CALM not BUSY: Managing Nonprofit Communications for Great Results

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Nonprofit Marketing Guide

#CALMnotBUSY
What is Your #1 Question for Me Today?
You are so, so very busy.
We are overwhelmed and understaffed
No strategy, no plan, no time to think
Everything is last minute
Too many opinions and too few decisions
Reporting to and working with others who don’t understand marketing
Always reacting, rarely strategic
Your communications are inconsistent.
You don’t get the best out of your staff.
You feel defeated and unmotivated.
All creativity and inspiration is sucked out of you.
You miss great opportunities.
You feel like you are letting others down.
It’s not just you.
Everyone is BUSY!
Let’s redefine BUSY for what it really is . . .
B is for Bogus.
U is for Unrealistic.
S is for Sidestepping.
Y is for Yoked.
No one will put the BUSY firestorm out for you.
It’s up to YOU to extinguish it with CALM.
Let’s Leave BUSY Behind . . .
and Get CALM.
C is for Collaborative.
What Being Collaborative Looks Like

- Connecting the dots between communications and everything else
- Leading internal conversations about your communications plan
- Listening to ideas and managing what you hear
- Empowering staff and insisting on accountability
- Working through how decisions will be made
- Recognizing and resolving conflicts
A is for Agile.
What Being Agile Looks Like

- Taking responsibility for improving internal relationships
- Building trust in your competence
- Building trust in your intentions
- Stepping up and leading
- Making better decisions faster
- Expecting the unexpected
- Creating agile content
L is for Logical.
What Being Logical Looks Like

- Limiting and integrating your communications goals
- Keeping up with shifting priorities
- Learning how to say No
- Following best practices, but experimenting constantly
- Making progress on strategic goals every day
M is for Methodical.
What Being Methodical Looks Like

- Using an editorial calendar
- Creating a standard content creation, review and approval process
- Building an office culture that respects deadlines
- Simplifying communications routines so others can follow them
- Improving your personal productivity
Always Be CALM
Collaborative, Agile, Logical, and Methodical
not BUSY
Bogus, Unrealistic, Sidestepping, and Yoked

#CALMnotBUSY
Buy the book and get your personal CALM Score.
Carrie has too many tasks but little authority.
Some Ideas for Carrie
Too Many Tasks, Not Enough Authority

- Create a Big Picture Communications Timeline to connect all the dots [Collaborative]
- Start working on an editorial calendar [Methodical]
- Create a system to manage good ideas and non-urgent requests [Collaborative]
- Learn how to gracefully say No [Logical]
- Develop a standard review process [Methodical]
Juan was promoted from tactical worker to strategic leader.
Some Ideas for Juan
From Tactical Worker to Strategic Leader

- Step up and take charge! [Agile]
- Open up lines of internal communications with other staff [Collaborative]
- Limit and integrate communications goals with other organizational goals [Logical]
- Study and implement best practices before experimenting [Logical]
- Expect the unexpected [Agile]
Janelle wants to stop reacting and get more strategic.
Some Ideas for Janelle
Stop Reacting and Get More Strategic

- Limit and integrate the team’s goals [Logical]
- Review how decisions are made to protect strategic goals [Methodical]
- Make good decisions more quickly [Agile]
- Spend more time planning for the unexpected [Agile]
- Explore tools to improve the team’s efficiency [Methodical]
Carrie – Too Much Work, No Authority
Juan – Promoted from Tactical to Strategic
Janelle – Stop Reacting, Get Strategic
Heather’s boss won’t delegate.
Some Ideas for Heather
Her Boss Won’tDelegate

- Shore up her boss’s confidence in her competence and intentions [Agile]
- Connect the dots between what she wants to try and her boss’s goals [Collaborative]
- Create a clear review process so there are no surprises. [Methodical]
- Build a better culture around meeting deadlines [Methodical]
- Brush up on conflict resolution skills [Collaborative]
Janice is trying to make big changes, but her coworkers won’t budge.
Some Ideas for Janice
When Co-Workers Won’t Embrace Your Big Plans

- Openly discuss how communications decisions should be made [Collaborative]
- Open conversations about team accountability [Collaborative]
- Work on making decisions within her control much faster [Agile]
- Experiment wherever she can [Logical]
- Celebrate what progress she does make every day [Logical]
Allen is working too much, but can’t let go.
Some Ideas for Allen
When Dedication to Work Takes Over Your Life

- Get clarity on what’s truly a priority (it can’t be “everything”) [Logical]
- Simplify as many common routines as possible [Methodical]
- Focus on creating more agile content that is easily repurposed. [Agile]
- Look at his own personal productivity style and work habits [Methodical]
- Learn how to say No to others AND to himself! [Logical]
Heather – Boss Won’t Delegate
Janice – Co-workers Won’t Embrace Big Plans
Allen – Working Too Much, But Can’t Let Go
Sheila’s visionary boss is making her miserable.
Some Ideas for Sheila
Her Visionary Boss is Making Her Miserable

- Take responsibility for improving the relationship [Collaborative]
- Regularly check-in on priorities [Logical]
- Build trust in both intentions and competence [Agile]
- Work on ways to triage and manage all the visionary ideas [Collaborative]
- Get extremely agile with content creation, so no work is wasted, even when priorities shift [Agile]
Ryan is doing the work of three people.
Some Ideas for Ryan
Promises of Additional Staff Aren’t Materializing

- Take charge of the situation – don’t just let it happen to you [Agile]
- Get really good at multiple ways to say No [Logical]
- Triage and simplify as many processes as possible [Methodical]

- Review her personal productivity style, not to do more, but to best manage her energy. [Methodical]
- Work on holding others (especially those with hiring authority) accountable. [Collaborative]
Everyone is so busy, Ellen gets no help with content.
Some Ideas for Ellen
Getting Content Creation Help from Busy Staff

- Establish the editorial calendar so people know when they are on deck [Methodical]
- Start building a culture that values meeting deadlines [Methodical]
- Create a standard review process and hold firm [Methodical]
- Expect the unexpected – develops lots of Plans B and C [Agile]
- Create lots of evergreen and easy-to-repurpose content [Agile]
Sheila – Visionary Boss Making Her Miserable
Ryan – Doing the Work of Three People
Ellen – Gets No Help with Content from Busy Co-Workers
Final Questions for Me Today?
CALM or BUSY? The Choice is Yours.
This is what nonprofits deliver. You deserve the same.
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