

## NEW AFFILIATE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

WELCOMING AMERICA



Building a Nation of Neighbors

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## INTRODUCTION TO STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

Strategic communications is an approach to advocacy and community-building that focuses on reaching key audiences for a campaign or initiative with messages that will persuade them to think or act differently. It uses the tools and techniques of corporate and political communications in the service of social change. In its simplest form, it involves:

- Articulating the goals of an initiative
- Identifying the audiences that can help you achieve those goals
- Developing messages designed to resonate with those audiences
- Disseminating those messages through the most appropriate channels—anything from community meetings to outdoor advertising to Facebook to national television advertising—depending on the scale of the initiative and the resources available to support it.

### *Strategy vs. tactics*

Strategic communications must be grounded in a thorough understanding of the context in which an initiative is undertaken (the history, demographics, and prevalent attitudes towards immigrants and immigration in a given community, for example) and a careful consideration of the desired outcomes of the work. From there, decisions about target audiences and message development flow naturally into the development of communications materials to reach those audiences. Often, people confuse these visible outcomes of a strategic communications planning process with the whole initiative, and think they can jump straight to them. By grounding the work in sound strategy, you increase the chance that your message will be heard and taken to heart, helping you achieve your goals.

### *It's not what you say, it's what they hear*

Effective strategic communications relies on meeting your audience where they are. This means that the messages you choose to share with your target audience should be those that you believe will be most convincing *to them*, rather than the ones that are most convincing *to you*. Your messages should make an emotional connection with your audience, seeking to tap into their deeply held values and beliefs. It is much easier to build on beliefs a person already holds rather than try to get them to believe a new idea that runs counter to their understanding of the world. Remember that facts and figures are almost always less effective than arguments based on emotion and feelings.

*Be creative!*

Strategic communications is also a place to apply your creativity—but not just for the sake of being creative. Your messages will be competing for your audience’s attention against messages for politicians, consumer products and services. The communications tactics you choose to employ should be as interesting and arresting as you can make them in order to cut through the clutter of our modern media environment. Whether you choose to work with communications professionals to develop the messages and media for your initiative or create them internally, thoughtful and strategic communications will support the larger goals of your efforts.

NEBRASKA IS HOME

*Nebraska is Home is a statewide Welcoming initiative that focused initially on several rural communities experiencing increased immigration related to the meat-packing industry in the state.*

*The strategic communications for the campaign sought to portray immigrants as sharing the same values related to hard work and building a better life for their families as native Nebraskans through a series of ads that were produced as billboards and small-format posters distributed to local businesses.*

*The copy for the ads made a strong statement about the positive benefits of immigration to Nebraska, and the campaign tagline: “A good life for everyone” played off the state motto to reinforce the campaign’s messages of inclusion and shared values.*



## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AS PART OF A WELCOMING INITIATIVE

As you know, Welcoming America's approach blends three distinct approaches to create more welcoming communities:

- Local leadership development, in order to help the individuals organizing the effort decide how to best adapt the basic Welcoming framework to local circumstances and lead an effort to transform their communities
- Public engagement: Working to foster understanding; positive interactions; and candid, constructive dialogue between US-born and immigrant community members
- Strategic communications to address the larger conversation about immigrants and immigration in a given community.

Strategic communications can support the other two “legs of the stool” by providing a tool for planning the overall initiative, creating alignment among the team planning the work, and establishing a yardstick to evaluate your efforts.

Strategic communications supports leadership development by giving local leaders a step-by-step framework for planning their outreach to the key audiences who will ultimately determine the success of their work. The careful articulation of the values underlying a Welcoming initiative in terms designed to be appealing to these audiences also gives local leaders a thoughtful way of talking about the work in terms intended to appeal to their key audiences.

The messages developed through a strategic communications planning process also support the understanding fostered by a Welcoming initiative by providing introductory language at public meetings that help explain the purpose of the effort and set the terms of the conversation. Because the messages have been chosen to appeal broadly to the participants in these events, they also introduce the concepts to be discussed—many of which can be difficult and contentious—in a way to which participants are likely to be receptive.

Strategic communications are an important part of any Welcoming initiative in their own right, of course. In many of our communities, the only stories told about immigrants and immigration are negative, accusatory, and frightening. Many people who make up the target audiences for a Welcoming initiative are uncomfortable with the anger and vitriol expressed on talk radio or the internet, but haven't been exposed to messages that remind them of the positive aspects of immigration, and stories of immigrants who share their values. Strategic communications provides a way for the leaders of a local initiative to articulate the values of their community and their goals for launching a Welcoming initiative that speaks to their highest aspirations for the kind of community in which they wish to live.

## THE GAME PLAN

There are many frameworks available for strategic communications (other models are listed in Appendix D—Further Reading) but for the purposes of planning a local Welcoming initiative, we recommend creating a GAME Plan. GAME is an acronym for Goals, Audience, Message, and Engagement.

