

Keys to Cascading Messaging

Nitin Nohira, the Dean of Harvard's Business School from 2010 to 2020 maintains that **"communication is the real work of leadership."**

This emphasizes that while leaders need to set direction, make decisions, and take action, **communication is vital to what they do.** This involves getting information from meetings to key audiences. This is sometimes called **"cascading messaging."**

Vital to cascading message are the following:

- **Key Audience:** Members? Boards or teams? A narrow and targeted audience? Individuals? The public?
- **Key Info:** What is the message leaders need to communicate? While including needed information, keep messaging a clear and concise as possible. If written, format the message in an easy-to-read format.
- **Key Method(s):** Based on the audience(s) and information, determine the best methods for communicating – email, social media, website, phone, letter, bulletin, newsletter, etc. In many cases, multiple modes of communication are most effective.
- **Key Timing:** Determine the best timing and frequency for communicating information. In many circumstances, multiple methods and multiple times are best.
- **Key Communicator:** Assign responsibility for cascading messaging rather than assuming that it will happen. People with communication strengths will be a logical choice.
- **Follow-up for Effectiveness:** Follow up on communication to make sure the messaging is being received and understood. This may involve a phone call, email, or text. With larger audiences, it may involve asking a variety of people, "Did you get the message? How did you feel about it?"

These are keys to good cascading messaging.

Good cascading messaging helps to move ministry forward!