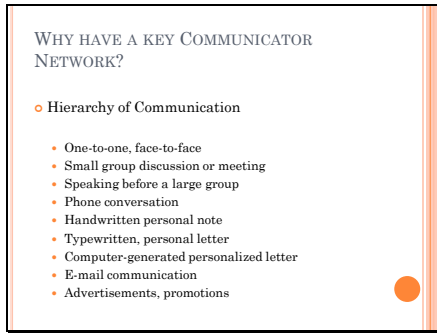


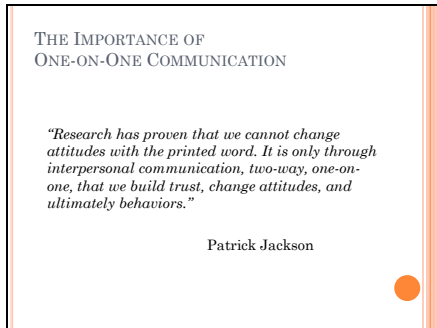
Slide 1



Slide 2




Slide 3



Slide 4

HOW COMMUNITIES MAKE DECISIONS


- 3% From printed word
- 7% From talking with others
- 90% From talking to people inside your school system



Slide 5

WHAT IS A KEY COMMUNICATOR NETWORK?


- A group of selected individuals who serve as:
  - Third Party Advocates
  - District Cheerleaders
  - Misinformation Countermeasure Squad
  - Environmental Scanners & Issues Anticipators
  - Easy Access Focus/Research Group



Slide 6

- *“Key Communicators are a collective of individuals who have an influence over others in your community.”*


Tom Salter
- They are:
  - Community or issues-based opinion leaders
  - Not afraid to make their positions known
  - Visible in the community
  - Not always the CEO, banker, attorney



Slide 7

WHY KEY COMMUNICATOR NETWORKS WORK


- Create neutral ambassadors
- Develop respect and trust
- Build one-on-one relationships
- Stop the rumor mill
- Invaluable in good times and bad
- Arm community members with current, accurate information
- Create transparency



Slide 8

TO GET STARTED, ASK THE FOLLOWING:


- Who—Who needs to be on the list?
- What—What do I need to tell them?
- Where—Where should I start?
- When—How often should I send messages or meet?
- How—How do I keep track of all these folks?



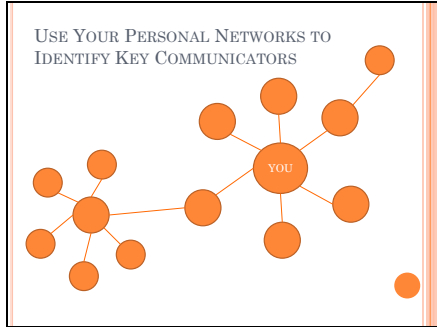
Slide 9

WHO SHOULD YOU INCLUDE?

- Divide your Key Communicators into publics (including formal and informal leaders):
- Professionals:
  - Clergy
  - Real estate
  - Governmental officials
  - Small business/Big business
  - Media
- Interest Groups
  - Finance
  - Curriculum
  - Early childhood
  - Special education
  - Senior citizens
  - Don't forget your detractors



Slide 10



Slide 11

- INVITING THEM IN
- A personal invitation from your superintendent
  - Take RSVPs and make follow-up calls
  - Hold your preliminary Key Communicator meeting


Slide 12

- AT THAT INITIAL MEETING
- Layout the Key Communicator process-set clear expectations for their participation, time commitments
  - Establish how and when you will communicate
  - Gather e-mail addresses, telephone numbers
  - Provide overview of district communication
    - Electronic newsletter
    - Social media
  - Provide them with a special e-mail address only Key Communicators can use to ask questions and receive prompt responses

Slide 13

KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR NETWORK


- Catalog your participants
  - What group do they represent?
  - Are they current parents?
  - What relationship do they already have to your district?
  - What are their “hot button” issues?
  - Do they know of individuals who should be part of the network?



Slide 14

RESPECT THE NETWORK


- Keep true to established expectations
- Hold face-to-face meetings periodically
  - Once or twice a year
  - Issue-related meetings
  - Share the results of your meetings
- Share bad news early
- Make it clear you want their input and feedback
  - Designate a time on the meeting agenda—ask them what they are hearing in the community about your school system
  - Make sure you take their calls and respond to their emails
- Choose your battles—avoid crying wolf or wearing out the relationship
- Review their commitment annually or bi-annually



Slide 15

RECOGNIZE THEIR WORK!

- They are volunteers—thank them and celebrate their contributions.
- Be respectful of their time and commitments
- Let them know the outcome of their work—tell them how they have made a difference.
- Ask for feedback on how to improve the use of their services.
  
- Don't let your Key Communicators be the best kept secret in your community any longer!



Slide 16

ANY QUESTIONS?

WORDS TO  
WAKE THE  
WORLD

Mary Ellen Marnholtz  
Words to Wake the World  
memarnholtz@wordstowaketheworld.com

