



SS/HS Communication University

Participant's Guide:

*Partnerships for Growth and
Sustainability*



Partnerships for Growth and Sustainability
Participant's Guide

DAY 1 CURRICULUM

Learning Activity/Session

Notes

Introduction: Overview of the Learning Lab

For any initiative, the strength of SS/HS partnerships can be the determining factor in successful systems integration and sustainability. Partnerships can look different from one community to the next, but the same principles for developing and deepening successful partnerships can apply.

Grantees on this track will learn how to identify great partners for their own site, attract partners and sustain partnerships with messages that overcome barriers and acknowledge benefits, and, improve their presentation delivery skills.

This track will also include an examination of models for successful partnerships that support systems integration.

Key Learnings:

- Key Learning #1: Strong partnerships call for effective communication. Done well, they can lead to systems change and sustainability.
- Key Learning #2: Understand the characteristics of partnerships and build the one right for you.
- Key Learning #3: To attract and sustain partners, we must inform ourselves through research.
- Key Learning #4: Know what to say and how to say it for successful partnerships.

Objectives:

- It's not always easy or obvious to identify the best partners for a SS/HS initiative. Key Learnings #1–3 will provide grantees with guidance on choosing—and keeping—strong partners. Identifying and understanding your audience are the key components to Step 3 in the 8-Step Communication Planning Model. Grantees will build on these concepts to learn how to improve existing partnerships, effectively identify potential partners, and research how their values, priorities, and missions best align with their SS/HS initiatives. By recognizing that partners are indeed audiences for effective communication and by researching and aligning to values and needs, grantees are poised to create messages and deliver them effectively (Steps 4 and 5 of the 8-Step model).

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building on the work in Key Learnings #1–3, participants will hone messages that match the values and priorities of potential partners, then learn to deliver those messages with indepth presentation skills training. | |
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Key Learning #1:

**Strong partnerships call for effective communication.
Done well, they can lead to systems change and sustainability.**

Learning Activity/Session	Notes
<p>Partnerships Support Implementation, Sustainability, and Systems Change and Integration</p> <p>As SS/HS grantees, one of your primary goals is to change the way business has been done in your schools and community. Since the SS/HS Initiative was first launched, grantees who have walked in your shoes before have reported that strong, effective partnerships are central to true systems change and integration.</p> <p>Systems change and integration seeks new or improved infrastructures that support the delivery of needed services. Effective partnerships can reduce duplication of services and increase efficiencies by streamlining their efforts through collaboration and sharing of data, processes, program administration, resources, and even funding.</p> <p>Getting the right partners to work together over time—especially in new ways—requires effective and strategic communication.</p>	
<p>Benefits and Challenges of Partnership</p> <p>Great SS/HS partnerships can de-silo services and functions. Working together, services are integrated, resources are streamlined, data may be shared, and many supports are made readily accessible to the children and families who need them most.</p> <p>Considering limited resources, systems change and integration makes sense. It is worth investigating the types of partnerships and partners that will improve business as usual in your schools and community.</p> <p>Because strong partnerships can lead to systems change and integration, you should be willing to overcome the challenges that may come with partnerships. Being realistic about your partnerships is central to achieving your goals.</p> <p>Let's look at some of the benefits and challenges that come with partnership.</p>	

Benefits to Partnership:

- Maximizes and streamlines community resources (talent and funding).
- Improves your/their ability to reach other community populations.
- Minimizes duplication of services.
- Increases credibility of all partners.
- Improves your appeal to a wider pool of external funders (a consequence of increased diversity of organizations).

Challenges to Partnership:

- Reduced autonomy and/or independence
- Unexpected conflicts of interest
- Drain on resources
- Negative impact on reputation
- Conflicting organizational priorities

Our Perfect World

Prior to this day's training, you were asked to consider the partnerships you would have if the world were perfect:

- In a perfect world, what is your vision for how your community will realize real systems change through your SS/HS work? For example:
 - How will decisions be made? How will information be shared? Who will be at the table?
 - What services will be sustained or expanded?
 - How will schools factor into the vision?
- What resources or expertise do you need to fulfill this vision in your community?
 - How does funding flow in your community?
 - Who is already doing what you want to be doing and can you duplicate it?
- In your community, whom do you know that could help you achieve this vision? (current or potential partners)
- Who can help you meet the people you need to meet?

By first identifying your vision for sustainability, systems change and integration, you can better assess your partnership needs—and determine a path for getting the right partners at your table.

We have started this learning lab by framing our work on partnerships in the context of improved systems integration and sustainability. By taking a top-line look at the benefits to strong partnerships and some of the challenges that come with them, we can now examine different partnership models as well as the characteristics of strong partnerships.

Key Learning #2: Understand the characteristics of partnerships and build the one right for you.

Learning Activity/Session	Notes
<p>Not All Partners—and Partnerships—Are Created Equal</p> <p>There are a number of levels of collaboration for partnership development. The level(s) that work best will depend on a community's realities, resources, and climate.</p> <p>Partnerships grow and develop over time. Leadership roles and partner functions may change, and it may be that some partners have a critical stake in the partnership, while others use a less formal approach.</p> <p>In order to take full advantage of your partnerships, you must ask yourself the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes partnership effective? • What makes you a good partner? <p>Let's first look at the different levels of collaboration and think about the way your CMT partnership functions. This exploration will point you in the direction of a partnership that serves your initiative's goals, and, with this clarity, you will be more prepared to communicate effectively with partners.</p> <p>Five Levels of Collaboration (moving from the least formal/time-consuming to the most formal/time-consuming):</p>	

Level	Purpose	Structure	Process
1 Networking	Share information	Loose, flexible, nonhierarchical	Little conflict, informal communication
2 Alliance	Limit duplication of services	Semiformal, communication hub	Facilitative leaders, complex decision making
3 Coordinating	Share resources	Defined roles, central body of decision makers	Autonomous leadership, group decision making
4 Coalition	Share ideas and resources	Formal defined roles, all members decision makers	Shared leadership, formal decision making
5 Collaborating	Build interdependent system to address common goals	Consensus decision making, formal roles and time	Ideas and decisions equally shared, highly developed communication

What makes a partnership effective?

