

# How to Gain Traction for your POV

## Get people to follow, believe and agree with what you are saying

- Use simple and consistent language.
  - If you are trying to gain traction on a POV, that inherently means you are meeting with or expecting to meet with some level of opposition. Whether that is because people disagree with you, they don't understand you, you are making them uncomfortable, they don't get it...the last thing you want to do is exacerbate this by using a bunch of industry jargon and big words that creates more confusion and trepidation.
  - Treat them with respect, don't be condescending and of course use industry terms if they pertain to the conversation, but don't use big words when simple ones will do. Don't use acronyms that aren't common knowledge. If the POV is complicated, use an analogy that is relatable.
  - This is true even if the people you are trying to influence are in your industry. A big point of this podcast is to break down marketing and branding concepts that can be interpreted many different ways with no clear right or wrong. In doing this, we are trying to get you to see our POV on how these concepts should be approached.
  - Use consistent language. This helps your POV register. If you call different things by different names, people get confused and then shut down.
- Repetition is key.
  - Once you have adopted the use of clear and simple language, it is important to formulate key messages that you will use to deliver your POV. The tool we use for this is a message track, or for multiple audiences, a messaging architecture. It helps you craft the messages that will be key to delivering your POV so that you can be intentional in the language, especially in considering the savviness of different audiences. This also helps with crafting an elevator pitch, which we have an episode on.
  - The entire point of the message track is to use it everywhere. Sometimes we get bored with our messages and like to change it up. But this just invites skepticism as you introduce new messages that aren't consistent with prior messages. Remember, on average, people need to hear the a message 5-7 times before taking action. So, if they are hearing it differently, then you are diluting your efforts.
  - That doesn't mean you shouldn't tweak it as you learn. This is the "being flexible" part. If you find one of your messages isn't working, change it. But then change it across the board. This maybe a bit difficult (and cost-prohibitive) in some cases (i.e. printed collateral), but in this digital world, much can be changed with a couple clicks of a mouse and keyboard. Just keep in mind, it may take some time for this new message to resonate.
  - It is fine to nuance for different channels and audiences, but the core of the message should be the same.
  - Take an example from the brand playbook: how often do you see the same tv ad, or social/digital ad before it captures your attention? How many more until you click on it? This is how you should think about your POV. Download the "Deep Dive" worksheet on our resources page by searching "Public Relations".
  - This can be difficult and takes a lot of discipline. You have to give people time to catch up to what you already know and have been living with. It also makes you better at the previous point- if you get the vernacular clear in your head and then repeat it, it adds clarity for you and the person listening/engaging with you. Messaging tracks are something we were NOT great at in agencies - we wanted to "get more creative". We lost every time.
- Don't try to sell the barn with the chickens.
  - Avoid packing too much in each messaging exchange in an effort to get it all out there. You may think you are helping by downloading every key message in an attempt to download quickly while you have their attention and make your POV even more compelling, but it tends to have the opposite effect of overwhelming the audience.
  - The best way to gain traction on your POV is to feed the messaging with the intent to elicit a response. This creates a conversation which keeps your audience engaged. By keeping your responses short, tight, simple and direct, your audience has a better chance of following your train of thought.
  - The key to this is to listen. You need to understand where their hang-ups are so you can respond appropriately and progress the conversation. If you become a brick-wall just regurgitating your message track, you will not get anywhere. Respect that the other person needs time to get to where you are. And when they buy your chickens, take that as a win even if you were hoping to sell the barn. Meaning if you get an affirmative response that gets you an action in the direction you want to go, take it. Then stop. This may be less than what you were hoping for but it gives you a way in to continue the conversation and an opportunity to sell the barn in the future.
  - In the world of sales they use the acronym ABC (ALWAYS BE CLOSING). In the agency world, the approach is "all or nothing". At FRp, we are CONSTANTLY flexing with our clients. It is a respect thing, where are they on their journey, what can they spend, what do they have time for....by meeting them where they are we have much more success.
- Prioritize the why and the impact.
  - Too often we get stuck in relaying every details of the how and what and we totally miss the why. A compelling why is that rallies people around a common purpose and gets agreement because they have a vested interest in the outcome. Getting people to appreciate the greater good that will come out of your POV is critical for traction.
  - Even better, the audience needs to positively benefit or a cause they care about needs to be positively benefit from the outcome. This means you need to know your audience and what motivates them. Then you need to craft your messages so it creates that emotional connection.
  - The key to these emotional connections is to be relational without getting pretentious. Some ways to do this:
    - Find a common pain point
    - Find a common goal or mission
    - Share your vision and how it will positively impact more people than just you
    - Educate on the status-quo and why it is insufficient
    - Relate to their situation with examples that pertain to them and how it can be mitigated
    - Overtly state that you are not in it for yourself but rather trying to find common ground
    - Enlist other to help promote the POV (in an authentic way)

