



Public Affairs Council

Writing for Public Affairs

Presented by: Brian Rubenstein



Today's Workshop

I. The #1 criteria for writing

II. “Street-level impact”

III. Avoiding jargon

IV. Exercise

V. Defining Your Audience

VI. Selecting the Right Voice

VII. The Rule of One

VIII. Q & A

About Rubenstein Impact Group

What we do

- **Increase advocacy actions** with stronger email campaigns
- Maximize campaign participation through **emotionally-driven narratives and storytelling**
- Develop structured advocacy **programs for highly-engaged volunteers**

“Brian TRIPLED the number of actions our volunteers took compared to before we started working with him.”

- Current client

About Brian

- 25 years of experience developing high-impact grassroots campaigns
- Works with the nation’s leading nonprofits and Fortune 500 companies
- Regular speaker about **using AI to bolster advocacy work**

About Rubenstein Impact Group





What is the
most important thing
to consider when writing
for an external audience?

Relevance

(To your audience. Not to you.)

“Street-Level Impact”

“Street-Level Impact” Content

Factual Statement

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“Street-Level Impact” Statement

We’re asking Congress to increase funding for lifesaving cancer research to help us discover new cures and ways to detect cancer at its earliest, most treatable stages.

“Street-Level Impact” Content

Factual Statement

Extending tax credits for solar energy will allow us to add 2.3 gigawatts of power to the electrical grid in the next 3 years.

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“Street-Level Impact” Statement

Extending solar energy tax credits will allow us to provide clean, reliable power to more than half a million homes and businesses.

Extending solar energy tax credits will position our community as a leader in the clean energy economy, creating hundreds of high-paying jobs while attracting innovative companies that want to operate where the power is clean, affordable and reliable.

“Street-Level Impact”

- Builds a stronger connection with your audience
- Makes your content more relatable to their life and business
- Typically outperforms data-driven content



Avoiding Jargon

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- Eliminate jargon with most audiences
 - Volunteers
 - Members
 - Action takers

Jargon includes:

- Bill numbers
- Official bill names
- Committee names
- Detailed dollar amounts
- Legislative process

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- Jargon can be okay for certain audiences
 - Lawmakers and their staff
 - Highly-engaged volunteers or members
 - Certain categories of people
 - Scientists
 - Doctors
 - Engineers



ACTION ALERT

FACEBOOK TWITTER

Dear Brian,

Today, the U.S. Senate continues to debate the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012. As part of the ongoing debate, a vote is expected on an amendment that will preserve critical, innovative research conducted through the Breast Cancer Research Program (BCRP) at the Department of Defense (DOD).

Amendment #4369, introduced by Senators Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Thad Cochran (R-MS), would repeal Section 756 and 898 of the NDAA. These onerous sections would prohibit funding for medical research at the DOD unless such research meets narrowly defined criteria related to military relevance. The passage of this amendment would preserve high-risk, high-reward research conducted through the BCRP, which benefits millions impacted by breast cancer and is awarded through a distinct partnership between consumers and scientists.

Let Your Voice Be Heard!

[Click here to encourage your lawmakers support the Durbin amendment!](#)

Since its inception in 1992, the DOD's Breast Cancer Research Program has awarded over \$3.2 billion in support of over 6,500 innovative research grants, investing in research to better understand how and why breast cancer develops, factors that increase risk, and more advanced ways to detect and treat this disease, including innovative treatments for breast cancer that are both more effective and less toxic (e.g. sentinel lymph node biopsy, trastuzumab for HER2+ breast cancer, vaccines and immunotherapies for breast cancer, nanoparticle-based drug delivery systems).

As someone who cares deeply about breast cancer research, please make your voice heard today. [Click here to urge your lawmakers to support the Durbin amendment, #4369, when it comes up for a vote.](#)

After you send letters to your legislators, help spread the word by asking your friends and family to join you in support of these vital programs. Thank you for continuing to join us in this important fight!

Sincerely,





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Defining Your Audience

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- Define your audience before you start writing
 - Digital activists
 - Highly-engaged volunteers/members
 - Customers or partners
 - Influencers
 - Grasstops
- **Different audiences have different needs**
- Use of tone, emotion, length and pacing will all vary



Selecting the Right Voice

Selecting the Right Voice

- Every email should be sent from an individual
 - Articles should be written with a specific author in mind
- All emails and content don't have to come from the same person
 - Create a cast of characters
- **Changing senders can improve email performance**
- Consider the voice of the sender/author
 - Staff vs. Peer-to-Peer
 - Gov't Relations Director vs. Grassroots vs. CEO



Selecting the Right Voice

- A sender's voice should not change
- Pick the voice that is best for your audience
 - Also consider what it takes to get content approved
- Monitor content performance to determine voice effectiveness or fatigue



The Rule of One

The Rule of One

- One action per email
- One issue per email
- One image (or none)
- One font size



Q & A



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