You need to be clear with partners about potential successes and challenges. You also must be certain that partners are providing meaning and value to your initiative. You can ensure that your relationships with partners are propelling you towards your goals by:

- Assessing your needs and current level of partner satisfaction; and
- Auditing current partners about their needs and current level of partner satisfaction.

Characteristics of effective partnerships:

- Well-defined mission
- Focus on specific issue(s)
- Solidarity among members
- Clear, unambiguous roles and responsibilities established and respected
- Members' perception that benefits outweigh costs

Characteristics of failing partnerships:

- Unclear purpose or mission
- Vague goals
- Unclear roles and responsibilities
- No clear accountability for outcomes

- Unrealistic timeframes for success
- Top-down or external mandates forced upon partners
- Responsibility without authority
- Partner mistrust
- Lack of partner participation
- Turf issues
- Missed deadlines
- Lack of fiscal accountability
- Members' perception that costs outweigh benefits

What Makes Us Good Partners?

Before deciding how your partnerships might be improved and expanded upon, take the time to do an internal assessment. Are you satisfied with how you are operating within the current partnership? This list of questions can help you identify whether there are steps you can take to be a stronger partner and leader:

- Am I happy with the way our partnerships currently function?
- Have I helped to create a clear path for members to openly discuss concerns about the partnership?
- Do I believe there's an appropriate distribution of responsibilities among the partners? And do I believe partners are living up to their responsibilities?
- Am I sharing leadership?
- Do we focus on team building, on shared decision-making and goal setting, and development of consensus?
- Am I sharing data effectively with partners, and are we using it to make smart, data-driven decisions?
- If asked, could I demonstrate or document the successful outcomes of partnership?
- Has our partnership succeeded in improving "business as usual" through lasting systems change that's now integrated into the fabric of our community?
- Do I believe our partners will stay committed to this work when funding ceases?

Understanding Is the Key To Cooperation

One of the barriers to successful collaborations comes from misunderstanding each other's organizational cultures and the associated values, goals, motivations, and priorities, which may differ from our own. Successful partners learn to respect, appreciate, and even view these differences as contributions to the larger partnership.

As we know, we have to understand our audience in order to effectively communicate with them. Building an understanding of our partners' organizational cultures enables productivity and cooperation. This is essential when laying the groundwork for effective outreach.

The list below looks at general characteristics of different types of organizations—and how an SS/HS initiative can align with different organizational priorities. It first identifies the types of organizations with which you are most familiar in your SS/HS work: education, law enforcement, and mental health. The list then looks at organizational cultures in your community with which you may wish to partner in the future.

By first understanding the organizational cultures of these audiences with whom you already partner, you better understand how organizations you do not know as well also have their own internal cultures.

Think About:

What are the organizational cultures of your partnering organizations, agencies and individuals? Here is a top-line look at some typical characteristics:

Education:

- Chief goals are not related to health/mental health. SS/HS initiatives can help by connecting academic success to the well-being of a child.
- School districts are hierarchical. SS/HS initiatives can help by respecting the chain of command.
- School districts are always in the public eye and tend to avoid controversy. SS/HS initiatives can help by positioning programs and services as solutions to school district priorities.
- School board members are elected and beholden to constituents. SS/HS initiatives can illustrate to school boards that program success is shared—and school boards can boast about these successes.

Law Enforcement

- Law enforcement might not see prevention as a component of their mission. SS/HS initiatives can help reduce the burden on overworked law enforcement partners by working together to develop alternatives to incarceration for at-risk youth or first offenders.
- They are hierarchical in structure, and respect traditional roles. They work as a family, in a patriarchal (or, matriarchal) sense. SS/HS initiatives can help by respecting the chain of command.
- Law enforcement sees protection of the community as the foundation of their work. SS/HS can link schools to part of the larger community now (e.g., through school resource officers [SROs] or gang intervention programs), and give credit for success to law enforcement.

Mental Health

- Mental health practitioners value researched-based solutions and scientific models. SS/HS can support this value by sharing data on needs, process measures, and outcomes.
- Mental health agencies compete with one another for funding, press coverage, and respect. Each agency feels that its mission is essential and, therefore, deserves support. SS/HS can provide funding (through new clients), and press coverage (by promoting partnering organizations in all communications, media outreach). Respect for mental health is already a cornerstone of this grant. It can be increased when SS/HS links mental health to the safety and well-being of the larger community during outreach to other audiences and stakeholders.
- Practitioners have dedicated their pursuits to this field, making them passionate about their work. SS/HS can leverage this passion by including mental health partners in decisionmaking.

Private Sector:

- Businesses care about the bottom line and return on investment (ROI). SS/HS communications can focus on the investment part of ROI. Partnering with SS/HS may not yield financial return, but it can yield other important returns, such as:

- Lower crime after school because of programs for at-risk youth (also means community is more attractive to new businesses)
- Happier workforce (employed parents of children in the district, or business-school mentoring collaboration)
- Future workforce development
- Good public relations/promotion for supporting a local initiative
- Business leaders are busy. SS/HS initiatives can improve outreach efforts by being succinct, to the point, and providing simple collateral materials, like one-page factsheets, which focus only on areas of real interest to businesses.

Government (Policymakers):

- Local, State, and Federal policymakers are typically elected—and they would like to be re-elected. SS/HS initiatives can find traction by aligning with the issues that resonate with policymakers (e.g., bullying). Use data (qualitative and quantitative) to demonstrate need for services and the successes of your initiative.
- Policymakers frequently have gatekeepers. SS/HS initiatives may not be able to reach a policymaker directly, and that's okay. Start by speaking to the staff members who focus on education and health care/mental health.
- Policymakers like the camera. Consider inviting local officials to speak at your events or publicly receive an award for their service to youth and families in your community.