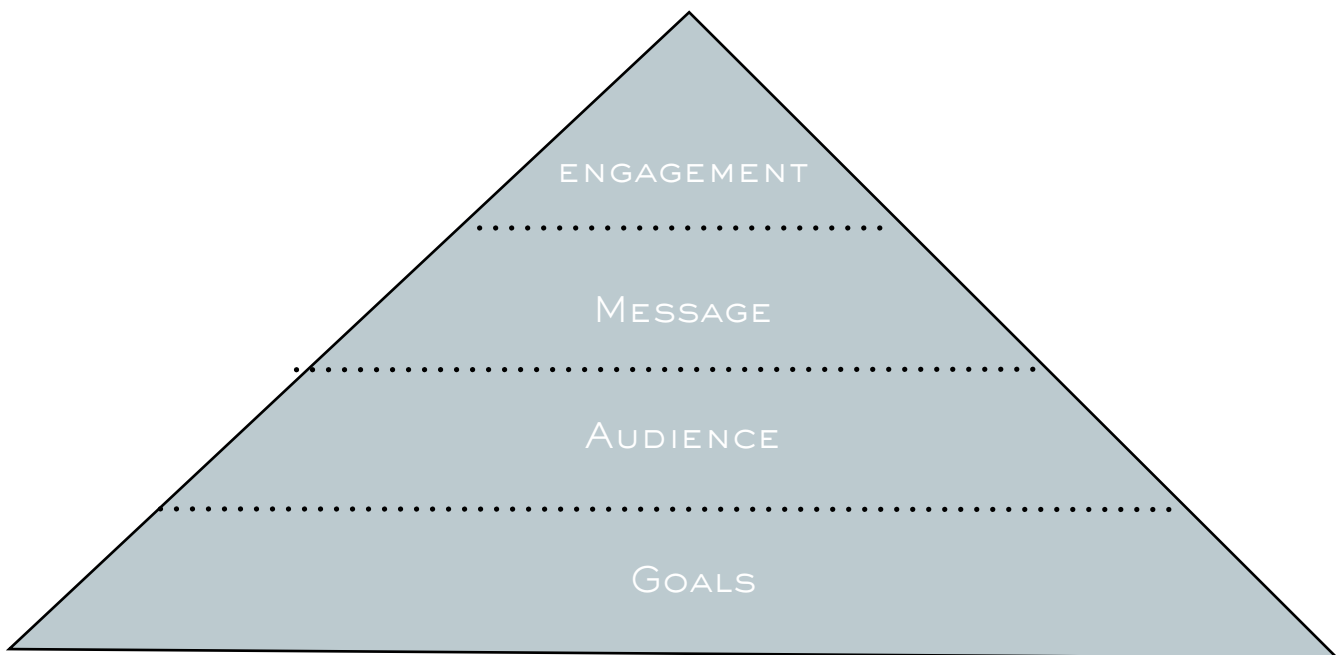
**Goals.** The first step in developing your plan is to decide on your goals: what outcomes do you want to see as a result of your efforts? These should be specific, realistic, and measurable. Rather than simply “raising awareness”, you might try to measure specific attitude changes among your target audiences. Because public polling can be difficult and expensive, you might choose to measure these attitude changes by employing qualitative or anecdotal data (the number of positive comments on a story on the local newspaper’s website about the initiative, the number of times a Facebook status update is “liked,” the quantity and quality of comments on one of your blog posts, or quotes from conversations with immigrants about how welcome they feel before and after your initiative, for example). Setting realistic goals is important for maintaining the momentum of your work, and being able to measure your success during and after a campaign. Whenever possible, set goals in terms of outcomes (the impact of your work) rather than outputs (the amount of effort you put in)—this allows you to get closer to measuring your actual progress toward your goals.

**Audience.** After setting your goals, decide who you need to speak with in order to achieve them. Who can give you what you want? In some cases, it may be an individual or small group of people, such as a mayor or members of a school board. In other cases, it may be a group of people, such as parents of school-aged children or local business owners. Once you’ve decided who your audiences are, you should describe them carefully. What are their demographic characteristics (age, race, gender, etc.), as well as their psychographic characteristics (what do they care about? What values are important to them?). This information will help you decide which channels to use to try and reach them, and what arguments to make in order to convince them to support your work. Finally, think about who has influence over a given audience. Who do they trust? Can you ask those influencers to carry your messages to each audience?

**Message.** What will you say to your audience to convince them to act as you wish them to? Values-based messages seek to make an emotional connection with your audience in order to change hearts and minds. Persuasion messaging is discussed in more detail below, on page 12.

**Engagement.** Having decided whom your audiences are and what to say to them, how will you get those messages to them? There is a huge variety of potential ways to reach your audience, and your challenge is to find ways to do so that effectively and efficiently, while staying within your budget. Potential audience engagement strategies are discussed below, beginning on page 14.

