

COMMUNICATING THE MESSAGE

A ONE-PAGER

Reports can get long. Here's a one-page breakdown of what you need to know.

Why is communication important? The ability to effectively communicate the message of a movement has long been important to movement-building. Crafting strong and compelling narratives around a movement and continuing with a consistent and clear message can help organizers effectively communicate what they want, and then make demands from the political leadership. That process both helps legitimize the movement's own story, galvanizing supporters in the process, as well as delegitimize the counter-narratives a political leadership may tell about that movement.

Where does social media play into this? Social media allows people to create their own source of news and information-sharing separate from what is documented in the mainstream, while also taking control away from the political leadership. Essentially, organizers can operate parallel to the mainstream and create another outlet for the public to remain informed on their movement's message and its goals, giving organizers greater control over that message in the process. Effective communication and messaging also helps organizers build the bread and butter of their movement: people power. Social media gives people another, easier option to be involved and participate: one tap and they can share their views and support of the movement. All of this is to say, social media has given organizers a vast communications toolkit they can use to galvanize supporters, control their message, keep others from delegitimizing that message, and gain new support in the court of public opinion.

What should you think about when crafting a narrative? From the literature and our own conversations, we have found it is important to craft narratives and counter narratives based on the interests of those you are appealing to, what they care about, and what to say that will persuade them to support the movement. Knowing who will be on the other end of your messaging and thinking about what you can communicate to reach them is pivotal.

When crafting narratives, organizers should consider these three audiences:

1. The general **public**;
2. The **political leadership** a movement is seeking to negotiate with; and
3. **Coalitions and allies** within the movement itself.

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