

Designing your Message

A message is a clear, easy-to-understand sentence that sums up what you're trying to achieve with your action. It should be simple enough that you could tell it to someone at the bus stop and they will understand straightaway what it's about.

The M&M team's job is to come up with this message, and then communicate it consistently on all media platforms.

Good messaging is about building a relationship with the people impacted by and involved in the issue you are talking about - people who might do something about it.

The **XRUK Strategy** asks us to use resonance and invitation to win a wider spectrum of support. It points us towards a target audience who are **not already activists** - i.e. people *not* like us! And it acknowledges that "local groups will know best which issues will resonate most in their communities, and which will provide opportunities to illustrate to new groups the increased power accorded by NVDA."

Follow the steps below to create a basic messaging strategy for an action, event or story. There's a video that talks you through the process on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/pmmSTzhQcP4> (7 min).

Speak to your National/Regional messaging team, or the XRUK M&M team, to find out about messaging training and resources.

Step 1. Who needs to know what?

Ask yourself what you are trying to achieve overall. More rebels? More people understanding that the climate and ecological emergency is important? What's your call to action? Be really clear.

Also be really clear who you are seeking this reaction from. You need to decide, at least in broad terms, which group of people this message is aimed at and why.

Your message is not simply information about an action that's happening - the action is the vehicle you will use to get the message across. And the message is what you want your target audience to know, and what they should do with that knowledge now they have it.

Step 2. How do they need to get the info?

What do you know about your target audience? Is that fact, or assumption? Do some research and check your facts. People regularly waste a lot of time making assumptions about their target audience.

Who do they respect/listen to? Do they know about XR? Do they trust XR (if not, look for [alliances](#) with people or organisations they do trust to deliver the message instead).

What issues do they care about? What makes them happy, angry, sad? What language and imagery do your target audience use? You need to be using the same ones.

Step 3. What's the best way to reach a target audience?

Direct meetings? Events, online content, news media? What does this group of people read, watch, listen to?

Focus on the channel that will reach your target audience. Don't waste time sending press releases to every outlet or doing a video that isn't done in a style that appeals to your target audience.

Remember: they are unlikely to like what you like (we are targeting people *not* like us, after all). So you may need to put out content you personally dislike or don't connect with.

Step 4. Check the strategic fit.

Check the messaging fits your strategy and "brand".

Does your message align with delivering the overall strategic goals of the Movement? You can check the strategy out [on this page](#).

Have you considered whether your message could be misinterpreted and cause a problem with another target audience? If so, can you re-word it?

Step 5. Did it work?

Think about how you will gauge whether your message had the right impact on your target audience?

You need to consider a communications plan as a two way conversation with the target audience.

- What feedback have you received?
- Who has engaged with you?
- How will you respond?

Don't keep sending the same message without solid evidence that it's working to achieve what you want. Keep adapting and refining it until you have evidence that it is.