Faith-Based, Community, and Nonprofit Organizations:

- There is great divergence between and within these categories; there are differences between faiths, and even within the same faith. However, social and political issues often impact these organizations deeply and personally. These organizations frequently exist to make the world a better place—a natural alignment with any SS/HS initiative.

Measuring Partner Satisfaction

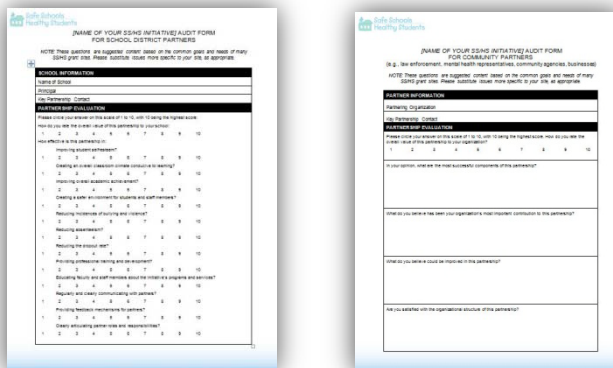
You want your partnerships to run smoothly, and you must also make certain your current partners are providing the expected meaning and value to your initiative.

Now that you have a sense of how satisfied you are with your partnership, it's time to check in with current partners to see how satisfied they are.

Audit your partners to:

- Maintain open lines of communication and prevent misunderstandings;
- Realistically assess partner perceptions of your initiative;
- Explore how existing partners will be able to sustain key functions;
- Identify likely gaps in services as you move towards sustainability (i.e., natural fits for new partnership development); and
- Analyze how partner roles are likely to change.

The Communication & Social Marketing (CSM) Center offers SS/HS grantees Partner Audit Templates in our Celebration Kit and online at <http://www.sshs.samhsa.gov/communications/toolkit/celebrationkit2007.aspx>.



The image shows two side-by-side audit forms. The left form is titled 'NAME OF YOUR SS/HS INITIATIVE AUDIT FORM FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT PARTNERS' and the right form is titled 'NAME OF YOUR SS/HS INITIATIVE AUDIT FORM FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERS'. Both forms include sections for 'PARTNER INFORMATION', 'PARTNER EVALUATION', and 'PARTNER SUSTAINABILITY'. The forms are designed to be filled out by the partners themselves to provide feedback on their satisfaction with the initiative.

These templates can be used as is or customized to gather information more specific to your own initiative. Because school district partners and community partners probably have different needs and perspectives on your initiative, provide different templates for these groups.

Our focus thus far has been on envisioning how a successful partnership would look in your community and assessing how close your current partnership is to meeting that vision. This includes conducting a partnership audit—a tool which provides you with the critical audience research you need to improve communications. We now need to expand our research to maximize existing relations even more, and to identify and attract new partners.

Key Learning #3:

To attract and sustain partners, we must first inform ourselves through research.

Learning Activity/Session	Notes
<p>Who Do We Need at the Table?</p> <p>By now, you've assessed your own partnership and identified opportunities for deepening existing relationships and developing new ones. Let's first review "typical" audiences for SS/HS sustainability and then discuss their values, culture, and the best ways to reach them.</p> <p>Typical audiences for SS/HS sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School districts • Faith-based organizations • Local businesses and business organizations • Community and non-profit organizations • Healthcare providers • Mental health providers • Law enforcement • Juvenile Justice • Court system • District Attorney • Local and state policymakers <p>Think about this general list, as well as your specific community, as you identify the partners who can help you maximize your grant funding and achieve your goals for success, sustainability, and systems integration.</p> <p>Consider—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What organizations, agencies, and individuals align with your missions, values, services? • Who else in your town is committed to providing prevention services for youth and families? • Who has a vested interest in seeing that the community is safe? Are they prosperous? Are they well-educated? <p>Any organization agency or individual you have just listed could be a potential partner. Understanding the motivations, values, and goals of an audience enables you to effectively communicate about partnership opportunities that will improve the community.</p>	

Leveraging Shared Values

As important as a partner's organizational culture are the partner's values—specifically, the values that you share. Values are important to message development and they provide key insight into understanding where your values align and will help you craft messages that motivate potential partners to get on board with your SS/HS initiative as well as keep existing partners actively involved.

Look at the list of values below and ask yourself:

- Which values reflect our own initiative?
- Which values match those of potential partners?
- Where is there an alignment?

Take a few minutes to consider the list of values that you and/or your partners might prize. Use the notes section on this page to jot down which values you believe resonate most with your initiative overall, as well as those which may be core values for your partners or potential partners.

- Authenticity
- Caring
- Comfort
- Commitment
- Community connectedness
- Competition
- Creativity
- Diversity
- Education
- Fairness
- Family connectedness
- Freedom
- Fun
- Growth
- Happiness
- Honesty
- Hopefulness
- Inclusivity
- Innovation
- Integrity
- Justice
- Optimism
- Pragmatism
- Reliability
- Responsiveness
- Responsibility

- Safety/security
- Self-sufficiency
- Success
- Trust
- Wisdom
- Other _____
- Other _____
- Other _____
- Other _____

Research Before Outreach!

Before you approach a potential partner, it's imperative that you think strategically about your communication efforts. This means you will have to learn more about these audiences. Using the information you've discovered on **values** and **organizational cultures**, you can develop strong communications for existing and potential partners.

Reaching out to a potential or existing partner that you do not know well is the equivalent of a salesman cold calling. Nobody wants telemarketers to call us about steak knives during our dinner—even if we really need those steak knives. In the same way, potential partners may not appreciate a request for support out of the blue—even if partnership with your initiative may be the best opportunity they'll encounter all year.