Using this simple four-step process, you can develop a strategic communications plan for your Welcoming initiative that fits the specific needs and circumstances of your community. The communications plan template in Appendix A can be used to facilitate a meeting of your planning committee, where these questions are discussed. In general, it is easiest to create a strategic communications plan with a small number of people, who then present a draft document to a larger planning group for input and approval.



***Build your strategic communications on a solid foundation. Start by articulating your goals, then decide who can help you achieve them, what to say to them, and the best way to reach them.***

## WELCOMING AMERICA'S CORE MESSAGES

In early 2011, Welcoming America went through a branding and message development process in order to articulate its internal understanding of its desired reputation with key audiences (brand), as well as the external expression of that brand (core messages). While these messages were created for the national Welcoming America organization, the language they use, and the concepts they employ, are an important tool for local affiliates.

These messages are meant as a menu of potential ways to answer questions about the work and express ideas about the values that are at its core. Local affiliates should carefully consider which of these messages best convey their own understanding of the work—why you are beginning it in the first place, what you hope it will achieve, and the specific activities that will make up your Welcoming initiative.

Affiliates can also pull words and phrases from these messages as part of your own message development work—just be careful not to alter the meaning of the messages. Affiliates should also take care to separate the messages employed in their Welcoming initiatives from other programs they may have. These messages, and the work of Welcoming, is specifically related to creating more inclusive communities, and does not take a position on issues such as comprehensive immigration reform, for example.

### *Purpose Messages*

The *purpose messages* explain *why* the organization exists and outline the problem Welcoming America is in business to solve. These explain the purpose of the organization's work and put its efforts in a relevant context for your key audiences.

Local affiliates can use these messages to help explain why you feel a Welcoming initiative is needed in your community. They should be augmented with information about immigration in your community and the particular motivations of the initiative's organizers in beginning the work.

*The number of new immigrants to the United States over the past fifteen years is as high as it was in the early 1900s. Many of those immigrants are making their homes in cities and towns without a history of immigration, increasing the risk of misunderstanding, fear and divisions within these communities.*



*Change on this scale is never easy or simple—not for the immigrants themselves, and not for the communities asked to welcome newcomers whose language or culture they may not understand.*

*Many organizations exist to help immigrants adjust to life here in the United States, but Welcoming America focuses on helping community members who were born in this country understand and appreciate their new neighbors.*

*As a nation, we face enormous challenges. Our best hope of overcoming them lies in finding ways to work together to address them.*

*Our communities are at their most successful when all of their members—including immigrants—feel included.*

*The business of building successful communities is hard work. But it's made easier by our proven, practical model, which supports local leaders with tools and resources as they shape a process that makes sense for their community.*

*Immigrants are often disconnected—by language, culture, and experience—from the communities in which they live. Welcoming America was founded to help people work together to build healthy, strong communities, no matter where they were born.*

*America has always been a beacon of liberty and opportunity to those seeking a better life for themselves and their families. Our work is intended to extend a hand in friendship to those who have worked so hard and risked so much for their chance at the American Dream.*

*We all want what's best for our families and the communities we call home. Those communities are strongest when everyone who lives in them feels welcome, included and supported.*

### *Impact Messages*

The *impact messages* explain *what* Welcoming America offers, not in terms of programs and services, but in terms of outcomes and results. These messages help audiences understand why Welcoming America's work matters. These messages convey the impact of the organization's work and begin to differentiate your organization from others working in a similar space.

Local affiliates can use these messages as a starting point for envisioning the kind of change you wish to see in your local community. Words and phrases in these messages such as “strong

relationships,” “neighbors” and “building vibrant, caring” community can form the basis of messages more specific to your local work.

*With the help of Welcoming America’s tools and resources, local leaders transform their towns and cities into Welcoming communities.*

*Our practical, proven approach helps community members form strong relationships across language barriers and cultural divisions, leading to mutual respect, greater understanding, and successful communities where everyone feels more welcome.*

*We help people see their neighbors in a new light—as partners in building vibrant, caring communities.*

*The communities where Welcoming America works have fewer strangers and more neighbors.*

#### *Approach Messages*

The *approach messages* explain *how* Welcoming America works and how it produces the results outlined in the impact messages. These messages offer a deeper understanding of how Welcoming America is structured and how it functions, without getting too far into the details.

Local affiliates can use these messages to begin to explain the specific approaches your Welcoming initiative will undertake. Since the approach messages explain how you produce results, they will flow naturally into further, more specific discussion of the programs you will include in your own Welcoming initiative.

