

2. How Do You Communicate?

3 Common Approaches

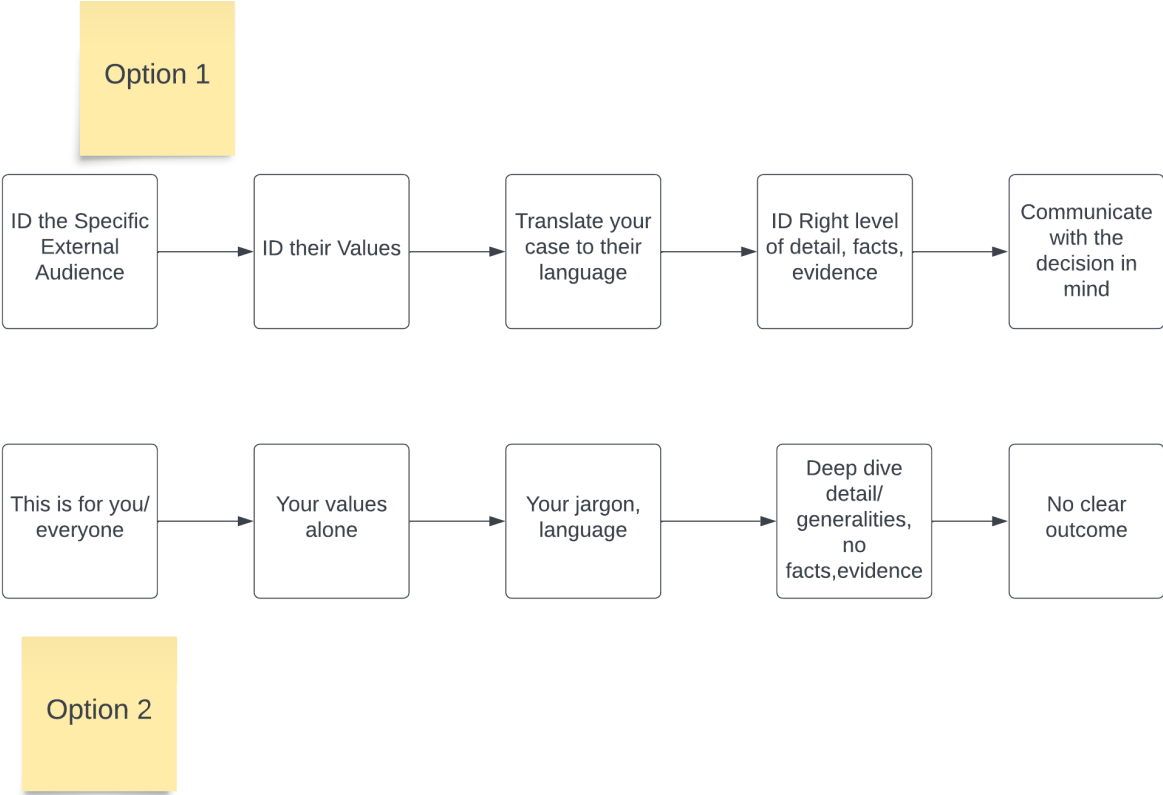






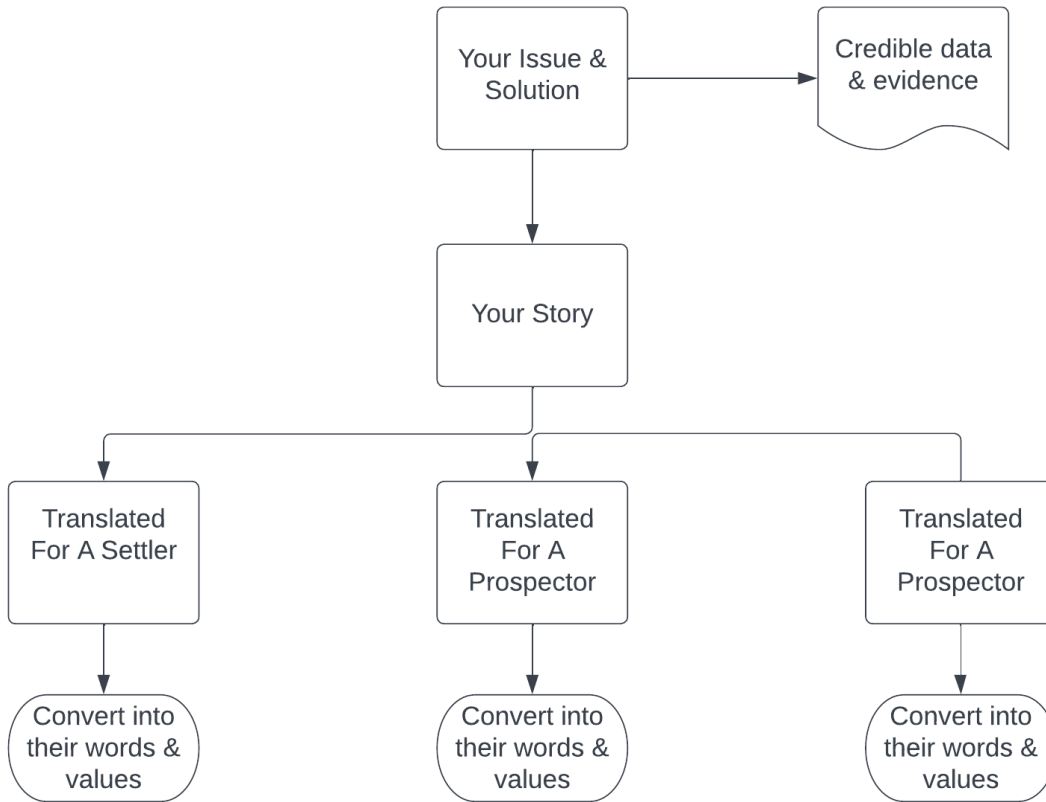
2. Is there an Alternative Approach?