Using the **Maximizing Partnerships** worksheet, select a community partner that you would like to work with, and consider the following questions:

- What do you know about the mission of the overall partnership sector? Their organizational culture? How might they measure success?
- How would you find out more information about this sector?
- What are some of the specific organizations you might consider that fall within this sector in your community?
- Based on your knowledge, what values, goals or mission does your project share with this partner?
- How would a partnership with this organization or sector benefit your initiative?
- How would a partnership with your initiative benefit this organization or partner sector?
- What might be the barriers to partnering with you (e.g., too much time, money, how it affects their reputation)?

- What support and/or actions would you ultimately like this organization to take on behalf of your initiative?
- What type of partnership might be most appropriate?

Use Audience Research To Inform Your Communication Strategy

Diving in deeper through research before developing a communication approach will help you create messages and materials that effectively get your point across and motivate audiences to action.

Using the questions above and your **Maximizing Partnerships** worksheet, you can form your message and materials development strategy.

A Closer Look

When developing your communication strategy for outreach to potential new partners, there are other considerations to include in your research:

- How can you best get them to meet with you?
 - Can someone introduce you (e.g., a champion on your school board belongs to the Chamber of Commerce)?
 - Do they have organizational meetings you could attend (e.g., faith-based leaders in your community hold a monthly breakfast)
 - Should you build/leverage a relationship with a gatekeeper first (e.g., reach out to your senator's key staff on education and advocate directly to them to carry your message to the senator)?
- Will they need to see data to illustrate the need for services or success with your programs?
 - What kind of data will persuade them? Qualitative? Quantitative? Both?
 - Do you have it?
 - How should it be presented?

Understanding how your audience prefers to receive information is crucial to effective communication. Based on your partnership research, ask yourself what your audiences' preferences would be. Would they prefer a simple one-sheet with program highlights? Would they prefer a more detailed report? What kinds of data will they want, and can you represent that data in your chosen material?

Recommended Reading: Kyrene, AZ, Case Study (See Appendix E)

Consider the following questions as you review the case study:

- How would you have handled this situation?
- How would you strategically address this situation?
- Are there things you would have done differently? How so?

Day 1 of this learning lab has set the stage for successful, strategic communications for partnership development. Whether you are seeking to deepen your existing partnerships or interested in developing new ones, you have now begun the audience research that is always needed for crafting messages and materials that will resonate and persuade partners to join in your work.

Day 2 will build on the work of Day 1 and increase your capacity to make the case for partnership through training in presentation skills.

DAY 2 CURRICULUM

Key Learning #4: Know what to say and how to say it for successful partnerships.

Learning Activity/Session	Notes
<p>Introduction</p> <p>At the end of Day 1, you asked yourself, <i>What do my potential partners value? How do these values align with the mission of my SS/HS initiative?</i></p> <p>During Day 2, you will use what you learned to refine your prework PowerPoint, and also learn the skills you need to deliver presentations that will attract potential partners and meet the needs of existing ones. Think back to some of the questions that were discussed on Day 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do these potential partners support your community already (e.g., do they support schools or community youth organizations)? • Do they provide services that fit nicely with the services you want to sustain or expand? • How are they regarded in your community? • How would a partnership with you benefit them? Could it solve a problem for them? • What might be the barriers to partnering with you (e.g., too much time, money, how it affects their reputation)? • How can you best get them to meet with you? • Will they need to see data to illustrate the need for services or success with your programs? • Will you need to prepare presentations or provide other printed materials to potential partners? <p>These questions should be addressed in your partnership presentations.</p>	
<p>The Value of a Good Presentation (and Presentation Skills)</p> <p>Presentations are a critical way to communicate with influencers and decisionmakers. It's likely the way you'll begin to engage new partners in your work or share successes with existing partners so that they stay engaged.</p>	

Whether you're talking one-on-one with someone, or delivering a presentation to 500 people, honing your presentation skills can help make the case that your initiative is doing important work that deserves to be supported and sustained.

Improving your skills as a presenter has benefits beyond partnership development, too. You may be called upon to report back regularly to your school board for updates on your initiative's success. You may need to speak to a room full of parents, students, or teachers about a specific program or services.

Just a few tweaks to your current presentation style can make a world of difference. And with so many bad presenters and presentations out there, this is an opportunity for you to stand out from the crowd by really engaging and wow-ing your audience with how you deliver your messages.

Opportunities for Grantee Presentations

As an SS/HS grantee, you and those on your team have a number of opportunities to present information about your great work in any number of settings, such as:

Formal Opportunities:

- Town hall meetings;
- School board meetings;
- Press conferences; and
- Professional networking events.

Beyond these formal opportunities, you might run into a key player in your community at the local coffee shop and need to deliver a quick and concise elevator pitch to persuade that person to agree to have a followup conversation with you.

Informal Communications:

- Email
- Telephone calls
- Face-to-face conversations
- Social media platforms that invite collaboration, comment, dialogue (e.g. blogs, wikis)

As you can see, not every opportunity is formal or requires a PowerPoint presentation. But the tips for being an effective presenter are universal—no matter to whom or to how many you are speaking.

Typical Materials for Partner Presentations

- PowerPoints
- Brochures
- Factsheets
- Business cards
- Issue-specific reports

Who Should Be Presenting?

A good presentation is often made even better by choosing the best presenter. This is largely dictated by your audience. Think about who will be in the audience and ask yourself:

- Whom does the audience know and trust on our team?
- Who has the right relationship with the audience?
- How can we leverage that relationship within our presentation?
- Is there anyone on our team who is not suited to present to this audience?
- What would be the best way to deliver our information (e.g., PowerPoint, one-on-one conversation)?

You may want to look beyond your CMT for possible presenters. For instance:

- As your school board meets to discuss the budget for counseling services, should they hear from a persuasive parent whose child's life has been truly improved?
- As policymakers consider bullying prevention legislation listen to public testimony, might they appreciate hearing from a student who has moved from victim to spokesperson?

The Good and Bad of PowerPoints

We've talked about a number of opportunities where, as an SS/HS grantee, you might need to present, but there's one kind of presentation on which we rely most often—the PowerPoint presentation.

