What Works Cities | RESULTS FOR AMERICA

On the Path to Certification

Comms for Cities Sprint

Kickoff: February 11, 2019

Cities that build a communications strategy around their work affirm their commitment to solving local challenges; they also build trust and engagement with residents who can reinforce and expand those efforts. Led by What Works Cities Senior Communications Manager Kristin Taylor, this Sprint will help you build your local government's capacity to use data and evidence to publicly communicate your impact.

We'll start by establishing why effective communication matters, introduce you to best practices in the field, and look at examples of how other cities are sharing their progress. We'll also explore a range of communications tools at your disposal and help you brainstorm ways to start using them in your own city.

Recommended Participants:

- Staff who want to communicate the impact of their data work more effectively—in particular, open data program managers and/or departmental data stewards
- Public information officers
- Community engagement staff

You're encouraged to form a local team by participating in the Sprint alongside colleagues in your city and working on the exercises together; cross-departmental/functional teams are especially encouraged.

What to Expect

This Sprint kicks off on February 11, 2019, and lasts four weeks.

Blue = action item.

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Cities receive all Sprint materials (February 11) **Complete:** 📗Reading Material (Part 1) **Complete:** ✏️Worksheet #1	**Attend:** 📅 Webinar February 20, 2:00 p.m. EST / 11:00 PST	**Complete:** 📗Reading + Viewing Material (Part 2)	**Attend:** 📅Video Call March 6, 2:00 p.m. EST / 11:00 PST
	Complete: ✏️Worksheet #2		
		Complete: ✏️Worksheet #3	

On the Path to Certification

During this Sprint, you'll work toward the following Certification criterion:

General Management 3

> **Your local government regularly uses public communications to share examples of how it is governing using data and evidence and/or stories of progress made as a result.**

Checklist

To achieve the above criterion, your local government must have achieved 4 of the 7 below within the preceding 12 months:

- Four or more posts on its social media channels.
- Two or more pieces of owned media (e.g., a blog post, a video, a public newsletter, etc.).
- One or more pieces of earned media (e.g., a news clip, a TV spot, an op-ed, etc.).
- Three or more public presentations or speeches (e.g., at conferences, panels, presentations to local groups, etc.).
- One example of a resource created to help residents understand how to use a municipal data tool (e.g., announcing the launch of an interactive site that breaks down the municipal budget, releasing a video on how to use the municipal open data portal, etc.).
- One example of a public announcement (e.g., via a press release, social media posts, earned or owned media, etc.) that complemented a major data achievement (e.g., the launch of an open data portal, data-informed improvements to a program, resources saved as a result of using data, etc.).
- One example of how community members have used municipal data and/or achievements made as a result.

Week 1
📚 Reading Material (Part 1)

Make your way through the below articles. The first two share why local governments should prioritize publicly communicating about their data work. The third introduces a set of communications best practices being used across cities that are successfully sharing their progress. In the final piece, a Q&A, you'll meet Kristin Taylor, who will be leading this Sprint.

- *GovTech*: The Importance of Celebrating Data Wins
- *Data-Smart City Solutions*: Storytelling Powers Change in Cities
- Communicating with a "What Works" State of Mind: 7 Practices of Cities Leading the Way
- Communication as Pollination: Helping Your Local Gov Work Flower

✏️ Worksheet #1

Fill out the "Building a Foundation of Communication Best Practices" worksheet to reflect on what you learned from the readings and prepare to come to the webinar ready to engage.

Week 2
📅 Webinar

Attend the webinar on February 20 at 2:00 p.m. EST / 11:00 PST. We'll spend 90 minutes taking a deeper dive into the 7 practices you learned about in your reading materials, study successful examples of communication from cities, and together, unpack what made them effective.

✏️ Worksheet #2

If communications it <u>not</u> your primary role, fill out the "Connecting with Your Communications Team" worksheet, using it as a guide to understand how you can best liaise with your communications colleague(s) to achieve your goals. If more time is needed, feel free to continue working on this worksheet into week 3.

Week 3
📚 Reading + Viewing Material (Part 2)

Make your way through the below resources. The first two focus on strategies for transforming the often-wonky topic of how your city is using data into stories people will care about. The third highlights concrete examples of how cities have used a variety of tools and opportunities to share their stories. In the final two, you'll hear directly from staff in Gilbert, Arizona, and Tulsa, Oklahoma, who are driving wins in their cities through digital communications and earned media, respectively.

- [Video] TEDxBroadway: Making Data Mean More through Storytelling
- *Data-Smart City Solutions*: What Makes a Good Data Story
- *Telling Your "What Works" Story: Effective Communications Examples from Cities*
- "Go Where Your Residents Are": A Q&A with Gilbert Chief Digital Officer Dana Berchman
- Use Data as a Flashlight, and Other Tips on Earning Media Coverage: A Q&A with Tulsa's James Wagner

✏️ Worksheet #3

Fill out the "Implementing Communication Best Practices" worksheet to brainstorm ways to begin putting your newly acquired skills to use.

Week 4
📅 Video Call

Come together via for a 90-minute guided discussion with your fellow Sprint participants on March 6 at 2:00 p.m. EST / 11:00 PST. During the call, we'll reflect on your takeaways from the Sprint and have time for questions. Come prepared to share one way you'd like to apply what you've learned over the next three months.