*We believe that just as fertile soil is needed for a seed to grow, receptive communities are critical if immigrants are to thrive. Most immigrant integration efforts have traditionally addressed immigrants themselves, through English language instruction or job training, for example. Welcoming America focuses instead on the communities where new immigrants have made their homes, helping neighbors build relationships built on trust and understanding. Instead of focusing on the seed, we concentrate on preparing the soil in which it will flourish.*

*We empower local leaders who know their communities best to develop a plan that addresses the specific circumstances and challenges they live with every day.*

*We bring people together in thoughtful, structured conversations, helping US-born and immigrant community members meet and learn about each other’s values and cultures.*

*At a time when the debate about immigration can be incredibly divisive, Welcoming America's work serves as a reminder of the values that we share with our immigrant neighbors, the contributions we all make to our society, and the benefits we all see when we work together toward a common purpose.*

*Our work is based on the idea that our communities are strongest when everyone living in them feels like a part of them. When any group is excluded from the conversation, we're all worse off.*

## WELCOMING COLORADO



**COLORADO  
WAS BUILT WITH  
STRONG  
CHARACTER.**

**Why stop now?**

**LET'S GIVE IMMIGRANTS  
A FAIR CHANCE.  
WelcomingColorado.org**

*Welcoming Colorado is a Welcoming initiative launched by a coalition of nonprofit organizations, including the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition, in order to uphold the values of respect and dignity for all people that the campaign believes are widely held by Coloradans.*

*Focus groups conducted with the campaign's target audiences in the four communities where it initially launched found a reluctance to identify shared values between immigrants and US-born Coloradans-- and a deeper reluctance towards labeling or being labeled themselves.*

*Ultimately, the advertising campaign sought to appeal to the pragmatic, individualistic aspects of Coloradans self-identity, as well as specific arguments about the importance of immigrants to the local economy.*

## MESSAGE DEVELOPMENT

### *Deciding What to Say*

Once you've decided on your goals for the initiative and determined which audiences you believe can help you achieve those goals, you need to decide what to say to them in order to convince them to help you.

Effective persuasion messaging attempts to make an authentic, emotional connection with your audiences, linking the values that animate the work of the initiative with deeply held beliefs among your target audiences. Emotion and values will always trump facts, figures and logic—make sure that your messages are constructed accordingly.

You should begin developing your messages by having a conversation about values—things that your planning committee believes deeply in about the work, and that you believe might be shared by your audiences. Try to come up with a range of values that you think *might* work for forming that authentic connection with your audiences. You might choose economic opportunity, safer communities, being a good neighbor, and basic fairness as some of the values that underlie your Welcoming initiative, for example, although the values you choose should reflect the specific circumstances and experience of people living in your community.

Once you've decided on a set of values, ask one member of your team to draft some short statements that explain what the value means to you and your community. Welcoming America's core messages can be used as a model for these, providing inspiration and specific words and phrases to include. Don't try to write messages by committee, but have the full team react to the draft messages through a conversation.

### *Focus Group Testing*

Once you have three or four draft messages agreed on by your planning group, it's time to test them. A focus group can be a great way to test your assumptions about your target audiences and get direct feedback on the initiative your planning and the way you're describing it; it can also be a great way to bring influential local leaders into the process in order to get their buy-in to the initiative. They'll be more likely to support it if they feel they have a hand in creating it.

“Focus group” can be a scary phrase for some people, but this needn't be an expensive traditional focus group with one-way mirrors and professional moderators. Simply pulling a small group of people from your community for a conversation about the issue of immigrants and immigrant integration is what you're looking for. You might consider providing coffee and snacks, or pizza

and soda, depending on when and where you schedule the meeting. Your focus group participants should be drawn from the audiences you've identified for the initiative, and it's a good idea to try to get a range of views represented in the room, from friendly to unsure about immigration—it's generally not a good idea to invite people you know to be actively hostile to immigrants.

Your goal is to facilitate a conversation that gets people talking and expressing their true views, so that you can find the best way to convince them to support your efforts. If possible, you should record the focus group using an audio recorder or a video camera, and two people from the planning committee should be present: one to ask the questions and facilitate the conversation, and one to take notes. The moderator should try not to insert their own views into the conversation, but merely to keep the conversation moving and encourage participants to speak candidly and respectfully to one another. Sample Focus Group moderator guides are included in Appendix B.

### *Finalizing the Messaging*

It is important to remember that the data you get from your focus group or groups is qualitative rather than quantitative. It can't tell you precisely what people in your community believe—another group of people might come to very different conclusions about which messages will work best in your community.

You should use the findings from the focus groups to help you decide which value or values you will base your communications on, and add, subtract and revise your draft messages accordingly. These messages should form the basis of all your communications work, from advertising to introductory remarks at community meetings.

## AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

Your decision about which channels you choose to use to engage with your audience should be driven by two things: where they are most likely to be seen and hear your messages, and the resources you have available to conduct your communications work. If one of your key audiences is older members of your community, seeking coverage or placing an Op Ed in your local newspaper might be an important means of engagement; if high school students are high on your list of targets, you might consider creating a Facebook page. Radio advertising can be a highly effective means of saturating your target audiences with your messages, but it is also quite expensive; outdoor advertising (such as billboards) is less expensive, and might be a more realistic choice for your budget.