The Good:

PowerPoint presentations can be extremely effective and help enhance what you're saying with engaging visuals. They also provide a frame of reference for presenters and the audience that guide the direction of a presentation.

The Bad:

Most PowerPoint presentations aren't memorable, in fact, very few of us, when asked, can recall a really compelling PowerPoint that blew us away. That's because many presenters misuse PowerPoint presentations by loading too much information onto each slide—making it a crutch, versus a tool.

Studies show that people can only retain a certain amount of information during each interaction. That's why for any presentation, and PowerPoint specifically, the information you deliver on each slide of your PowerPoint should be presented in:

- Three to five main points; and
- Seven-to-nine second sound bites.

This does not mean that your presentation can only be 9 seconds long. But it does mean that when putting together a PowerPoint, less is more.

What Makes a Good Slide?

A good rule of thumb is the **6 x 5 rule**. No more than 6 words per line and 5 lines per slide.

The point IS NOT to put all your information directly on the slide because that overwhelms and confuses your audience. A text heavy slide competes with you for your audience's attention, and you want to ensure that when you present, you are the center of attention—not your slides.

If you believe that your audience needs more information than should practically be put onto your slides, consider creating a one or two-page handout people can refer to during or after your presentation. Make sure to include your contact information on this handout so people know how to reach you for more information or if they have followup questions.

Here are some tips for creating PowerPoint slides, see Appendix F for a complete list.

Tips for Maximizing the Impact of Your PowerPoints:

- Use no font size smaller than 24 point.
- Avoid clutter on each slide; make sure there is ample white space, especially around charts of graphs.
- Use no more than 4 colors in your charts and limit the number of colors on any given screen.
- If possible stick to lighter backgrounds and use dark text so it's easy for people to read.
- Do not use all caps except for titles.
- Limit the number of transitions and animations used. It is often better to use only one so the audience knows what to expect.
- Avoid scripting out full sentences on your slides. Instead, use images, where appropriate, to represent your content.

To test the readability of your slides, stand back 6 feet from the monitor and see if the information on the slide is clearly presented.

This section focuses on the layout of your PowerPoint slides. For an outline you can use to develop a concise and compelling presentation, refer to Appendix G, The Model Presentation.

Going From Good to Great

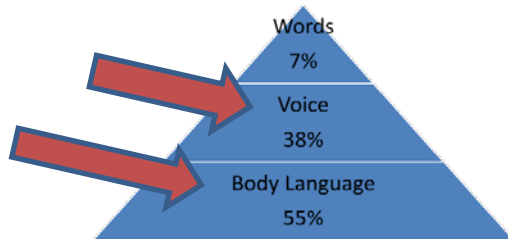
Whether you're presenting to 5 or 500 people, it is important that you be perceived well by your audience. While you might be more comfortable as a presenter leaning on a table or standing with your hands on your hips, these subconscious actions could inadvertently send an unprofessional or off-putting vibe to your audience.

These tips will help take your presentation skills from good to great (for more, see Appendix H):

- 1. It's more about voice/body than actual words;**
- 2. Know why you're speaking and to whom;**
- 3. Practice, practice, practice; and**
- 4. Bring the passion!**

Let's look at each one of these tips independently.

1. Audiences perceive more about your voice/body than your words.



Surprising, but true: your audiences care more about your voice and body language than what you're actually saying. You may even have experienced this firsthand. Have you ever encountered a presenter who, despite being brilliant, was hunched over the podium or spoke too softly? It's likely these small nuances in his/her presentation style greatly impacted your perception of the presentation overall.

Because of this phenomenon, it's important that you never read from your presentation word-for-word or turn your back on your audience when you're presenting. And there are many others tips to help ensure your body and voice support you while presenting. Some of these techniques may feel awkward to you, but just as with developing strategic communication, it's all about the audience and how they perceive you.

Tips:

- If you're standing, take a strong stance—feet planted, don't cross or contort. Be careful not to lock your knees.
- Use natural hand gestures—above waist/below chin.
- Make purposeful movements, let your hands describe message.
- Move with purpose—don't sway or move randomly across the room.
- Don't point!
- Dress appropriately for the venue. Look professional and dress like your audience, not for your audience.
- Talk slowly and clearly.
- Vary your tone and try avoiding uhs, ums, and ahs.
- Always keep water available.
- Make eye contact with your audience, when possible.

2. Know why you're speaking and to whom.

Think back to the prework for this session (the PowerPoint you developed) and the intended audience. Why are you meeting with this partner? What's in it for them and what's in it for you? Specifically, how will this partnership help you realize your SS/HS vision? How long will you have to make your case? Will your audience want to see data? Will this be a formal presentation or an informal get together? Use this information to help shape what you'll say and what kind of presentation you'll give. Also, this helps inform the kind of content you include in your actual presentation.

3. Practice, practice, practice.

Once you have prepared your message and your presentation, take a break. Return to your work with a fresh set of eyes. Then, work with your peers to practice your presentation skills. Ask your peers to ask you questions about what you've presented to model a conversation you would have with a partner or group.

4. Bring the passion.

At the end of the day, you're doing this work to help make your community a better and safer place for youth and families. And it's likely that as the project director, you're passionate about this topic. Let that passion show when you're presenting. If you show others how excited and committed you are to making a difference, that passion can be contagious and help drive others to get on board.

Handling Questions and Answers (Q&A)

"The real art of conversation is to not only say the right thing at the right time but to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment." —Dorothy Neville

Nearly every speaking opportunity brings with it a chance for your audience to ask questions. More often than not, these Q&A sessions come and go without a hitch, and the questions you're asked are noncontroversial, straightforward, and generally benign. But there may be scenarios when, as a presenter, you need to answer tough or uncomfortable questions.

Let's look at strategies that professional public speakers use to navigate tough Q&A.

Expect and prepare for questions.

