

Messaging 101

Action Tips

The Homework

- Ask the same question two ways with the goal of exposing any conflicts
- Remind participants not to share answers or reference the website/existing materials
- Give a deadline that's two days in advance of your true deadline– these never come in on time!
- Select a text color for each participant and paste all the responses onto a master document, this way you can easily reference who said what without having to flip through pages
- Highlight words in yellow that appear often and in agreement; choose another color for words and phrases that are in conflict

The Session

- Plan for two hours and ask participants to be present– no cell phones or heads in laptops
- Open the session with an icebreaker- one I love is [the “Yes and…” game](#), either describing a day in the life of your customer persona or inventing an imaginary product your company could develop
- Bring a big Post-It pad to capture words and phrases, or use a dry erase board and capture photos to Evernote as you go along
- Don't forget juicy markers!
- Record the session
- Have participants get up and move at the halfway point
- Bring snacks!

The Final Deliverable

- Get your first draft of core messages down on paper as soon as possible (w/i 24 hours)
- Connect offline to be sure you've got information correct, especially if there were questions raised in the session
- Experiment with formats (Q&A, Grid, Outline) to determine what works best for you
- Include in the final all taglines, brand/product names and legal mark-ups– this document should be a one-stop shop for final answers on correct style
- One it's locked and loaded, leave it alone!