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WHAT'S YOUR AUDIENCE'S CARROT?

New Report Helps Nonprofits Move People from Knowledge to Action

(Washington, D.C.) – If knowledge alone spurred change, the world would already be a better place. Yet time and again people report knowing and even caring about an issue, but still don't act. Real change requires action, and the key to moving people from knowing something to doing something is persuasion. A new report from the Communications Leadership Institute™ and Spitfire Strategies™ aims to help nonprofits harness the power of persuasion to make more progress toward their social change goals.

Discovering the Activation Point™ is the first-ever look at the tried and true work of leading thinkers on persuasion through a nonprofit lens. Vetted by a panel of experts from the academic, foundation and nonprofit worlds and tested by qualitative research conducted by The Curious Company, the result is a comprehensive guide that offers the best persuasion practices for nonprofits.

"For so many important issues – from the environment to health care to foreign aid – polls tell us that Americans are strongly supportive and yet they fail to take action demonstrating that support," says Kristen Grimm, president of Spitfire Strategies and author of the report. "The Activation Point examines this phenomenon and finds that it's not enough for nonprofits to simply educate their audiences about an issue and assume action will follow. They must also build will in order to spur action – and persuasion is the key to building will."

The Activation Point helps nonprofits think through how they can incorporate persuasion into their communications efforts. An activation point occurs when the right people at the right time are persuaded to take action that leads to measurable social change. But before people will act, they must view the issue as relevant to their daily lives and believe that change is possible and something good will happen as a result.

"For the first time, nonprofits have a guide to persuasion tailored to their unique needs as social change organizations," says Holly Minch, executive director of the Communications Leadership Institute. "Many groups are looking for innovative ways to move people from knowledge about a problem to action for solutions – the Activation Point can help."

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The report offers guidance for how nonprofits can create activation points by:

- **Determining who they need to persuade.** There is no magic number, but the report finds that nonprofits rarely need to reach as many people as possible. Small numbers of the right people can make big things happen.
- **Figuring out what stage an audience is in and how to move them to act.** The Activation Point discusses how to move audiences through the three stages of action, from making knowledge stick to building the will to act to reinforcing action.
- **Deciding when the time is right to persuade.** People are not ready for activation 24/7 – and the result for groups who try is issue fatigue. The Activation Point offers guidance for knowing when the time is right, and when it's not.

The Activation Point was made possible through the generous support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the Open Society Institute. To download a free copy of The Activation Point, as well as additional information on the expert panel, qualitative research, and case studies showcasing activation points in action, visit www.CommunicationsLeadership.org and click on the Activation Point.

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The Communications Leadership Institute is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing nonprofits with the training and tools they need to increase their communications capacity and use high-impact communications campaigns to achieve their goals. CLI offers the gold standard in communications training so nonprofits can use their voices in the most powerful way possible. For more information, visit www.CommunicationsLeadership.org.

Spitfire Strategies is a communications firm that works with nonprofit and foundation clients to increase their capacity to create high-impact communications programs that support their goals and achieve their missions. Spitfire also helps nonprofits strengthen their internal communications capacity through our training programs and communications tools. To learn more, visit www.SpitfireStrategies.com.