You are there to deliver messages, not just answer questions. With this in mind, you must know your key messages and be prepared to bridge to them from any question that's asked. Bridging both acknowledges and answers the question you've been asked, then quickly bridges back to the key message that best supports the answer.

Possible bridge lines include:

- That's an interesting question, and I think I can best answer that by discussing...
- You might also want to know that...
- In addition, our research shows...
- Another way to look at that is...
- I want to make sure you understand that...
- I'm not an authority on that, but I can tell you that....

Examples of Bridging

Question: "How do the rates of gang activity compare to the rest of the State?"

Bridging answer: "I'm not an authority on those figures, but I can tell you that we've established a strong partnership with law enforcement and local service organizations to provide alternatives to gang life and offer youth a positive future."

Here's another example.

Question: "So you have counselors in place to provide services to kids who might be violent, but wouldn't that money be better spent on more teachers in the classroom?"

Bridging answer: "We all agree that there should be as many qualified teachers in classrooms as possible. And it's important to understand that every school district is struggling to make this happen. Until then, we're happy that these counseling services—which cost the district nothing—are available to help keep classrooms calmer, making it more possible for all students to learn."

Here are some other tips to remember when responding to questions in practice and in live presentations:

- **KISS:** Keep It Simple, Stick (to the message). What this really means is do your best to respond to the question by getting your message out, and then move on by asking for another question. Keeping things simple and brief can help you maintain control of a room during Q&A.

- **Flagging:** Flagging is a technique used to draw the listener's attention to the point you wish them to remember by saying something like: "The last point is particularly important..." Here's an example: Let's say you're asked the question, "Is it true that your Parents as Teachers programs provide free food for participants? You can respond by saying, "Why, yes, our program certainly provides dinner for participants; we also have child care available for parents with children while they attend the session. And this last point is important, we offer transportation to and from the sessions to help parents access our services."
- **Hooking:** Hooking is used to get more of your key points out when asked a question. For example, "In answer to your question, the first point is ..., the second point is ..., and the third point is ..." Politicians do this often. Here's an SS/HS example. Let's say you're asked the question, "What has SS/HS been doing over the years to address the growing bullying problem in our middle schools." You can respond by saying something like, "These past few years, we have implemented Olweus Bullying Prevention Program; however, we know from research that bullying is a multifaceted issue that also deals with mental and social health. That is why, in addition to the Olweus Program, we've been working directly with families and schools to ensure kids are supported across all aspects of their lives, helping them stay off drugs and alcohol through our substance abuse prevention work, ensuring they're able to cope with problems both at home and at school through our school counselors, and finally, keeping them safe on school grounds via our school resource officers."

In this example, you were able to share more information about your great work than was asked by hooking a series of related topics together, instead of just answering the question asked about bullying.

Handling Emotional Questions

Sometimes we encounter hostility or high emotion when fielding Q&A. This may especially be true when talking with members of the community who are passionate about their work, family, and fellow citizens. The trouble

with emotion is that it can quickly infect others in the room and turn a once placid audience against you. To diffuse the situation and maintain control of the room, experts use a four-step process.

4-Steps to Handling Emotional Questions:

1. “I” to “you”
2. “I, too”
3. Ask permission
4. Followup

“I” to “you”

First, you must acknowledge the person who asked the question and let him or her know you’re willing to answer his or her question.

“I would like the chance to respond to you.”

“I, too”

Next, empathize with the person who asked the question by highlighting a time when you, too, felt angry or frustrated by a situation.

“I, too, have been frustrated by the slow pace of change in our community.” Or, “I also find it difficult to balance the need for services with decreased dollars in our community.”

Empathy shows respect for the person who has asked you a question. It is very different, however, from saying “I know you how you feel” to someone who is emotional. This statement will prompt the listener to immediately profess that you can’t possibly know how he or she feels, exacerbating the situation.

Ask Permission

This may seem strange, but it’s important to ask the emotional person if he or she will accept a response from you before you begin answering their question. This will help further diffuse the situation and puts the power of the conversation back in your hands.

“Would it be OK if I responded to your question?”

Once they have said yes, answer their question using the bridging, flagging, and hooking techniques mentioned earlier, as appropriate.

Followup

Finally, if the person refuses to calm down, let him/her know that, to be mindful of the group's time, you would be happy to remain after the presentation to talk in more detail; then quickly ask if there are other questions.

Day 2 of this lab has provided an opportunity to refine and practice PowerPoint development and presentation delivery skills. Throughout the 2 days, you've learned how to identify and understand your current and future partners, as well as how to speak with them in compelling ways. This knowledge can help ensure that your audiences will truly see a partnership with your initiative as a win-win.



Appendixes

Appendix A: Project Director Partnership Worksheet

DIRECTIONS: Complete part 1 of this worksheet prior to attending the Communication University.

PART 1: In A Perfect World

What is your vision for how your community can realize systems change and integration through your SS/HS initiative?

Consider: How would decisions be made? Information shared? Who would be at the table? What services would be sustained or expanded? How would schools factor into this vision?

What resources or expertise do you need to fulfill this vision in your community?

Consider: How does funding flow? Which existing partners can help? Whom do you need to meet? Who is already doing what you want to be doing—and can you duplicate it? Who can help you build bridges to potential new partners?

PART 2: Before Outreach, Assess!

