

# Effectively Articulating the Roles and Requirements of Financial Aid and Its Value on Campus

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# Traits of Great Communicators?



What gets in the way of great communication?

# What is the Value of the Aid Office?

[HTTPS://PADLET.COM/KELLYD57/8DZQB  
G9XIWXVP58Z](https://padlet.com/kellyd57/8dzqbG9xiwxvp58z)

What are the natural leverage points within the financial aid office?

<https://padlet.com/kellyd57/xpmlxbhlctzoleq>

“

# Communication as Explanation

”

View Campus Communication as an Opportunity to \_\_\_\_\_?

# Communication Always Has a Goal

## Communication goals

To get and give information

To persuade

To ensure understanding

To get action

To change behaviour



# Communication Always Has an Audience





# Why does the audience matter?



## Consider a College President

Let's assume, for this example, these are some characteristics your president:

- Busy
- Strategic with time
- Lacks a foundation financial aid
- Makes swift judgments based on information provided

A close-up, slightly blurred image of a clock face. The clock has a white face with black numbers and hands. The hands are dark, and the center has a small orange-colored hub. The text "Making the Most of Your 5 Minutes" is overlaid in white, sans-serif font, centered on the clock face.

Making the Most of Your 5  
Minutes

# Communication = Explanation

Most Communication  
revolves around the  
"Why?"

Data aside, the "why"  
almost always requires  
an explanation

Explanation is the art  
of  
packaging **facts** and  
presenting them in a  
way that answers  
"**why?**"

Why does it make  
sense to do this?

Why should I care?

Your explanation is  
your opportunity to  
make your audience  
care!

# Explanations Make People Care

## Twitter Example – Providing just the facts

Twitter allows you to post updates about what's going on in your life and read updates from others.

What is the problem with this explanation?

## A Better Explanation of Twitter

Thanks to Twitter, it's possible to share short, bite-sized updates about your life and follow the updates of people that matter to you via the web. Yay! Twitter pages look a little like blogs with very short posts. Each page is personal and has updates from friends or people you respect and admire. Get closer to people that matter—140 characters at a time!

# Word Choice is Important

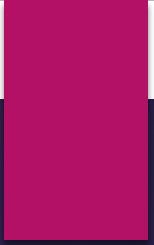
One word has the power to move someone from interest to disinterest.

# Teenager Looking Over a Menu

- ▶ Sea Bass with Rice and Green Beans
- ▶ Ribeye Steak with garlic mashed potatoes and grilled asparagus
- ▶ Crab cakes with mushrooms and a French rémoulade

Where is the problem word?





Explanations fail when we are unable to translate the language of our work to the language of a possibly uninformed audience.

# Context Matters



**Know your audience and prepare with them in mind.**



**Build context for those who do not share your background.**

Explain the forest, then explain the trees.

# Storytelling Makes a Difference

*A blog is a personal journal published on the World Wide Web consisting of discrete entries (“posts”) typically displayed in reverse chronological order, so the most recent post appears first. Blogs are usually the work of a single individual, occasionally of a small group, and often are themed on a single subject.*

OR

*Meet Allison. She recently created a website where she posts her experiences in raising a puppy. Her website is an online journal, or blog, and every few days she posts a new entry that appears at the top of her page. This stream of entries lets her connect with dog lovers from around the world.*

# Personification & Analogy

- ▶ People remember what they feel.
  - ▶ The human connection is powerful and persuasive
- ▶ Build on existing knowledge
  - ▶ Give your audience confidence that understanding the new option is easy through an existing connection
  - ▶ Offer an invitation to take more steps
- ▶ Example: “You know X, right? Well Y is like it, and here’s why...”



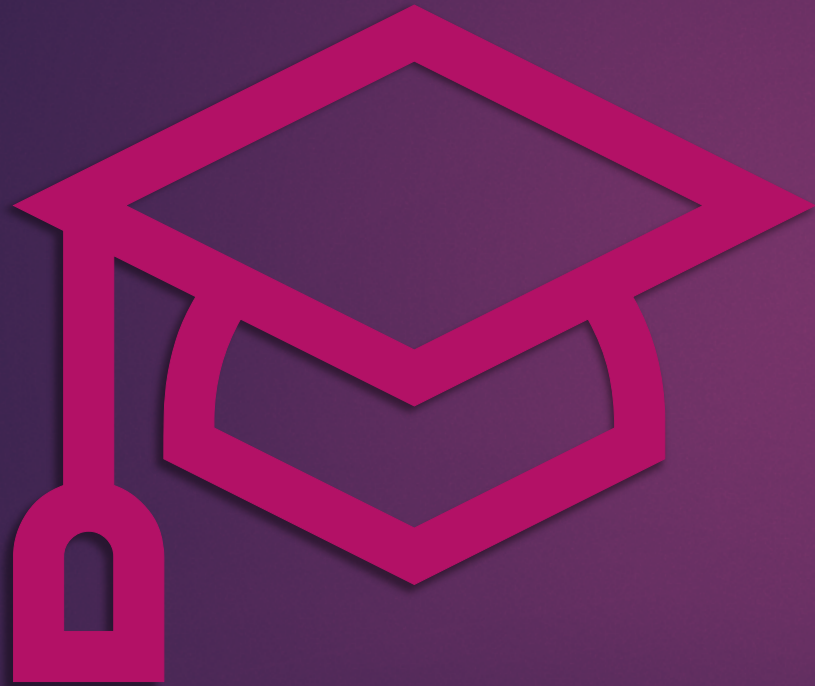
# A Call to Action

MAKE SURE TO INCLUDE THE CALL TO ACTION UP FRONT

# Communicating Up

You can have brilliant ideas, but if you can't get them across, your ideas won't get you anywhere.