However you choose to engage with your audiences, you might consider working with professional communicators to create the media your initiative will employ. An advertising or communications consultant or firm can help you translate your messaging into professional-looking advertising that puts your initiative in the best light and provides a high-visibility “face” for the work you are doing. If your budget doesn’t allow hiring a professional team to do this work, you might consider seeking *pro bono* assistance or working with a local college’s advertising or design program to help you create compelling materials. If you do choose to seek outside assistance developing materials, you should draft a Creative Brief with your partner—a document that provides information about the goals of the work, target audiences, and the key message or messages you wish it to convey. Many professional communicators will have their own format for this document, and a template Brief and samples Creative Briefs are included in Appendix C.

Welcoming Initiatives around the country have used many engagement channels in their efforts, such as billboards, transit advertising, video, social media, and online advertising—the table WHERE lists some of your options and briefly describes the benefits and costs of each. Be creative in the kinds of channels you will use to reach your audiences, but make sure your choices are rooted in sound strategic thinking—whatever you produce should help advance your goals, and reach your target audiences effectively and efficiently.

<b>Engagement Tactic</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
Outdoor and transit advertising	Billboards, bus shelter ads, bus ads, etc.	High visibility, relatively inexpensive for exposure. Can provide a focal point for media events, campaign launches	Requires professional looking work for best effectiveness. Best suited to simple messages with images.
Posters	Small format posters distributed to local merchants, schools, organizations	Inexpensive, involves community in distributing and displaying support for initiative.	Most effective with professional looking materials. Requires effort to distribute.
Social media	Facebook, Twitter accounts	Low cost, effective for building support organically for an initiative	Requires time commitment to manage effectively, some knowledge of social media best practices
Online advertising	Facebook, Google, Display advertising	Easily targeted to target audiences, generally “pay per click” so only costs when people engage with your ads.	Low click-through rates, small format ads make it difficult to convey messages sometimes.
Earned media	Stories placed in news media	Third-party validation of your efforts, generally reaches a large audience	Lack of control over messages, can be difficult to get news media attention
Online videos	Short videos featuring participants from the initiative’s work, immigrant stories, etc.	Can be very effective in humanizing immigrants, demonstrating impact of work. Ease of online distribution through social media channels .	Can be expensive to produce. Requires considerable effort to promote effectively, even online.

## APPENDIX A. CAMPAIGN COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING TEMPLATE

Use this template to create the GAME (Goals, Audience, Message, Engagement) Plan for your Welcoming initiative. Work through each section with the planning committee during a meeting, and nominate someone to take notes and craft a final plan for the initiative.

### GOALS

What outcomes do you want to see as a result of your efforts? Think big picture here, and limit yourself to two to three goals. Focus on outcomes rather than outputs.

*Ex. Increased feeling of safety and respect by law enforcement among immigrant populations  
Greater integration and increased trust between US-born and immigrant populations*

Goal 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Goal 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Goal 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Measures of Success

How will you know when you have achieved your goals. Focus on measurable, achievable outcomes, and be creative when trying to assess efforts around attitude change.

*Ex. Immigrants report more positive interactions with law enforcement (measured anecdotally)  
Increased number of immigrants willing to speak with law enforcement  
X% increase in attendance of immigrants at city council meetings*

Goal 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Goal 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Goal 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**AUDIENCE**

Who can help you achieve your goals (target audience)? Describe who they are and what they care about. Try to limit yourself to no more than five target audiences.

*Ex. Recent immigrants from Mexico. Values of family, faith and economic opportunity.  
City Council members. Values of civic engagement and community*

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Who has influence with your target audiences? Who can you get to help you convince them to help you achieve your goals? Include the names of specific individuals in your community if you know them.

*Ex. Recent immigrants are influenced by clergy, their children's teachers, Spanish-speaking business owners*

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**MESSAGES**

Start by brainstorming a list of values that caused you to want to lead a Welcoming initiative in your community in the first place. Why is a more integrated immigrant population in your community important to you? What impacts do you think it will help you achieve? Discuss what each value means to you, as individuals and a group.

*Ex. Stronger community, greater economic opportunity for all, basic fairness, celebrating cultural diversity, safer community*

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Once you’ve brainstormed your list, look back at your target audiences. Which values do they share? Pick the top 3 -5 values and nominate one person from your group to turn these shared values into a set of messages. Try to focus each message on one of the values. **Don’t try to write these as a group.** Reconvene the group to review a draft of the messages later.

## ENGAGEMENT

How will you get the word out to your target audiences? You may have a good relationship with some of them, and be able to ask them directly—do that! For others, you may want to try and reach the group more broadly, through the news media or paid advertisements. Are there specific community events you can use to reach your audiences, such as Fourth of July picnic? Be creative—but not just for the sake of being creative. Make sure the engagement channels you choose will help you reach your target audiences effectively and efficiently, and fit within your budgets.