This section is designed as a self-assessment for project directors. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the level of highest agreement, rate the following statements:

Question	Scale
I am happy with the way our partnership currently functions.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
I help to create a clear path for members to openly discuss concerns about the partnership.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
I believe there's an appropriate distribution of responsibilities among the partners.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
I believe our partners living up to their responsibilities.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
I share leadership.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Our partnership values team-building, shared decisionmaking, goal-setting, and consensus building.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
I share data effectively with partners.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Data is used effectively to drive decisions.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
If asked, I could demonstrate or document the successful outcomes of our partnership.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Our partnership has succeeded in improving business as usual through lasting systems change that is now integrated into the fabric of our schools and community.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
I believe our partners will stay committed to this work when funding ceases.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Appendix B: Five Levels of Collaboration

Level	Purpose	Structure	Process
Networking	Share information	Loose, flexible, nonhierarchical	Little conflict, Informal communication
Alliance	Limit duplication of services	Semiformal, communication hub	Facilitative leaders, complex decisionmaking
Coordinating	Share resources	Defined roles, central body of decisionmakers	Autonomous leadership, group decision making
Coalition	Share ideas and resources	Formal defined roles, all members decisionmakers	Shared leadership, formal decisionmaking
Collaborating	Build interdependent system to address common goals	Consensus decision-making, formal roles and time	Ideas and decisions equally shared, highly developed communication

Appendix C: Maximizing Partnerships Worksheet

Use one worksheet per partner sector.

Chose which partner sector you would like to strengthen.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education (school district) | <input type="checkbox"/> Government (policymakers) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health | <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit, community organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Law enforcement | <input type="checkbox"/> Faith-based organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

What do you know about the mission of this sector? Their corporate/organizational culture?
How might they measure success?

What are some ways to find out more information?

What are some specific organizations you might consider that fall within this sector?
(Example: State Farm Insurance, Children's Hospital Association, Boys and Girls Club)

Identify Areas of Common Interest

Based on your knowledge, what values, goals, or mission does your project share with this sector? Which level of collaboration might work best?

How would a partnership with this partner sector benefit your initiative (benefits to *you*)?

How would a partnership with your initiative benefit this partner sector (benefits to *them*)?

What might be the barriers to partnering with you (e.g., too much time, money, resources, how it affects their reputation)?

What support and/or actions would you ultimately like this organization to take on behalf of your initiative?

Appendix D: Partner Audit Form

NOTE: These questions are suggested content based on the common goals and needs of many SS/HS grant sites. Please substitute issues more specific to your site, as appropriate.

PARTNER INFORMATION										
Partnering Organization										
Key Partnership Contact										
PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION										
Please circle your answer on this scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest score. How do you rate the overall value of this partnership to your organization?										
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
In your opinion, what are the most successful components of this partnership?										
What do you believe has been your organization's most important contribution to this partnership?										
What do you believe could be improved in this partnership?										
Are you satisfied with the organizational structure of this partnership?										
Are you satisfied with the way information is communicated between partners?										
Are you satisfied with the way information about our initiative is communicated to the community?										

Does your organization use any tools to communicate this partnership to the public (e.g., Web site, newsletter, newspapers, radio, community access television, public events, public service announcements, brochures)?

Does your organization have any available resources into which our partnership could tap to better promote this initiative's work to the community (e.g., Web development, public relations, writers, editors, spokespeople)?

Do you see your organization's role in this partnership as changing over time and, if so, what does that look like?

Other thoughts?

**Kindly complete and return to *[Name of your SS/HS initiative]*
project director's office by *[date]*. Thank you!**

Completed by:

Date:

Appendix E: SS/HS CASE STUDY

Kyrene, AZ: Cultivating Relationships Before Requesting Support

The Situation: Kyrene’s SS/HS Initiative was highly regarded by the school district. The superintendent and several school board members were champions for the initiative, but the district was strapped for cash. With declining enrollments, this school district located in a suburb of Phoenix made it clear that there was no room in the budget to sustain much of this important initiative.

The Strategy: The initiative decided to approach the local business community—*strategically*. Even though they felt they were coming to the question of sustainability late in their initiative, they took three months to conduct indepth research of local businesses, large and small. They assessed missions and looked at company histories of giving back to the community. They identified organizational priorities and values and figured out where individual company needs aligned with their initiative. They identified benefits to partnering with their initiative and preemptively assessed potential barriers to partnership.

They also researched who knew whom in their community and discovered that several of their district champions—and even their SS/HS staff—could personally introduce the project director to someone in a management position at several area businesses.

With research concluded, Kyrene made a list of the businesses they believed would be *most likely* to support specific functions of their initiative.

Another key outcome from their research: businesses (and the school district) were both committed to keeping Kyrene “the best of the best.”

The Execution: The initiative leveraged champions and partners to make critical personal introductions to business leaders. Kyrene’s project director became the face of this initiative. She met with businesses and established a credible relationship with the most likely partners. The site also created specific printed collateral for businesses to supplement in-person meetings, providing them with succinct followup information on their successes and needs. Finally, they made it easy to offer financial support by channeling contributions through the school district’s 501(c)3.

The A-HA! Moment: The Kyrene SS/HS initiative was almost shocked to learn that businesses were happy to support the district and *most were surprised that they had never been asked for help before this*.

The Outcomes: Kyrene received extensive support—large and small—from local businesses committed to keeping their community “the best of the best.” This funding, along with funding from other grants, meant that this initiative succeeded in sustaining close to 85 percent of their initiative’s key functions.

Appendix F: Tips for PowerPoint Presentations

LAYOUT

- For bullet points, use the 6 x 5 rule. One thought per line with no more than six words per line and no more than six lines per slide.
- Use no font size smaller than 24 point.
- Clearly label each screen. Use a larger font (35–45 points) or different color for the title.
- Use a single sans-serif font for most of the presentation. Use different colors, sizes, and styles (bold, underline) for impact.
- Avoid italicized fonts as they are difficult to read quickly.
- Use light backgrounders and dark text.
- Do not use all caps except for titles.
- Select sans-serif fonts such as Arial or Helvetica. Avoid serif fonts such as Times New Roman or Palatinoas because they are sometimes more difficult to read.
- Be sure to check your spelling and grammar.

GRAPHICS, DESIGN, AND COLOR

- Limit the number of colors on a single screen.
- Keep the background consistent and subtle.
- Keep the design clean and uncluttered. Leave empty space around the text and graphics.
- Use quality Clipart and use it sparingly. The graphic should relate to and enhance the topic of the slide.
- Limit the number of graphics on each slide.
- Try to use the same style graphics throughout the presentation (e.g., cartoon, photographs).
- Check all graphics and colors on a projection screen before the actual presentation.
- Avoid flashy graphics and noisy animation effects unless they relate directly to the slide.
- Limit the number of transitions used. It is often better to use only one so the audience knows what to expect.
- Use no more than four colors on one chart.

