

Using a Message Wheel to Keep Your Messaging on Track

A message wheel is a simple visual format for organizing the messages that are key to your issue. Your most important message – that one thing you always want to share – is placed in the middle of the wheel. Supporting statements – which would likely include the problem, solution, and one or two other key statements – are placed around the wheel like spokes. Points that explain or expound on your supporting statements are added under each heading.

You will want to use the central message every time you communicate about your issue, whether you are writing a letter to the editor or Op-Ed, speaking to a neighborhood group about your issue, answering questions about your cause, or being interviewed in the media. Sounds simple, right? When you are the one in control of the message, like writing a letter to the editor or preparing a presentation, it should be. You don't have to use every point every time. Just select the supporting messages that are most likely to resonate with your audience, add examples, stories, and descriptive language to paint the picture for the audience. Make it your own!

However, in situations where you are responding to questions, such as during an interview, following a presentation, or when meeting with a decision maker about your issue, making sure you are coming back to your central message can become a little more tricky. This is when the visual layout of the message wheel can be an especially helpful tool for you and your spokespeople. The message wheel helps show the connections between your

supporting messages and your central message. When you are asked a question, find that thread that can take you back to a point under a supporting statement and bridge to that. Once you have made it to your supporting statement, you can link back to your central message.

To use this tool most effectively, spend some time digging into it and thinking about examples from your school, your neighborhood, or your family that you could share to personalize your messages. When you are writing, use those examples to make your cause more relatable to others. When you are preparing for an interview, think about the arguments that those who disagree with your position might bring up and plan a response that can bring you back to your central message – and then practice your response.

By bringing the most important points for your issue into one place and using it, you'll be sure to keep your messaging on track.

SNAP Incentives

SNAP incentives boost local economies.

- Every \$5 spent using SNAP generates up to \$9 in economic activity.
- SNAP incentives generate job growth. Every \$1 billion of SNAP benefits creates 8,900-17,900 full-time jobs.
- SNAP incentives increase spending on fruits and vegetables at grocery stores and farmers' markets.
- SNAP incentives generate economic growth for local communities, even with a reduction in SNAP caseload.

SNAP incentives help families stretch their food dollars and buy healthier options.

- SNAP provides more nutrition assistance to low-income children than any other federal program.
- Incentives help thousands of families afford fruits and vegetables.
- Children's healthy eating habits and taste for healthy food can become lifelong behavior and support overall health and wellness for years beyond enrollment in the SNAP program.
- Studies show that increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables can reduce risks of heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

Adding financial incentives that increase the value of SNAP dollars when they're used to purchase fruits and vegetables increases purchase and consumption of these healthy foods by making them more accessible for low-income families while also bolstering local economies.

SNAP incentives reduce food insecurity.

- Nearly two-thirds of all SNAP participants are children, elderly, and people with disabilities.
- Financial incentives ensure that SNAP participants have greater access to nutritious foods and helps to encourage buying more fruits and vegetables.
- Together with local resources, including food banks, pantries, community grocery stores, and farmers' markets, SNAP incentives help families put healthy food on the table.

SNAP incentives can help SNAP participants eat more fruits and vegetables.

- When given incentives to buy fruits and vegetables, participants spend more of their SNAP benefits on these healthy foods.
- SNAP participants often continue to purchase and eat more fruits and vegetables even after the incentive program ends.
- Those who participated in incentive programs reported purchasing more fruits and vegetables and eating less chips, cookies, and candy.
- There is broad support for expanding SNAP incentives.



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