*Ex. One-on-one conversations, posters, Radio PSAs, Youtube videos, Facebook page*

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Once you've put your groups thinking down on paper, have one person turn it into a plan by typing up your notes and filling in the blanks. Consider testing the draft messages and decide which your initiative will employ to reach your various target audiences. Remember that this plan should be a living document. You should update it as the context of your work changes—as new funds become available and new engagement opportunities arise, for example. And decide when you'll return to your measures of success to see how well you've achieved your goal—a one-year timeframe generally works well. Finally, don't forget to celebrate your successes. You're doing the hard work of making your community stronger.

## APPENDIX B. FOCUS GROUP MODERATOR GUIDE SAMPLES

### *Welcoming Colorado Focus Group Moderator Guide*

- I. Introductions (10 minutes for section/ 10 minutes elapsed time)
  - a. Introduce moderator
  - b. Disclosure: purpose of focus groups
  - c. Focus groups rules: honest answers, respect for differences, no side conversations
  - d. Introduce participants
    - i. Name
    - ii. Occupation
    - iii. Family/ Children (a little about themselves)
  - e. What 2-3 issues are most important ones facing our community?
- II. Immigration Situation (20/ 30)
  - a. Do you think, on balance, that immigrants in Colorado are good for, or bad for, our community? Why?
  - b. Tell me what you've heard about immigration in Colorado recently.
    - i. Have you heard about any new immigration laws or policies? What were they?
  - c. How would you describe the current system of immigration laws?
    - i. Is it working?
    - ii. What laws or policies do you think should be changed?
- III. Immigrant Contribution/ Integration (15/ 45)
  - a. Can you think of any contributions immigrants make to our community?
  - b. Should we be doing more or less to welcome immigrants to our community? Should we be doing more to help integrate the immigrants who are already here?
  - c. What kinds of activities do you think might help immigrants become more integrated in our communities? Do you feel like these exist in our community? Should we do more?
- IV. Values (15/ 60)
  - a. I'm going to read a list of values (things people care about) to you. I'd like to know your opinion on whether you think immigrants in our communities care about it.
    - i. Love and care about the United States
    - ii. Respect for our laws and the police
    - iii. Traditional family life
    - iv. Faith and belief in God
    - v. Trying to make a better life for the next generation
    - vi. Desire to be active in the community
  - b. Now I'd like to read some statements about immigrants in our communities, and I'd like to know if you think they are true or false (why or why not?)
    - i. Immigrants to our local community:
      1. Pay taxes to the nation and to our local community.
      2. Are important to keeping our local economy strong.
      3. Are similar to previous generations of immigrants to our community.
      4. contribute to lower crime rates. (ie. The more immigrants in a community, the lower the crime rate).

- V. Message Testing (20/ 80) (Have messages written out, one per large sheet)
  - a. Next, I'd like to show you some statements about immigrants to see what you think of them
    - i. For each statement:
      - 1. Do you think it's a true statement?
      - 2. Does it make you more or less likely to support immigrant integration in our community?

Statement 1. Immigrants in Colorado are just like the rest of us. They share the same values we do of hard work, responsibility, strong families and making a better life for their children. Nearly all of us have ancestors who were immigrants to this country, and just like the immigrants here now, we all strive for the American Dream.

Statement 2. Our democracy is strong only when all of our people can participate to the fullest and cherish the American Dream for their children. We are weaker when everyone cannot participate. We need to integrate immigrants and their families into our communities and country. They need to be able to earn the right to work, accept the responsibilities of being Americans, like learning English and paying taxes, and have a fair chance to earn the right to citizenship

Statement 3. America is a nation of immigrants that has welcomed generations of newcomers. Our American values should be reflected in our policies and programs on immigrants. The goal of efficient and smooth integration is good for Colorado and good for America. When immigrants learn English, become citizens, play by the rules, pay taxes and contribute to our economy, we all prosper.

Statement 4. Entrepreneurialism has always been a strength for Colorado contributing to our economic leadership and innovation. The entrepreneurialism of Colorado's immigrant families also enhances our economy, our neighborhoods, and our communities. We should welcome people with this spirit and dedication into our communities.

Statement 5. One of Colorado's biggest strengths is our diversity—the mountains and the plains, big cities and small towns, industry and agriculture, That diversity extends to the people who live here: indigenous people here before all of us, Latino families that have been here since before Colorado was a state, people whose ancestors were homesteaders and cowboys, people who came here last year or last week for a job in tourism or our hi-tech industries. Welcoming immigrants into our community is just one more way to celebrate the differences that make us strong, and the values that we all share.

