amount of time. To remain successful in today's economic and media climate you'll need to quickly communicate with a variety of stakeholders and audiences – some of whom know your work intimately and others who don't realize they should care ... yet.

Your ability to concisely share information about your research with a variety of audiences can aid in grant development, recruit prospective students, enlist potential partners, and build understanding among policymakers and the public.

The School of Engineering public relations office and KU News in the Office of University Relations are ready to help spread the word about your work and research achievements. But as a researcher, you are the authority – the voice – that best communicates the story that needs to be told.

Different audiences may need to hear the same message using different words or through a different channel. Just like you, your audience is busy, too. They have a limited amount of time to absorb your message and they have numerous messages and distractions competing for their attention. The worksheet below, taken from an NSF workshop about communicating science and scholarly work, is a tool to help you identify, clarify and distill what you need to communicate about your work when a media or other communication opportunity arises.

Don't feel you need to complete this worksheet on your own. The School of Engineering PR office can and will help you navigate different communication messages, media channels and other opportunities.

When you are called upon to communicate authoritatively on a subject or if you are ready to share the news about your work, our office can help guide you through this sometimes-challenging media landscape. Your work at KU matters, and our goal is that all audiences – even those without a technical background – understand why they should care, too.

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Communications Planning Worksheet

(From the NSF presentation Science: Becoming the Messenger, Feb. 2011)

1. I'm going to communicate about:

2. My audience is (describe the audience):

3. My message is targeted to this type of person in the audience (describe as though you are addressing one person):

4. Relative to what I'm talking about, he/she currently knows, believes or does:

5. This makes him/her

Supportive-----Resistant

6. My target audience will respond most favorably if I make my points in the context of (e.g., politics, science, economics, business, personal involvement, etc.):

7. Relative to what I'm talking about, I want him/her to know, believe or do:

8. Three things my audience should know (or three questions my audience might ask) about my subject are:

a.

b.

c.

9. Arguments and evidence that support these assertions/answers:

a.

b.

c.

10. I will reach my target audience through (check one):

Live Presentation

Online Media

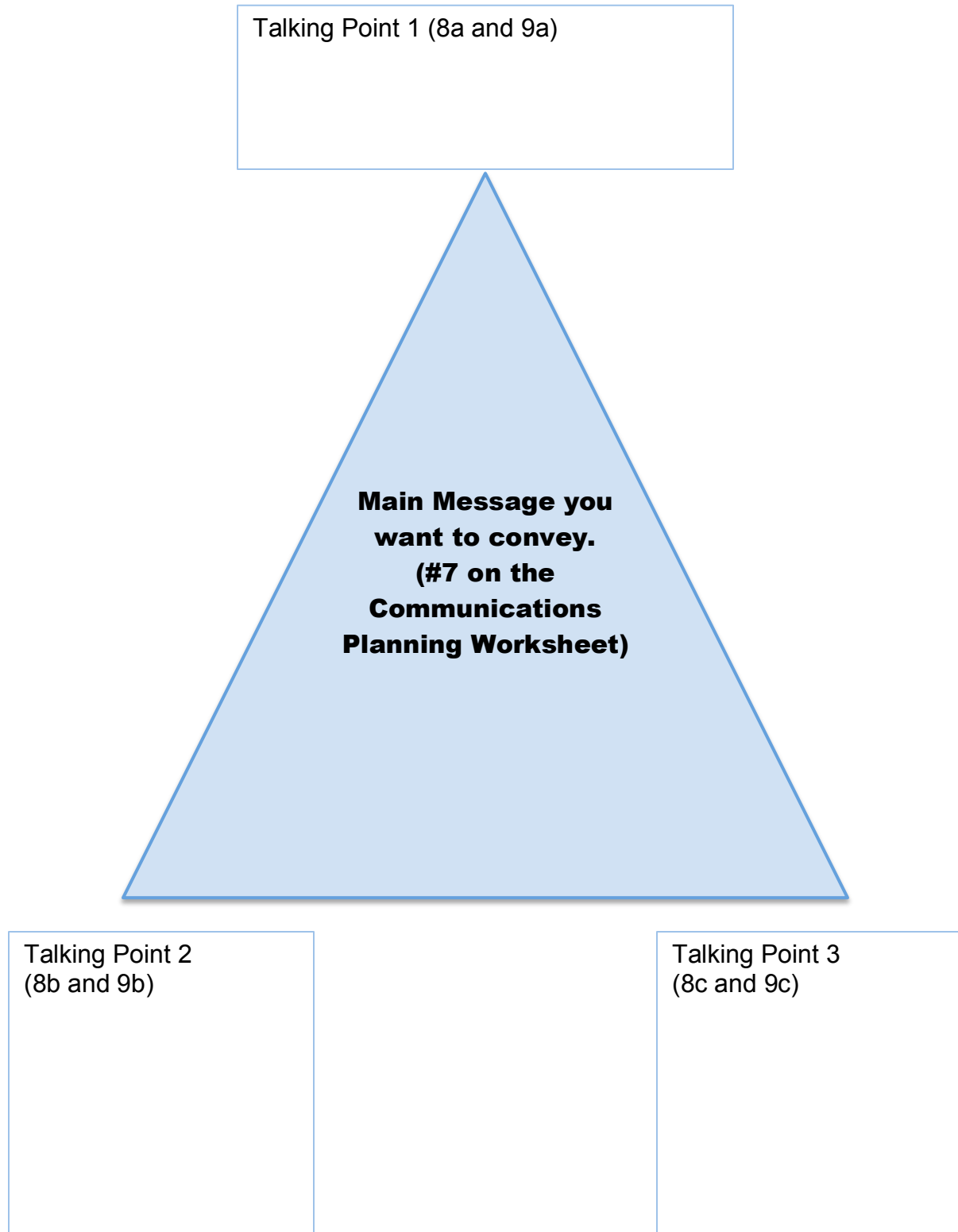
Audio/Video

Interview with Traditional Media

In Writing

Message Triangle Worksheet

Refine and reinforce the message before you approach the audience. Use responses on the Communications Planning Worksheet to fine-tune your message. Write clearly, concisely and cogently. The points of the triangle have equal importance.



Talking Point 1 (8a and 9a)

**Main Message you
want to convey.
(#7 on the
Communications
Planning Worksheet)**

Talking Point 2
(8b and 9b)

Talking Point 3
(8c and 9c)