1. Option 1 or Option 2

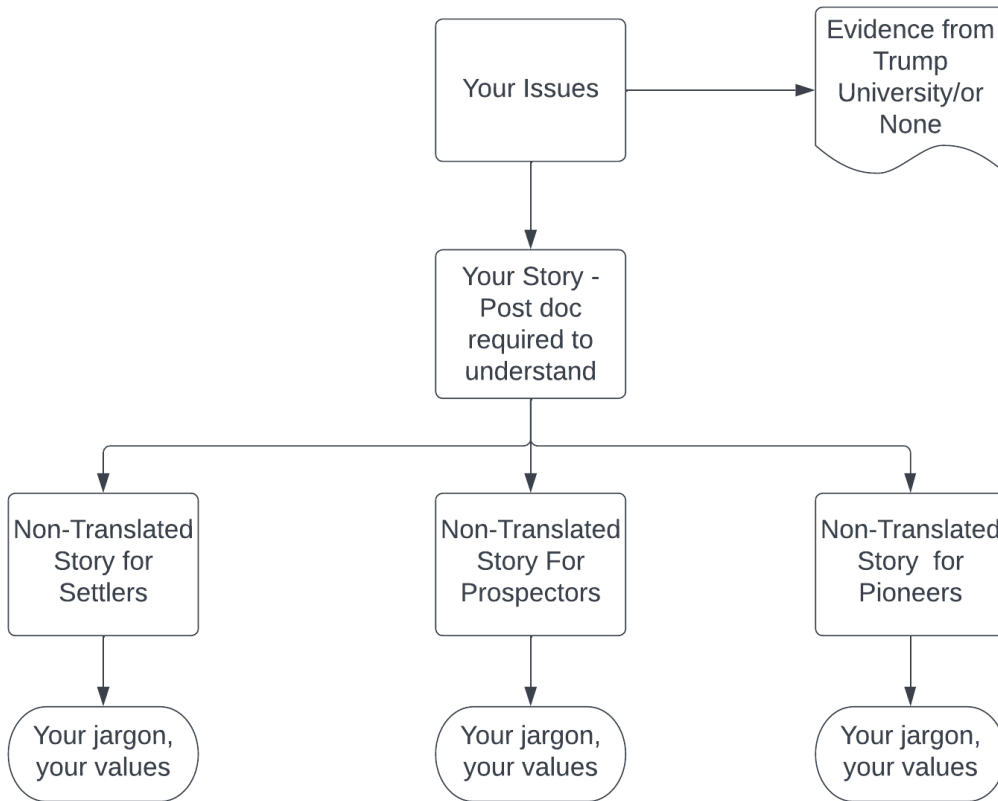


2. Tell A Story

This way



Not this way



1. Letters

Wireframe for a letter to the Commission

Dear [Name]

Subject Heading: Indicates the issue/procedure.

Point 1: Main Point

What's the issue. Synthesise the essence of the matter you are writing to them about.

Identify why this is a problem.

Objective evidence to support your point of view.

What is the solution? Add legislative language/policy solution, & cross-refer to Annex

Point 2

What's the issue? This should flow from the Main Point.

Why is it a problem?

Objective evidence to support your point of view

What is the solution? Add legislative language/policy solution, & cross-refer to Annex

Point 3

What's the issue. This should flow from the Main Point.