## VI. "Illegal Immigration" (15/ 95)

- a. Some of you have mentioned illegal immigration as an important issue facing our community (or.. What do you think about illegal immigration in our community?)
  - i. What are the harmful effects of illegal immigration on our community?
  - ii. Whose responsibility is it to address illegal immigration? What should they do about it?
  - b. Earlier, we talked about community efforts to help integrate immigrants. Do you feel like illegal immigrants should have access to these opportunities, too? Why or why not?
  - c. Now I'd like to make a few statements, and I'd like your reaction:
    - i. If I were to tell you that immigrants – including undocumented – pay taxes, how would you react to that?

- ii. If I were to tell you that as a population, immigrants – including undocumented – pay more in taxes than they receive in services, how would you react to that?
- iii. If I were to tell you that for most undocumented, there simply is no way to apply for legal status or citizenship in the U.S. because our laws don't allow it, how would you react to that?
- iv. If I were to tell you that undocumented immigrants are not eligible for most public benefits – including welfare, food stamps, etc. – and under-apply for those for which they are eligible, how would you react to that?

VII. Campaign Names (5/ 100) (Have names written out, one per letter-sized paper.

Show each one, then hang on wall in a group.

There is a new community campaign beginning in Colorado around the issue of immigrants and immigration. I'm going to post a number of potential names, and I'd like to hear your reactions:

- Building Colorado's Future Together
- Building our future together in Colorado.
- Many faces. One Colorado.
- Many stories. One Colorado.
- "Colorado, where we all belong."
- "Honoring Colorado's past, present and future"
- Colorado Is Home.
- Welcoming Colorado

Are there any other comments you'd like to share? Thank you very much for your time.

*Redwood City Together Focus Group Moderator Guide*

*Materials to bring with you:*

*Sign-in sheet*

*Easel Pad with values list, message statements (one statement per page) list of possible names, list of possible tag lines*

I. Introductions (10 minutes for section/ 10 minutes elapsed time)

- a. Introduce moderator
- b. Background: focus group to discuss the makeup of our community and efforts to foster a stronger sense of shared purpose in Redwood City, as well as the messages that might be used in the initiative we're planning. I'll get a little more specific about this towards the end of our time together.
- c. Agreements: honest answers are what we're looking for—they will help us most, even if the answers are contentious, respect for differences, no side conversations, if you're the kind of person that talks a lot, step back, if you're the kind of person that is quiet, speak up. Allow facilitation: this is the beginning of the process, and only a first step. I may move us along, please don't feel like this will be your only chance to talk about these issues.
- d. Introduce participants
  - i. Name
  - ii. Family/ Children (a little about themselves)
  - iii. Briefly, (in one or two sentences) What's the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about this community?

II. Immigration and Redwood City (15/ 25)

- a. How would you describe how changing demographics are affecting Redwood City?
- b. How often do you interact with immigrants in your daily life? In what ways do you interact with immigrants?

(NOTE: IF YOU'RE MORE THAN 30 MINUTES INTO THE SESSION, MOVE ON)

III. Immigration Integration/ Contribution (15/ 40)

- a. What kinds of activities do you think might help newcomers feel more welcomed in our community? Do you know whether these activities are offered in Redwood City?
- b. IF CONVERSATION TAKES A NEGATIVE TURN: What contributions do you think immigrants make to our community?

(NOTE: IF YOU'RE MORE THAN 45 MINUTES INTO THE SESSION, MOVE ON)

IV. Values (20/ 60)

- a. I'm going to show you a list of values (things people care about) to you. The people who are planning this initiative put this list together based on some things we thought might be important values for people in our community. Think about people you know well who live in Redwood City. Which of these values do you think are most important to them? (SHOW List of Values):
  - i. Being active in the civic life of Redwood City
  - ii. Opportunity: the chance to work hard and build a better life for themselves and their children
  - iii. Being part of a community that respects different points of view
  - iv. A safe community for their families
  - v. The responsibility to build a community that cares for all of its members.
  
- b. Now I'd like you to think about immigrants in our community. Looking at the same list of values, I'd like to know which you think are most important to them?
  - i. Being active in the civic life of Redwood City
  - ii. Opportunity: the chance to work hard and build a better life for themselves and their children
  - iii. Being part of a community that respects different points of view
  - iv. A safe community for their families
  - v. The responsibility to build a community that cares for all of its members.

(NOTE: IF YOU'RE MORE THAN ONE HOUR INTO THE SESSION, MOVE ON)

V. Message Testing (20/ 80)

- a. I'd like to show you some statements about immigrants and immigration to see what you think of them.
  - i. For each statement:
    - 1. Do you think it's a true statement?
    - 2. Does it make you more or less likely to support efforts to build a stronger, more integrated community?

(SHOW First Statement) Statement 1. Redwood City is becoming more and more diverse—today, no racial or ethnic group can claim to be the majority, and that trend is almost certain to continue. Our continued prosperity and success depends on our ability to build an integrated community that respects the diversity and dignity of everyone who lives here.

