

How to communicate your message

Taken from a Messaging Workshop March 2021

Lesley Sheldon-Browning Sept 2021

A good conversation should

- Bridge the gaps between what people currently think about the issue and what you would like them to think
- Start with a Vision

A Vision

- Focus on what you want to happen rather than what must not happen.

For Example, when you commission a painting you want to see a beautiful scene. You do not say that you do not want any trees, any dark sky, any litter.

In the same way, you want people to be treated equally and fairly. Don't focus on what yOU don't want such as detention, camps etc

- Vision needs to be value led
- Hope is a better motivator than fear
- Capture the common ground. For example: a more humane system; a diverse society. People seeking asylum can become part of the community, rebuild their lives and live their potential without risk.

Explain the problem and offer a solution

- Clarify myths and misconceptions, but not in a way that makes the other person feel stupid.
- Avoid repeating myths.
- Capture the common ground
- Stick to a 3:1 approach - 3 Solutions: 1 problem. Too many problems will make people feel fatalistic.
- Avoid country comparisons. This can backfire. (Germany takes in many more people than we do)

Explain the problem and offer a solution

- Avoid focusing all the blame on the Government or Home Office. Instead emphasise positive vision on how the system could work better
- It is often easier to extend compassion to people we relate to, or who are like us. So don't focus on the trauma or the act of migration instead focus on the common experiences of people. *Imagine what it must be like to....*
- Focus on stories and personal narrative of people in communities - build a shared sense of humanity.
- Draw on common values of compassion, dignity, empathy etc
- Avoid using the listeners' language...

Language

From	To
Human Rights	We all exist in society and live in relationship to one another. Some people need <i>protection</i> to help them live their life
The Government	<i>This</i> government
Immigrants / Asylum Seekers	A person seeking safety or fleeing persecution
Sovereign Borders Bill	Legislation that makes it harder for people to get safety in the UK

Language

From	To
Genuine Refugees	People looking for safety or needing protection
Legal routes	Having access to safe routes to the UK
No one is Illegal	Everyone deserves to be safe
We want a fair system	We want a compassionate asylum process

Using Stories

- Gain consent
- Use stories to make your vision real
- Dont mask the problem - highlight compassion but make it clear that Britain is not doing enough
- Good stories are humanising and offer humour, challenge and hope