

Communication Strategies for Effective Social Media Use in Local Government

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Introduction

An information influx and endless outlets for content delivery has resulted in local governments competing for the public's attention. The purpose of this study was to provide local government officials the charismatic communication strategies necessary for capturing the attention of their social media followers.

Hypothesis 1: Government professionals can be trained to increase their use of Charismatic Leadership Tactics (CLTs)

Hypothesis 2: Government professionals trained in the use of CLTs will experience greater follower engagement within the social media accounts they manage.

Method

Workshop: 1-hour instructional workshop with groups of 3-5 participants. Taught by Thomas Prior.

Participants: 18 local government employees who manage official city social media accounts.

Measures:

H1: Number of CLT's in pre-assignment and post-assignment were compared. $CLTs_{t+1} - CLTs_t = +/-$

H2: Total Engagement Ratio (TER) for each account was compared one month prior and one month after the workshop. $TER = (Likes + Retweets) / \# \text{ of tweets}$.
 $TER_{t+1} - TER_t = +/-$

Findings

Can Government Professionals Learn Charisma?

- Yes! A paired t-test indicated that participant CLT usage increased by an average of 61%.
- The variety of CLT's used also increased between the pre- and post-assignments.

Does the use of Charismatic Leadership Tactics Increase Follower Engagement?

- Likely so! Our research shows an increase in total engagement collectively among the social media accounts following the workshop; unfortunately, this increase in total engagement cannot be solely attributed to the use of CLTs.

Charismatic Leadership Tactics (CLTs)*

- Stories and anecdotes
- Rhetorical questions
- Metaphors and similes
- Contrasts
- Lists and repetitions
- Moral conviction
- Sentiments of the collective
- Setting high and ambitious goals
- Creating confidence that goals can be achieved

*Antonakis, J., Fenley, M., Liechti, S., (2012, June). *Learning Charisma*. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2012/06/learning-charisma-2>

Workshop Design



Background Information
Gender, Age, Tenure, Social Media Experience

HEXACO-PI-R
Honesty, Emotionality, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience



Assignment 1.1:
"Using 140 characters, draft a sample tweet to promote the upcoming event outlined below"

"Your city will be hosting their annual Holiday Festival on December 16th. The event includes live music, food vendors, an ice skating rink, light displays, games and free admission."



- Dr. John Antonakis' TED Talk, "Let's Face it: Charisma Matters" (2015)
- Explanation of Charismatic Leadership Tactics
- Practice: Identify the CLT used in three social media posts



Assignment 2.1:
"Modify your previous tweet by integrating Charismatic Leadership Tactics."

Assignment 2.2:
"Practice using Charismatic Leadership Tactics by drafting a sample tweet using content relevant to your account."

Charismatic Leadership Tactics Discovered Post Workshop

The screenshot shows two tweets. The first is from 'i.d.e.a. Museum' (@ideaMuseumMesa) with a 'Follow' button. The text says: 'Have you checked out The Art of Healthy Living? Enjoy art, movement stations & hands-on activities with your family while learning about nutrition, exercise & wellness. A great motivator for those New Year's resolutions. 🥰🥰🥰 #HealthyLiving'. The second is from 'Sustainability' (@LivingGreenMesa) with a 'Follow' button. The text says: 'High Water Bill? It might be a leak... here's an easy way to check if it's a hidden one. #WaterWise 💧 Find more tips at ow.ly/ND0z30gERMv'. The bottom of the screen shows navigation icons for Timelines, Notifications, Messages, and Me.

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