— Lee Iacocca



Tips for  
communicating  
to executive  
leadership or a  
board of trustees

## Get to the Point in 1 Minute

Time is an  
executive's most  
valuable asset.

"I'm here to present our  
marketing plan. We want to spend  
\$1 million on channel incentives."

"Okay. Why?"



An example that needs improvement, given the audience.

"I'm here to present our marketing plan. Now, as you can see from this SWOT Analysis, our strengths are in technical support and integration with existing infrastructure. Our weaknesses are in perceived cost and perceived technology lock-in.

Next slide please.

Awareness is trending up over the past four quarters, but...

**"STOP!"**

What is the impact of a concise opening with a question to the executive?

"I'm here to present our marketing plan. With this plan, we'll increase sales by 15% over the next 4 quarters..."

"Do you think we're being aggressive enough?"

"Actually, I was just going to suggest..."

"Is this how you'd define success?"

"How important is this market to our long term strategy?"

"Do you agree we've prioritized our opportunities correctly?"

Asking  
Questions  
Allows for  
Interruption but  
Keeps you in  
control of the  
Conversation

# Include a Future Projection

- ▶ Collegiate executives are often focused on the future.
  - ▶ How do we grow a diverse student population?
  - ▶ How do we increase retention?
  - ▶ How do we dominate cross-applications?

They want to talk about that! How can you help?

# Sell Your Vision Before Jumping Into Details

1

Focus on the  
buy-in

2

Once the vision  
is shared, move  
into the details.

3

But stay out of  
the weeds!

# Lead with Stories

- ▶ Executives Respect Data
  - ▶ But realize it can be incomplete, incorrect or biased
  - ▶ Their instincts play a large role in decision making
  - ▶ Lead with stories that appeal to gut instincts
- ▶ Data Should Back Up the Story



Don't Be  
Intimidated

-

BE PREPARED!

And, Be Afraid  
for Them

SHOW HOW WHAT  
YOU ARE  
PRESENTING WILL  
PROTECT THEM  
FROM THEIR FEARS!



## Final Tip

Surprises are never welcome.

Good or bad, does not matter.

Executives always want to be in the know before anyone else!



# Recap of Key Points

- Your Goal

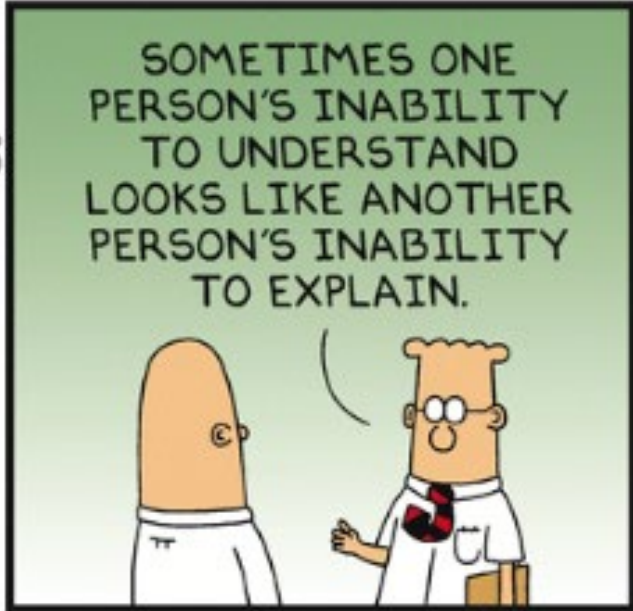
- Your Audience

- Your Delivery



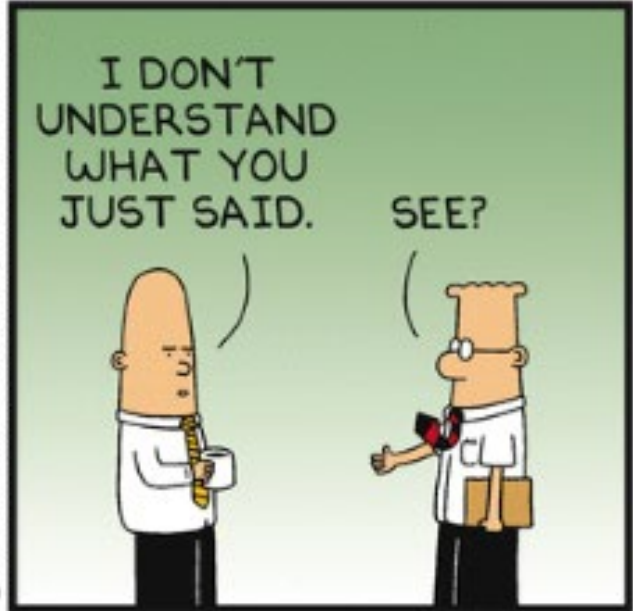
SOMEONE TOLD ME  
YOUR PRESENTATION  
WAS CONFUSING AND  
UNPERSUASIVE.

Dilbert.com DilbertCartoonist@gmail.com



SOMETIMES ONE  
PERSON'S INABILITY  
TO UNDERSTAND  
LOOKS LIKE ANOTHER  
PERSON'S INABILITY  
TO EXPLAIN.

5-17-12 ©2012 Scott Adams, Inc./Dist. by Universal Uclick



I DON'T  
UNDERSTAND  
WHAT YOU  
JUST SAID.

SEE?



# Small Group Work!



# Final Questions



# Thanks for your attention!

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Credits from this presentation :  
The Art of Explanation, by Lee Lefever  
"Presenting to Executives", Bruce Gabrielle