Why is it a problem

Objective evidence to support your point of view

What is the solution: Add legislative language/policy solution, & cross-refer to Annex

Final: Make Your Ask – why are you sending the letter, e.g.:

- You want to meet to discuss the issue
- You want the Commission to clarify the proposal/law
- You want them to re-consider their position

Add the name of the person & contacts details for the Commission should contact for follow-up.

Signed

CC: Desk Officers

Annexes
Graphs
Tables
Studies
Legislative/Policy solutions mentioned in letter

Does and Don'ts

Do

1. Ask yourself if a call or coffee is not more effective than a letter.
2. Be clear about who you are communicating to and why. You are writing to persuade a decision-maker to decide in your favour. Ask yourself what points will persuade them to act in your favour. The most compelling points for the reader may differ from those dearest to you.
3. Highlight those points that speak to them: e.g. following the Political Guidelines, Better Regulation Rulebook compliance, out of sync with major strategic initiatives, procedural irregularities, unintended consequences.
4. Be specific about the issue in the subject header. For example, if chemicals, mention the full substance name and CAS number and the procedure.
5. 1 page.
6. Font 12
7. Use Plain English.
8. 1 central point – and up to 3 supporting points.
9. At the start, state in one concise paragraph what the letter is about. What is the essence of the issue?
10. Put yourself in their shoes.
11. Make sure your points are fair and objective.
12. Provide credible evidence and data to support your point of view.
13. Add tables, charts, and supporting studies in Annexes.
14. Provide a viable solution to the political/public policy issue at hand.
15. CC officials who are working on the issue.
16. Phone the person you are sending it to in advance, or at least the desk officer managing the file.
17. Send the letter in time – before any decision has been taken.
18. Get someone else to read it to see if it makes sense.
19. Run it past a spell checker.

Don't Do

1. Use a misleading subject line.
2. CC 20-200 people.
3. Use a passive-aggressive tone.
4. Claim you support the initiative and then spend four pages saying it is terrible but never offering an alternative.
5. Random bolding of words without rhyme or reason.
6. Send the letter after the decision has been made.
7. Send the letter because it will put your views on the record, despite your views already being well known and on the record.
8. Send a letter to a Commissioner before informing the desk officer.
9. Send a letter to a Commissioner criticising a unit without thinking the desk officer is going to draft the reply, and the Commissioner not read it.
10. Send a letter to the Cabinets on Inter-Service Consultation too early or too late.
11. Send a letter that's been drafted and edited by a Committee of technical experts. Persuasive writing is rarely their strong spot.
12. Send a letter in anger. It comes across poorly.
13. Pile in lots of different points. Have no more than 3 points in the letter, and ideally have one.
14. Mass emailing of the letter. They'll be filtered automatically into the bin.
15. Never bothering to see how the letter landed with the intended reader.
16. Don't make clear what you want.
17. Use discredited experts to support your letter.
18. Use discredited points to support your points – the climate change denial-like points.
19. Raise bonkers points that only Roger Helmer MEP would have supported.

2. Position Papers

Good Practice

- Written for an external audience.
- Brief. 2-4 pages - not 44 pages.
- Clear. Plain English.
- Evidence – no selective citation.
- Provide Solutions.
- Refer to: IA, RSB Opinion
- Visuals. Graphs, Charts.
- Annex:
 - Amendments with justifications
 - Full studies

Some Challenges

- You need real evidence.
- You need a real solution.
- Your members/colleagues are not the audience.
- You need to get it prepared on time.
- You can't write it for a select group of MIT post grads.

3. Meetings

External not Internal

In Advance

- Be clear why you want the meeting.
- Send a pre-read in advance of the meeting – at least a week before. Longer for more senior officials.
- Rehearse the meeting. Anticipate the questions you will be asked.
- Put yourself in their shoes. What do they need to know.
- Speak with the desk officer in advance. Be clear about the goal of the meeting and what you want to get out of it.
- Have a workable solution and flag it in advance. You want a decision.
- Turn up early, or test the IT system for the call
- Rehearse. Record yourself.

In the Meeting

- Copy Sir John Browne. Insist the person doing the work on the file is in the meeting. He knew that they were the people with the power of the pen.
- Check they have the pre-read and hand over the 1 pager to the participants.
- Ask if the pre-read was a fair representation of the issue.
- Ask if there are any questions. Answer the questions.
- If you don't know the answer, defer to a colleague who does, or say you'll get back in 24 hours.
- Be civil throughout.

- Be able to adjust your conversation from technical, policy to political.
- Answer any questions clearly and concisely. Avoid jargon.
- When the issue is dealt with, thank them, and leave.
- Take the walk back with the official to the lift.
- Follow up on any commitments and a meeting summary within 24 hours.