

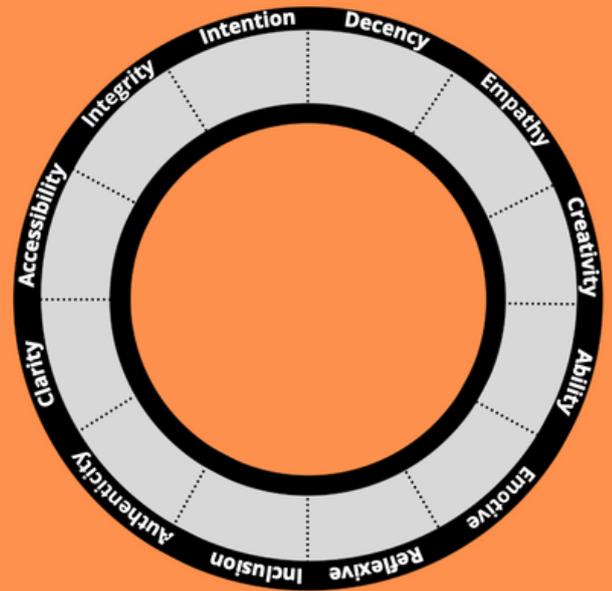


# The Communications Doughnut

*A framework for effective and ethical communication*

**The Communications Doughnut is a first; a framework for effective and ethical communication that is easy to understand, implement and evaluate. It ensures the way you communicate (as an individual or organisation) builds *connection, influence and impact*.**

*Check out the main ingredients for the 'dough' below, then read on to page 2 for how to put it to work.*



## The 12 DOs of the Doughnut

- 1: Intention:** There is a sincere, motivating purpose behind the communication, which is clear to the audience. And a genuine intent to add to an idea and not just to serve personal gain.
- 2: Diversity & Inclusion:** Involving and accounting for diverse voices, cultures and needs in the creation and delivery of the communication.
- 3: Integrity & Responsibility:** Honest, open and transparent about yourself and your message. Having courage and consistency. Being fair, not coercive.
- 4: Authenticity:** Informed, evidenced and credible. Differentiating between opinion and fact, and making truthful representation of the available information.
- 5: Legitimacy & Decency:** Abiding by legal and ethical standards, as well as regulatory frameworks / professional standards. Ensuring respect and sensitivity: non-offensive, non-bullying, non-discriminatory and non-exploitative.
- 6: Empathy:** Understanding and accounting for the audiences' needs (both their pains and desires), as well as how they will perceive and process information. Using the language and concepts that will connect.
- 7: Clarity & Brevity:** Simple, precise, active language and design to foster greatest understanding. Avoiding jargon, technical language and euphemism. And being mindful of the potential for interpretation.
- 8: Creativity:** Striving for new approaches and methods to communications (as well as applying freshness to language and image use), to ensure ideas land and engagement is maintained.
- 9: Accessibility:**  
Giving more people the opportunity to receive (or take part in) the communication, including those with communications challenges. Ensuring a diversity of delivery approaches.
- 10: Ability:** Ensuring communications are delivered skillfully, with high technical standards in writing, public speaking, design and personal communication.
- 11: Emotive and non-verbal:** Offering both factual and emotional connection to your ideas through language and images. And using non-verbal forms (including body language and tone of voice) consciously.
- 12: Responsive and Reflective:** Not just 'broadcasting' but also listening to responses and adapting the communication to ensure it best connects. Being open to learning from contrasting beliefs.

**Every communication produces a reaction - it affects the way we *think, feel* and *act*. The Doughnut helps you control those outcomes by taking responsibility for why you are communicating (intent), what you are saying (content) and how you are saying it (delivery). Whether you are speaking, writing or designing ideas, the Doughnut helps you harness the power of communication to create positive change.**

### **Why do we need The Communications Doughnut?**

Communication is the foundation of society; it is how we build connections, share information and bring about action. It allows us to fulfil our potential and realise our ambitions. A positive, constructive approach to communicating is therefore essential in supporting human and planetary progress.

However, too often, communication - whether that's from brands, the media, in politics, or even in our work and personal relationships - is either poor (and ineffective), or deliberately destructive: used as a tool to divide, mislead or suppress.

The Communications Doughnut finally makes it easier for you to communicate constructively, ensuring greater outcomes for the three main purposes of communication: *connecting, informing and influencing*. Importantly, it also helps you to recognise and repair - or call out - destructive approaches to communicating.

### **How can we use the Doughnut?**

**It can be used as a guide:** helping to build general understanding of positive communication, guiding the development of a credible voice and brand, helping to craft impactful messages and optimal approaches, and providing the checkpoints for creating an overall positive culture of communication.

**And it can be used as an evaluation tool:** the key points in each principle can be used as a checklist, allowing you to note where you're excelling or falling short. It can then provide a visual representation of this score.

**And once adopted, it may provide organisations with a recognised mark of standards:** it reflects a commitment to effective and ethical communication practices.

It provides a floor of standards below which no one should fall and a ceiling of ethics, above which no one should rise. It is based on academic and professional insights, whilst being uniquely practical. (And it is inspired by the design of the brilliant Doughnut Economics model - see [www.kateraworth.com](http://www.kateraworth.com).)

### **Simply get to know the 12 DO Principles to start using the Doughnut now**

This document is a short overview of one part of The Communications Doughnut, created to help you get going with the Doughnut's key ideas right now. Check your communications approach against the principles and make a plan for how to bridge the gap, aka fill up the dough.

**For the full, expanded tool** (which also provides a second ring with principles for anyone receiving a communication), along with more detail on the ideas informing the Doughnut, and how effective communication can be evaluated through the Doughnut, see [www.adamstones.co/doughnut](http://www.adamstones.co/doughnut)

**Help to progress the Doughnut: share your feedback at [adam@adamcomms.com](mailto:adam@adamcomms.com)**



The full Communications Doughnut has two rings, for added flavour (and impact). And can visually represent how well you are communicating.