DELIVERY

- Do not read the presentation. Practice the presentation so you can speak from bullet points. The text should be a cue for the presenter rather than a message for the viewer.
- If the content is complex, print out the slides so the audience can take notes.
- Do not turn your back on the audience. Try to position the monitor so you can speak from it.

Adapted from: <http://www.cheney268.com/training/powerpoint/powerpointtips.htm>

Appendix G: The Model Presentation

Whether you're putting together a PowerPoint to deliver during a Chamber of Commerce meeting, or talking one-on-one with a local, influential minister, it's important to organize what you're going to say in a compelling but concise way. Whatever the speaking opportunity, there's a simple outline you can follow to ensure you get the right information out. The following model presentation can serve as an outline for PowerPoint slides or a way to help organize your talking points. Here is a worksheet to help organize your information.

Slide 1: Attention Getter

To immediately engage your audience, begin your talk or presentation with something compelling that grabs the audience's attention and connects with their feelings. This could be done by quoting a statistic or describing a problem your community faces. Here are a few examples:

- "Most youth crime in our community happens between the hours of 3 p.m. and 6 p.m."
- "This past year alone, 25 of our young people have attempted to end their lives; that's like two full pews in your church of young people who felt they had nowhere else to turn."
- "Our after-school program has helped nearly 40 students graduate from high school this year alone"

Think about your audience as you consider your attention getter, and be sure that the issue or topic you're describing is something they also value.

Slide 2: Recommendation

Once you've set up your topic in an attention-grabbing way, you then state what your recommendation, or "ask" is from that person or group. It can be as large as asking the whole Chamber of Commerce to help you keep the after-school program going, or as specific as asking one particular business to pay for student transportation to and from the program. The key here is to be as specific as possible with your audience so they understand what's being asked of them. Also, be brief. You can follow up with more specific information about logistics for their involvement, process, etc., but during your presentation or conversation, avoid providing too much detail that overwhelms the audience.

- "That is why we'd like your support sustaining our after school program by funding our after-school program so we can continue keeping kids off your streets."

Slide 3: Benefits

Once you've stated what you'd like the audience to do, talk about how your "ask" or recommendation is a solution to a problem they have. Think about appealing to things like time, money, and their feelings. Thinking back to the Chamber of Commerce example:

1. “With your support for providing transportation to our after-school program, you’ll be keeping kids off the streets during the hours of 3 to 6 p.m., reducing the number of youth loitering in front of your stores and shoplifting.”

Slide 4: Proof

Next, you’ll need to prove that your benefit is real. This proof can be presented in the form of data, examples, stories, testimonials, or even anecdotes. Think about your audience and what they’ll need to hear to be motivated to action. For instance, faith leaders might want to hear testimonials from parishioners or local businesses might be more interested in hard data. Some may want a mix of these. If possible, provide two or three kinds of proof within your presentation. For instance, again thinking back to our Chamber of Commerce:

2. “Since the start of this program three years ago, shoplifting in our town has gone down by 15 percent.”
3. “We also have heard from other businesses that there has been more foot traffic in their stores because shoppers are no longer deterred by the large group of loitering youth in our town.”
4. Overall, the stores in our community have seen a 10 percent increase in revenue since we began the program three years ago.”

Slide 5: Summarize and Obtain Action and/or Agreement

Finally, after you’ve presented your information and proof, quickly summarize your presentation and obtain action or an agreement for more followup. For example:

5. “Bottom line: Our program helps your business do better, and we need your support to ensure these kids have a constructive place to go after school hours. Will you consider helping us continue to help you by supporting this important program?”

Sample Presentation Outline

The following is a sample PPT presentation, where each box represents its own PPT slide.

Who is the audience? *Chamber of Commerce.*

What are their priorities? *Money, sustaining their businesses.*

1. Attention Getter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sixty percent of youth crime occurs between 3 and 6 p.m. 	2. Recommendation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund after school program. Keep kids off streets, stop loitering. 	3. Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fewer students loitering by your shops. Less shoplifting.
4. Proof <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results in fifteen percent reduction in shoplifting. Stores report more customer foot traffic. 	5. Summarize and Obtain Action/Agreement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding after-school program is good for your business. Without it, kids are back on your streets. Can we count on your support? Schedule followup meeting. 	

Appendix H: Presentation Tips and Techniques

PREPARE

- Dress professionally for every presentation, as if you're going on a job interview.
- Don't wear patterns or dangly jewelry when presenting. They are distracting to the audience.
- Keep water available in case you feel parched or your mouth gets dry during your presentation.
- Eat lightly before your presentation to avoid lethargy.
- Also avoid foods that make you sleepy or gaseous (dairy/soda).
- Develop and use visual aids to enhance your presentation (e.g., PowerPoints, charts).
- Expect and prepare for tough questions.

DELIVER

- Show feeling and passion about what you're presenting.
- Have a conversation with your audience; talk to them, not at them.
- Gauge your voice—be aware of your tone and avoid saying ah and um.
- Use gestures and movement as you speak to reinforce your messages.
- Make eye contact with members of the audience throughout your presentation.
- Don't memorize your presentation word for word, instead, learn the content and talk to your audience about what you know.
- Check in with your audience every now and then to ensure they're still following you and paying attention.

RESPOND

- Gain thinking time when asked a tough question by repeating or rephrasing the question.
- Use lead-ins when answering questions, including: Thank you for that question, I love questions that make me think, and I'm glad you asked that.
- If you don't know something, offer to followup. Never make up facts.
- Be sure to reinforce your message points when you answer a question.

**Most importantly, keep practicing.
Find your inner presenter and develop
your own personal public speaking style.**