



Alumni-Association
of the Rochus and Beatrice
Mummert-Foundation



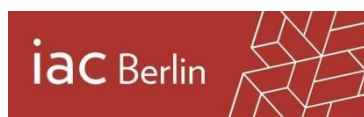
BAFE
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DOs AND DONTs

To build a culture of transparency between the governance and the media

Supported by



Foreword

The following list of recommendations is an outcome of the project entitled Trust and transparency - Building mutual understanding between Public service, Media and Business implemented by the Bellevue Alumni Association, the Mummert Alumni Association with the cooperation of media experts and funded by the Bosch Alumni Network. The project aimed to facilitate a cross-sectional exchange between alumni of the Robert Bosch Stiftung programmes of the public and private sector and the media to improve the understanding of each other's constraints and expectations to improve the quantity and the quality of the information provided to citizens on governance issues.

The main pillar of the project was a Seminar held in Palermo, from 16-18 November 2018, where thirty professionals explored ways to increase transparency and communication between their sectors. Based on this experience-exchange, a list of DOs and DONTs was developed by the organisers together with the participants.

The target of this list are professionals working in public or private governance and the media. Although the recommendations are based on individual experiences, many of them are beyond one person's reach and can only be implemented at the organisational level. Nevertheless, it is hoped that even the ones that require high-level commitment can be inspirational as development goals regardless of one's position in the organisation.

DOs and DONTs for the governance

Don't

Think that your work needs to remain secretive

Do

Keep the people informed on your tasks and achievements

Make the decision-making process public

Involve stakeholders in the policy-making

Don't

Hide your data

Do

Make data available, accessible and understandable to the public

Inform the public on their right for information (transparency laws)

Make sure your organisation knows and follows the law on data transparency

Apply and raise awareness of others' good practices

Don't

Confuse public opinion with unprepared or inappropriate communication

Do

Define clear guidelines for institutional communication

Coordinate and prepare your team

Master crisis communication: one crisis-one voice

Communicate rapidly but acknowledge uncertainties

Don't

Think the media is your enemy. Citizens have the right to obtain relevant and precise information

Do

Involve the media in informing the public

Provide an information kit to media

Don't

Let false information spread

Do

Monitor the media coverage

React promptly where appropriate

Don't

Be too technical

Do

Train your experts to communicate with media

Don't

Compromise your values

Self-censor if you have doubts about practices at your organisation

Stay silent when you witness irregular practices

Let individuals' actions harm the trust in your organisation as a whole

Do

Ask questions

Be aware of your potential conflicts of interests, and inform your hierarchy where appropriate

Stop impunity: act if you see a conflict of interests or corruption in your institution

Be a whistleblower: inform investigative journalists if you witness irregular practices and feel powerless

Be aware of anonymous tip boxes where you can contact investigative journalists without revealing your identity

Don't

Think that practices and behaviour can be changed easily

Do

Accept that there is no "one size fits all" solution

Choose suitable good practices applied by other organisations

Look out for misuse and bypass of transparency laws



DOs and DONTs for the media

Don't

Publish unchecked information, even if the pressure is high to break the news

Do

Your research: identify the beneficiaries and the stakeholders, their financial relationships and so on

Think longterm: readers will support reliable media

Don't

Bash the bureaucracy just for the sake of it

Do

Stay objective: keep trying to get in touch with all sides, the administration included

Don't

Oversimplify

Cover topics if you do not feel competent

Do

Educate yourself

Become a specialist or consult experts

Work with multiple sources

Use local outlets: talk to people who know the subject

Don't

Underestimate people's distrust in the media

Use tied money

Do

Use disclaimers: inform your readers about your funding and potential conflict of interests

Diversify your funding

Acknowledge your mistakes and have a correction page to publish corrections

Don't

Work alone

Do

Support other journalists and work in a team if possible

Don't

Senzationalize

Do

Share at least some good news

Inform the public about good practices and achievements of the governance bodies, where appropriate

Don't

Compromise your values

Do

Protect your source's privacy

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