

All about key messages

Key messages are the big idea at the heart of what you are producing, whether it is a verbal presentation or a written report.

The strongest messages are the simplest ones; so don't try to cram too much information into a single idea.

Your key messages should be **specific, concrete, relevant** and **accessible across audiences**. They should connect the dots between what you do and how it relates to your audience.

This can also include an internal audience, for those who see their own area of expertise but are in need of placing it within a bigger picture

The takeaway from your key message should be the answer to the question: **WHAT'S NEXT?**

Key messages are the foundation for other materials: statements, speeches, fact sheets, frequently asked questions and other documents.

They're easy to deliver -- and easy to receive! They will boost your overall communication effort with **clarity, focus** and **precision**

Developing your key message

Begin by identifying all the points you want to get across to the audience, then focus on the most important points.

- What is the most important thing you need to say?
- What is your target audience most concerned about?
- Refine your language to make them accessible. Remove your jargon.
- Simplify, Simplify, Simplify. If it can't fit on a t-shirt, it is not a key message
- Limit your messages to three: beginning with a premise statement
- Stay in the active voice, and stay positive!
- Once you have your message, have an example to bring it to life: the more visual the better
- Test your messages on someone unfamiliar with your subject. If they don't get it, no one will.
- Adapt your message to your audience -- but stay on message regardless of whom you are addressing