(SHOW Second Statement) Statement 2. No matter where we were born, we all want the same things for our families—safe streets for our kids, neighbors who watch out for each other, and warm, welcoming communities where we can all thrive together.

(SHOW Third Statement) Statement 3. Redwood City was built by people who came here to work hard, build a strong community, and make a better life for their families. Newcomers to our community share many of our values, and we should do everything we can to help them feel welcome and included. It's only fair that they have the same opportunity to get ahead that those who came before had.



(SHOW Fourth Statement) Statement 4. In Redwood City, our diversity is one of our greatest strengths. We're most successful when we recognize and celebrate the contributions that everyone—immigrant and non-immigrant alike—makes to our rich culture and shared prosperity.

VI. Names and Tag lines (10/ 90)

- a. Finally tonight, I wanted to share a little bit more about the initiative that is bringing us together, and ask for your thoughts about some possible names for it and tag lines (slogans) that we might use as part of it.
- b. Led by Redwood City 2020, with several nonprofit orgs as partners: (LIST). Part of a national effort called Welcoming America that includes local leadership development, strategic communications and public engagement to increase understanding between immigrants and receiving communities by working with local partners in 15 states. The Redwood City initiative is a pilot site for the work here in California.
- c. With that background, I want to share some possible names and slogans, and ask: which of these do you like best? Which makes you more likely to want to be a part of it? (SHOW Names and Tag lines).

Names

- i.* Bringing Community Together
- ii.* Welcoming Redwood City
- iii.* Becoming Neighbors
- iv.* One Community For All

Tag lines

- i.* Working together to build a great community for us all
- ii.* Stronger together
- iii.* Dream together, build together
- iv.* Helping newcomers become neighbors
- v.* Redwood City—a community worth sharing

- d. Any other names/ tags that you think would work well for this initiative?

Thank you all for your time. If you're interested in becoming more involved with this initiative, please make sure you put your name and e-mail address on the sign-in sheet.

## APPENDIX C. CREATIVE BRIEF TEMPLATE

The Creative Brief is the document that codifies a shared understanding of the goals, audiences, messages and desired tone of a given piece of communications, such as an advertisement, PSA, or brochure between the organizers of a strategic communications efforts and the creative team (usually consisting of a copywriter and art director) tasked with developing the work. Some creative teams may have their own format for the Creative Brief and/ or want to draft it themselves, but the following template can provide the general outlines of what it should contain.

### **Organizational/ Initiative Name**

**Main Initiative Contact** (with e-mail and phone number)

### **Description of Project**

#### **Organizational/ Initiative Background**

*Briefly describe the organization or organizations planning the effort, their reasons for launching it, and the activities it will conduct*

#### **Organizational/ Initiative Goals & Objectives**

*Briefly describe the desired outcomes of the overall initiative.*

#### **Marketing Goals & Objectives**

*What are the specific goals and objectives of the creative piece being developed?*

#### **Target Audiences**

*Who is the piece intended to communicate with? Be as specific as possible, and include demographic information, as well as information about their psychographic profile—their values, hope and fears as they relate to the topic of immigration and immigrant integration.*

#### **Single Essential Message**

*Distill the single idea you wish the audience to take away from the communications piece after being exposed to it. These words are not likely to appear in the piece itself, but provide the creative team with a target for developing creative means of conveying the core ideas contained in it.*

#### **Tone and Manner**

*Describe the personality of the organizations conducting the initiative, and characterize the desired tone of the piece. Should it be serious and quiet? Funny or provocative?*

**Deliverables**

*Describe specifically the final piece you are asking the creative team to prepare for you. If it is a brochure, include the size (if you have one in mind), whether it is full color or black and white, etc.). For an ad, describe what you know about where it will run: is it a billboard, a series of posters, newspaper advertising?*

**Timeline**

*Include your desired timeline for completing the work.*

## APPENDIX D. FURTHER READING

This toolkit provides a framework and introduction to the theory and practice of strategic communications, but there are a wealth of resources available to individuals who wish to learn more.

**Andy Goodman** ([www.agoodmanonline.com](http://www.agoodmanonline.com)) has written a number of texts on various aspects of nonprofit communications, from storytelling to presentation skills. His free monthly e-newsletter, *Free Range Thinking*, is an excellent source for interesting case studies from the field.

**Hershey/ Cause Communications** ([www.hersheycause.com](http://www.hersheycause.com)) publishes a free *Communications Toolkit* that offers short chapters on many communications tactics that nonprofits can employ, from social media to advertising.

**The Smart Chart** ([www.smartchart.org](http://www.smartchart.org)) is a campaign communications planning tool, offering a step-by-step guide to planning and evaluating your communications efforts.

**The SPIN Project** ([www.spinproject.org](http://www.spinproject.org)) has a number of publications devoted to various aspects of strategic communications for social justice organizations. Their annual SPIN Academy is a four day residential training retreat for employees of nonprofit organizations dedicated to social change.



