

Talking Sheet Tips

A talking sheet is an important tool when meeting with people, raising awareness, and sharing information. It is a succinct and professional way to leave information behind and make an impression. However, many people make the mistake of trying to do too much with talking sheets. When creating talking sheets, keep these following tips in mind.

- Don't spend a lot of time on the history or the agency
- Focus on the ask and why it is important – this is the most important component.
- Remember who your audience is and construct your ask, and information to match their interests and perspectives.
- Keep in mind the cost of reproducing and mailing them. Using thick glossy paper is nice, but can be expensive.
- Talking sheets should be part of a larger packet of information used in the context of an organized strategy. Talking sheets do not perform the work on their own.
- Ideally, talking sheets should be a single page to maximize the chance that the entire document will be read and shared
- Use pull out boxes to highlight important statistics
- Use bullet points rather than paragraphs.
- Do not use exclamation points or question marks, and try to avoid over-punctuating your points. **NOBODY likes to be shouted at on paper!!! SO DON'T DO IT!!!!**
- Do not use fancy fonts as they distract from the content. Make it look professional and clean, *not fancy and overdone*. Keep font sizes to 10, 11, or 12, anything smaller and people won't be able to read it, **and anything larger will become distracting.**
- Do not bleed text all the way to the margins. Use standard one inch margins on all sides.
- Make them general enough that they can be shared with a variety of audiences and people. This includes writing them at a basic literacy level.
- Talking sheets are the not time to name drop or spell out supporters. Those can be listed on a separate document.
- Talking sheets are not fact sheets – do not regurgitate just facts and statistics.
- End with the most important statement – your ask.

Studies have shown that 76% of people will read a pull out box before reading the normal text.