Building a Brand for Legislative Staff: Beyond Logos and Buzzwords

NCSL
2014 Legislative Summit

Bryant R. Howe
Utah Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel
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The Utah Legislature

• 104 Members
  • House: 75
  • Senate: 29
• Meets annually for 45 calendar days
• 1,100 bill requests
• 750 – 800 bills are introduced
• About 500 bills/resolutions pass
• $12.9B budget – all sources
• Both chambers controlled by Republicans since 1979
• Republican Governor since 1985
• No term limits, moderate turnover
The Utah Legislature: Staff

- House and Senate
- Office of Legislative Fiscal Analyst
- Office of Legislative Auditor General
- Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel
  - Committee staffing: standing and interim
  - Bill drafting (including background research, etc.)
  - Legal services
  - IT/Website
  - Library
  - Just about anything a legislator wants us to do (speeches, constituent help, spot research, etc.)
Name the brand:
Name the brand:
QUARTER CIRCLE K DIAMOND
What’s a brand?

• It stands for something
• Consistency – you know what your going to get
• Separates/differentiates you from your competition
• Unique identifier
• Something to Identify you
• Something you guard and protect
VS.
How do you build a brand?

• Few tangible assets.
• Reputation
• When someone says “(name your agency),” what comes to mind?
  • Responsive?
  • Helpful?
  • Accurate?
• What value do I deliver to my customers?
How do you build a brand?

Step one: decide what’s important

Step two: make sure your employees know what’s important

Step three: see if your customers agree

Step four: keep repeating
Step one: decide what’s important

- Utah Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst
  - “Affect good government through *objective, accurate, and relevant* budget advice”

- OLRGC – What’s important is embedded in our Pay Philosophy:
  - “Employees are encouraged to be problem solvers, to support and assist their colleagues in providing legislators what they need”
Mission:
Affect good government through objective, accurate, and relevant budget advice.
Step two: make sure your employee’s know what’s important

- Annual performance review – standardized instrument
  - Manager performance evaluation
  - “360” interviews with team members
  - Compensation interview
- Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst: “OAR”
  - Objective
  - Accurate
  - Relevant
Step three: see if your customers agree

• Committee chair interviews
• Bi-annual Survey of Legislator Satisfaction
• Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst
  • Various metrics on fiscal notes, revenue estimates, etc.
OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH AND GENERAL COUNSEL
SELECTED RESULTS FROM 2014 LEGISLATOR SATISFACTION SURVEY
AVERAGE RESPONSE ON A FIVE-POINT SCALE

- Contacted in Timely Manner: 4.20
- Bills Provided Timely: 3.80
- Policy Objectives Met: 4.30
- Drafter Helpfulness: 4.40
- Amendments/Subs Timely: 4.60
- Overall Quality of Bills: 4.40
- Quality of Intern: 4.30
Thank you
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