

Breaking Through the Coronavirus Crisis:

10 Tips for Consistent, Compassionate, and Clear Communications

**Stay
Strong**

1

This is an unprecedented crisis that will challenge every organization. But it also provides an opportunity to show strength through regular, appropriate communications that help your colleagues, customers, and community when they need it most.

**Stay
Safe**

2

The priority must be safety. Whenever possible, share relevant information from credible messengers, including the CDC, Department of Health, and local officials. Use your channels to extend the reach of important messages and show what you are doing to keep people safe.

**Stay
Productive**

3

What you do matters more than where you do it. Embrace collaboration tools and ensure that you have a clear system of accountability. If you are still able to work, let your customers know – and share anything that has changed. For example, restaurants can share takeout options, credit unions can highlight drive-through services, and stores can feature online options.

**Stay
Connected**

4

Keep in touch with your audiences regularly – and get creative. Use innovative platforms (Zoom, FaceTime, Slack, recorded video messages, etc.) to meet virtually and share important messages. Consider setting aside unstructured meeting times for employees to have “water cooler” conversations.

**Stay
Positive**

5

Employees look to leaders for information and inspiration – don't reflect stress. Keep the messages you share with internal and external audiences positive and uplifting. Give them a positive action to take: Shop local, donate here, share this post, etc.

**Stay
Supportive**

6

Employees may be dealing with heightened anxiety and depression. Link them to mental health and financial planning resources, like an EAP. Make sure your tone is warm, cut red tape, and solve whatever problems you can. Perks like free takeout meals benefit both your employees and your community.

**Stay
Transparent**

7

Difficult times often require difficult decisions or announcements. If you have to share news that impacts employees or customers, make sure you are the source of the information. Stick to the facts, show you care, and share any action steps. Whether the news involves financial setbacks or a sick employee, it's never easy – but clear communication is the best approach.

**Stay
Relevant**

8

Right now, it's all about coronavirus. Don't be tone deaf by pushing out news like it's business as usual. Even if you aren't in the health care space, there is an opportunity for thought leadership on related topics ranging from financial counsel and social services to business solutions and education. Share your unique expertise, and remember to tailor your messages.

**Stay
Nimble**

9

Everything is changing at a rapid pace, and it likely won't slow down for a while. Strategies that worked last week may not work this week. The best organizations and businesses will adapt to the changing landscape and communicate accordingly. Spend time developing a post-coronavirus communications plan and incorporate lessons learned throughout this process.

**Stay
Human**

10

This is a human crisis that requires a human response. There is no substitute for compassion, and it's important to weave your heartfelt perspective into every message that you share. Acknowledge challenges, but focus on the positives and the ways you are supporting your audiences through these challenges.

