

# Staying Connected, Becoming Connectors

National Conference for Station  
Managers and Volunteer Leaders

Washington, DC

March 22 – 23, 2007



# What We'll Cover

- Welcome and introductions
- Why public broadcasting is at a “tipping point” and how our efforts will take it to the next level
- Malcolm Gladwell’s The Tipping Point and the lessons for public television
- Connectors, Mavens, Salespeople: becoming public television’s advocates
- Finding the role that’s right for you and for your station


# Defining “Tipping Point”

- A moment in an organization’s life when the context in which it operates, a changing perception by the community and involvement of key people converge to accelerate the organization’s emergence into its next level of performance and achievement. It is often sudden, sometimes unexpected, sometimes deliberate.
  - Adapted from “The Tipping Point” by Malcolm Gladwell, Little Brown, 2000

# Public Broadcasting: At the “Tipping Point”

- Can we create an “epidemic” of support for public broadcasting?
  - Ideas, messages, behaviors can spread like viruses
- What is at stake?
  - A promise, an investment, an opportunity
- What can we offer?
  - Communities committed to public broadcasting’s future: CPB’s new Public Awareness Initiative
- How can volunteers help?
  - Leadership in accelerating the “tipping point”

# How Tipping Points Occur

- The Law of the Few
    - People who are Connectors, Mavens or Salespeople who have a vision
  - The “Stickiness” Factor
    - A brand or product that people remember
    - Simple changes in messages can have a powerful impact
  - The Power of Context
    - Why the environment is right for public broadcasting to command a new level of engagement
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# Who Makes it Happen?

- Connectors

- Have social networks and use them to advance ideas and organizations (Six degrees of separation)

- Mavens

- “One who accumulates knowledge” – people who make it their business to know what public broadcasting is, needs and envisions

- Salespeople

- The persuaders

# Staying Connected

Discussion:

Why volunteers need to stay engaged and help accelerate the “tipping point” and what they can do

# Ways to Stay Connected and Be Connectors

- Serve on the governing or advisory board in a way that models leadership
- If yours is/was an MGI station, work to sustain the momentum of major giving
- Insist on productive meetings, retreats, orientations and committees
- Expect a careful system for recruitment and enlistment of new board members
- Implement a “AAA” or other motivation-based program for board member engagement



# Ways to Stay Connected and Be Connectors - 2

- Try to make your station your top philanthropic priority (or one of your top three) – if not now, then soon
- Understand and work towards the station's vision for your community and the station's role in achieving that vision
- Engage your network in the station wherever and whenever possible
- Ask for help in handling objections people might ask: be sure you are prepared

# Ways to Stay Connected and Be Connectors - 2

- Understand and be able to articulate your station's mission and values
- Think creatively about new opportunities and the role your station can play in the community – “broadcasting isn't what we do, it is how we do what we do”
- Exercise your social network, your knowledge and your persuasive skills regularly on behalf of your station

# And One Other Way We Hope You Will Stay Connected....

- ...With each other as volunteer leaders of public television to accelerate the “tipping point”
  - What kinds of communication would you like to maintain?
  - What can you learn from each other?
  - How can you support each other?
  - Would meetings like this in the future be helpful to you?
  - What kind of public television information would you like to receive?

# Closing Thoughts

- “Creativity is the power to connect the seemingly unconnected.” William Plomer (African-born English Writer, 1903-1973)
- “Be More...Connected” (PBS marketing theme)
- “A great attitude does much more than turn on the lights in our worlds; it seems to magically connect us to all sorts of serendipitous opportunities that were somehow absent before the change.” Anonymous

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