The Communications Capacity Conundrum

• Robin Miner-Swartz
• Owner, Miner-Swartz Editing and Consulting
• Former VP of marketing and communications, Capital Region Community Foundation, Lansing, Michigan
• Critic and features editor, Lansing State Journal
Meet my friend Rob
Rob is seriously funny
Rob honed his voice
Be like Rob
The Communications Capacity Conundrum

Maximize your output
Minimize your stress
Amplify your message

steps to

7
The 7 steps

1. Question Everything
2. Schedule Downtime
3. Stock Your Pantry
4. Play to Your Strengths
5. Ask for Help at Home
6. Delegate
7. Always Tell the Story
1. QUESTION EVERYTHING

• What do we do?
• Why do we do it?
• Who is it for?
• Are they responding?
1. QUESTION EVERYTHING

What do we do?

• Identity/branded pieces
• Internal communications
• External communications
1. QUESTION EVERYTHING

Why do we do it?

• Purpose?
• Cause/event?
• Just because?
1. QUESTION EVERYTHING

Who is it for?

• Audiences
• Just because?
1. QUESTION EVERYTHING

Are they responding?
• Donations/funds growing?
• More/new grantees?
• More/new media coverage?
• Crickets?
... a brief aside about media relations
... a brief aside about media relations

• Know your local media outlets
• Know what to pitch
• Know what not to pitch
• Say thank you
... a brief aside about media relations

Be a source

• Unique position
• It’s not always about you
Note to PR friends and/or professionals: My inbox is flooded with your requests. Three things to guarantee I NEVER open your email: Exclamation points in the subject line; the words "game-changing," "revolutionary," "unique;" and a subject line I can't read in my iPhone's small window. And if --- THAT'S A BIG IF --- I open your email, it's headed directly to trash if: You've only sent an attachment, bore me in the first 5 words and god help you if there are no bullet points that tell me why I should give two shakes about what you are emailing about. #rantover
... a brief aside about media relations

• Don’t ask to approve the story.
• Offer an exclusive.
• Know the ground rules (on and off the record)
YOUR TURN

• Media success?
2. SCHEDULE DOWNTIME

Wait, that’s a thing?
2. SCHEDULE DOWNTIME

Identify slow times during the year

• Half a day?
• Work from home one day?
• Spring cleaning for the office?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>PTO</td>
<td>Invoice P&amp;G, 8am</td>
<td>Business brand/style guide, 8:30am – 10:30am</td>
<td>Organize digital files, 8:30am – 12pm</td>
<td>Design newsletter templates, 8:30am – 2pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Social messaging for Q3, 8:30am – 11:30am</td>
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<td>Strategic planning presentation, 8:30am – 5pm</td>
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<td>Update website, 12 – 4pm</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Update login/passwords list, 4 – 5pm</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td></td>
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2. SCHEDULE DOWNTIME

Inspect your uninterruptable power supply

• What has to happen always?
• Backup systems?
2. SCHEDULE DOWNTIME

Inventory management

- FAQ sheet
- Media talking points
- Templates
- Commonly used language
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slow time</th>
<th>Always running?</th>
<th>Backup system</th>
<th>Inventory management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last week of January</td>
<td>Schedule Facebook posts for February, March &amp; April</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>First week of March</td>
<td>Update website — new stories, grant forms</td>
<td>Update website how-to manual</td>
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<tr>
<td>End of first quarter</td>
<td>Schedule Facebook posts for May, June &amp; July</td>
<td></td>
<td>Create FAQ sheet for media, update media contact list</td>
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<td>Mid-June</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Organise, clean out digital files, standardise file names</td>
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<td>First week of August</td>
<td>Schedule Facebook posts for August, September &amp; October</td>
<td>Update logins for social media accounts</td>
<td>Create templates for collecting stories and creating newsletters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week after Labor Day</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Second week of October</td>
<td>Schedule Facebook posts for November, December &amp; January</td>
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<td>First week of November</td>
<td></td>
<td>Analysis outcomes from annual event last month</td>
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<td>First week of December</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Update New Year greeting card mailing list</td>
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3. STOCK YOUR PANTRY
3. STOCK YOUR PANTRY

• Key messages
• Spotlight stories
• Content to repurpose
• Content calendar
3. STOCK YOUR PANTRY

