Strengthen the Trust Between Local Govs and Their Residents Through Better Communications

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HOW IT SPREADS

Word of Mouth
Social Media
Traditional Media
Websites-Legit & Not
Podcasts
Blogs
Uniformed Staff
Electeds Saying the Wrong Thing

PREVENTION

Start Now
Tell Stories
Be Timely & Out in Front
Respect All Viewpoints
Keep Spin to a Minimum
Educate Spokespeople
Be Visual
Meet People Where They Are

CURE

Be Direct
Rely on Your Friends
Be Aware of Emotions
Know Your Facts
Be Everywhere

GET STARTED

Make a Plan
Define Takeaways
Get Organized
Establish a Timeline and Milestones.
Commit

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

How should communities choose which strategies work best in their city/town?
At the end of the day, you know your community best. Take all of the advice and filter it to fit best in your community's context. Also, examine which tools have historically been successful, this may be part data and part perception.

On a given communication campaign, what is the distribution plan? (Social media or traditional commercials?)
In the community we worked with on the Home Rule initiative, we focused primarily on social media because of the high community presence on Nextdoor and Facebook.

Do you have any advice on how to deal with a controversial project in which the elected officials and public will need to be comfortable with unknown implications?
Look at communications and messaging in phases and bring the community along with the process. Be honest and clear about variables, discuss how you are trying to resolve those variables. Engage the community in solutions.

How to combat misinformation when it is coming from the staff?
Find out if it is Unintentional or Intentional Information. In the case of unintentional misinformation, hold an all-staff meeting to ensure everyone is on the same page. Create quick-fact business cards which act as a reference tool about a given issue. If the misinformation is spreading intentionally, find out what is the core reason for the misinformation (ex. fears relating to job security, resistance to changes)

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