

La comunicación de Gobiernos e instituciones públicas. 80 cosas que he aprendido comunicando

Pau Canaleta Heras
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A logbook for communication by institutions

In the work *La comunicación de Gobiernos e instituciones públicas. 80 cosas que he aprendido comunicando* [The Communication of Governments and Public Institutions. 80 Things I Have Learned While Communicating] (UOC, 2024), author Pau Canaleta Heras offers up a practical manual for professionals in institutional and political communication. With over twenty years of experience in the field, Canaleta distills his knowledge into eighty key tips to improve communication within governments and public administrations. This manual is not only a compendium of practical recommendations but also a reflection on the importance of effective, honest and relatable communication placed at the service of citizens.

Canaleta provides us with a privileged vision of public communication based on his extensive experience as a consultant and professor of communication. Some of his major contributions to this work include the importance of strategy, transparency, professional honesty, and adaptation to technological and digital changes, which are increasingly important in the tasks undertaken by communication offices. Likewise, Canaleta insists on the need to develop a well-defined communication strategy in the medium and long term. As the author highlights in several chapters, communication without strategy is ineffective and often counterproductive. This advice resonates with academic theories on strategic communication, such as those developed by authors such as James E. Grunig, who defends the importance of planning and research in public communication.

In a world where distrust and discredit towards public institutions are growing, Canaleta emphasises the need to be transparent and honest, including within the style of communication adopted. For the author, transparency not only generates trust but is also a fundamental pillar of a healthy democracy. He is a firm proponent of good practices in communication in the context of disinformation and dubious practices on the internet. For this reason, Canaleta stresses the importance of adapting to new media and technologies, such as social networks and new digital platforms. For the author, these tools are not elements that public institutions must incorporate into their strategies, but rather they must have their own autonomous and well-defined communication plan in line with the global strategy. Moreover, he makes the case for multi-channelling as a backbone of the new communication, along with specialisation in digital narratives as a professional offering that is increasingly in demand.

Canaleta's book is especially valuable for the new generation of public communication professionals. Some of his most prominent pieces of advice include knowing your audience well, laying out a coherent narrative, and proper crisis management, which are becoming more and more emphasised. During the pandemic, institutional communication was crucial in managing the crisis. Governments worldwide had to inform the population about health measures, restrictions and vaccines. Governments that used clear, transparent and science-based communication were far more successful in gaining public trust.

This book, although designed for communication offices in governments and public administrations, is also useful for

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communication undertaken by companies, non-profit entities and other social actors. Civic movements are often among the first to innovate in communication, connecting with new audiences and establishing new ways of connecting with the citizenry. Canaleta also calls for us to learn from these players in order to improve and innovate in public communication.

To sum up, the work *La comunicación de Gobiernos e instituciones públicas. 80 cosas que he aprendido comunicando* (The Communication of Governments and Public Institutions. 80 Things I Have Learned While Communicating) is a pocket collection of experiences that the author makes available to professionals and learners; it is a kind of logbook that seeks to guide the grinders of information in times of difficulty. In an increasingly complex and interconnected environment, Canaleta's practical and well-founded contributions are appreciated after years of trial and error and a handful of communicative triumphs. Without a doubt, the book will be a reference manual for moments of difficulty, crisis contexts and other communicative adversities that we communication professionals face.