Key messages

• Mission/vision/purpose
• Elevator speech
• Brand/style guide
3. STOCK YOUR PANTRY

Spotlight stories

• Donors
• Nonprofits
• Nextgen philanthropy
• Community projects
3. STOCK YOUR PANTRY

Content to repurpose:
• Annual report
• Facebook post
• Downloadable resource
• Donor brochure
3. STOCK YOUR PANTRY

Content calendar

- Communication channel
- Timing/frequency
- Actual content
4. PLAY TO YOUR STRENGTHS

Ask yourself:

• **What** needs to get done?
• **When** is it due?
• **Who** is the best person to do it?
The mystery of Miss Lansing
The mystery of Miss Lansing

Robin Miner-Swartz
October 21 at 1:57pm · Saint Helen
My aunt brought these to a family party this weekend. She found them in her late husband’s sock drawer. Any idea who she is or what era this might be?
The mystery of Miss Lansing

Kathleen Lavey: You should get Judy Putnam to write a column.
Like · Reply · October 21 at 2:04 pm

Joan Austin: Do you know when your Uncle graduated from high school?
Like · Reply · October 21 at 2:12 pm

Judy Putnam: She looks familiar.
Like · Reply · October 21 at 2:18 pm

Jack Thompson: Mary Jane Kluiber

Jack Thompson: She was a 17-year-old Everett senior, the daughter of Frank and Myrtle Kluiber, 8127 Gardenia Ave. He was a salesman for John Bean. Does any of this help, Robin?
Like · Reply · October 21 at 2:44 pm · Edited

Dan K Clements: WOW, that jogs the old memories, we lived at 6310 Gardenia, nice family!!
Like · Reply · October 21 at 3:21 pm

Jack Thompson: Miss Lansing of 1961

Robin Miner-Swartz: My aunt knows nothing about her, but this is all great info!
Like · Reply · October 21 at 8:29 pm · Edited

Jack Thompson: She later graduated from MSU and taught phys ed. On June 17, 1967, she married Air Force Lieutenant Richard Flynn. They moved to Benton PA where he was stationed.
Like · Reply · October 21 at 2:55 pm

Robin Miner-Swartz: The MSU part makes sense. Uncle Dick was at MSU at the same time. And Uncle was in the Air Force. Is she still alive, Jack?
Like · Reply · October 21 at 2:57 pm · Edited

Jack Thompson: The trail ends with her new name and moving from the area.
Like · Reply · October 21 at 2:58 pm
5. ASK FOR HELP AT HOME

Internal support

• Staff
• Grantees
• Donors
Share Your Story

It’s important for people living with mental health conditions to know that they are not alone. Sharing a story about your personal experiences with mental health challenges can help in your own recovery as well as provide encouragement and support to others with similar experiences. Telling your story can take several forms:

- Prose/poetry
- Song lyrics
- Inspirational quotes
- Drawings
- Photos
- Videos

NAMI offers two safe, moderated spaces for sharing stories and creative expression: You Are Not Alone and OK2Talk. These spaces also allow for anonymous public posting, unlike our NAMI blog.

You have an authentic voice. You can make a difference for yourself and others by sharing your experiences and perspective. What has helped? What hasn’t? What has been most discouraging about your condition? What has given you hope? There are all sorts of things you know that other people want to know—you are not alone.

Let them know that they aren’t either.
6. DELEGATE

“There are people for that.”
— My mom
6. DELEGATE

Working with consultants

• Targeted help
• External perspective
• Back-burner projects
6. DELEGATE

Other helpers

- Ambassadors
- Deputize people
NEW AT 6:00

SECRET SANTA PAYS OFF WALMART LAYAWAY ACCOUNTS
ALSO GAVE MONEY TO ANGEL TREE PROGRAM
Elfing impact: 2009

Number of contributions in 2009: 2 (Robin & Betsy)
Amount given away in 2009: $50
Elfing impact: 2009

Number of contributions in 2009: 2 (Robin & Betsy)
Amount given away in 2009: $50
Elfing impact: 2017

Number of contributions in 2017: 76
Average contribution: $50
Range of contributions: $10 to $500
Amount given away in 2017: $5,510

Total given away since 2009: $18,060
7. ALWAYS TELL THE STORY
YOUR TURN

• What’s your favorite time-saving trick?
• What’s the one thing you do every
day/week/month/quarter to ensure you’re on track?
• One piece of advice to share?