Our Waikato - Trust and Confidence Strategy

Waikato
District Council
Te Kaunihera aa Takiwaa o Waikato

Our Plan – "we are visible, trusted and committed to engaging with our communities"

"People are at the heart of all the decisions we make" – Mayor Jacqui

The Public Service

79% of New Zealanders trust public services based on their personal experience

Trust in the Public Service brand is 58% *(compared to trust in the private sector brand - 47%)*

Do you think the Public Service change their services in response to feedback from the public (41%), admit responsibility when they make mistakes (39%)

2023 Resident Survey summary

Trust: 47% (2021) – reduced to 37% (2023)

"Percentage of customers satisfied with the ease of access and clarity of information regarding key community issues." Has a target of 50% and is sitting at 37%.

There is a growing frustration around queries not being answered and a lack of follow-up. Latest result shows a decline from 69% (2021) to 50% (2023) overall satisfaction.

"I know how to provide feedback to Council on issues that are relevant to me" 48% (2021) – reduced to 36% (2023)

What needs fixing…to address trust and confidence in Council?

- ~~Council delivery of services and activities, on time and within budget~~ – *not this Strategy*

✓ Council relevance and visibility – connectivity to people and communities (Council "brand")

✓ Council responsiveness ie timeliness and flexibility

✓ Council listening to feedback and being transparent

Trust and confidence looks like…

People will understand who we are and what we do (we are visible)

People will know what is planned, being done, or being delivered and why (we provide quality information in a timely way)

People can contact us and we will get back to them (we are responsive)

People will be comfortable having conversations with us to inform decision-making (we are listening)

People = residents, iwi/hapuu, citizens, new-comers, visitors, ratepayers, community groups, businesses…

To build trust and confidence we will….

1. Enhance the visibility of who we are, what we do

2. Establish pathways for listening and responding

3. Develop our internal infrastructure – systems and people

1. Enhancing visibility

Relevance – geographic rohe/zones

'Free people' channels

Signage – facility and project

Targeted formats and channels

Neighbourhood and community events

Existing channels and networks

Media planning

Smart infographics

2. Establish pathways for listening and responding

- Maaori partnerships
- Significance and Engagement Policy
- Digital
    - one tool and do it right
    - geo-targeting
    - insights
- Civics (informing participation and good decision-making)

3. WDC communication infrastructure

Systems and processes

Databases (contact/channel)

Calendar (events and engagements)

Language

Policies and procedures

Tools and resources

Our people

Every staff member plays a part

Internal communication plan

Changes in the way we do things

New measures

Elected members will increase the ratings from 6 to 8 and from 5 to 7 by December 2024

2024 Customer satisfaction with enquiry responses will increase from [50% - 2023] to [??%] by June 2025

Percentage of residents satisfied with levels of information affecting their local area will increase from [37% - 2023] to [??%] by June 2025

Trust and confidence in Waikato District Council will increase from [37% - 2023] to [??%] by December 2025.

Plus internal measures for ELT/staff

Question

How can the staff support you to better communicate within your communities?
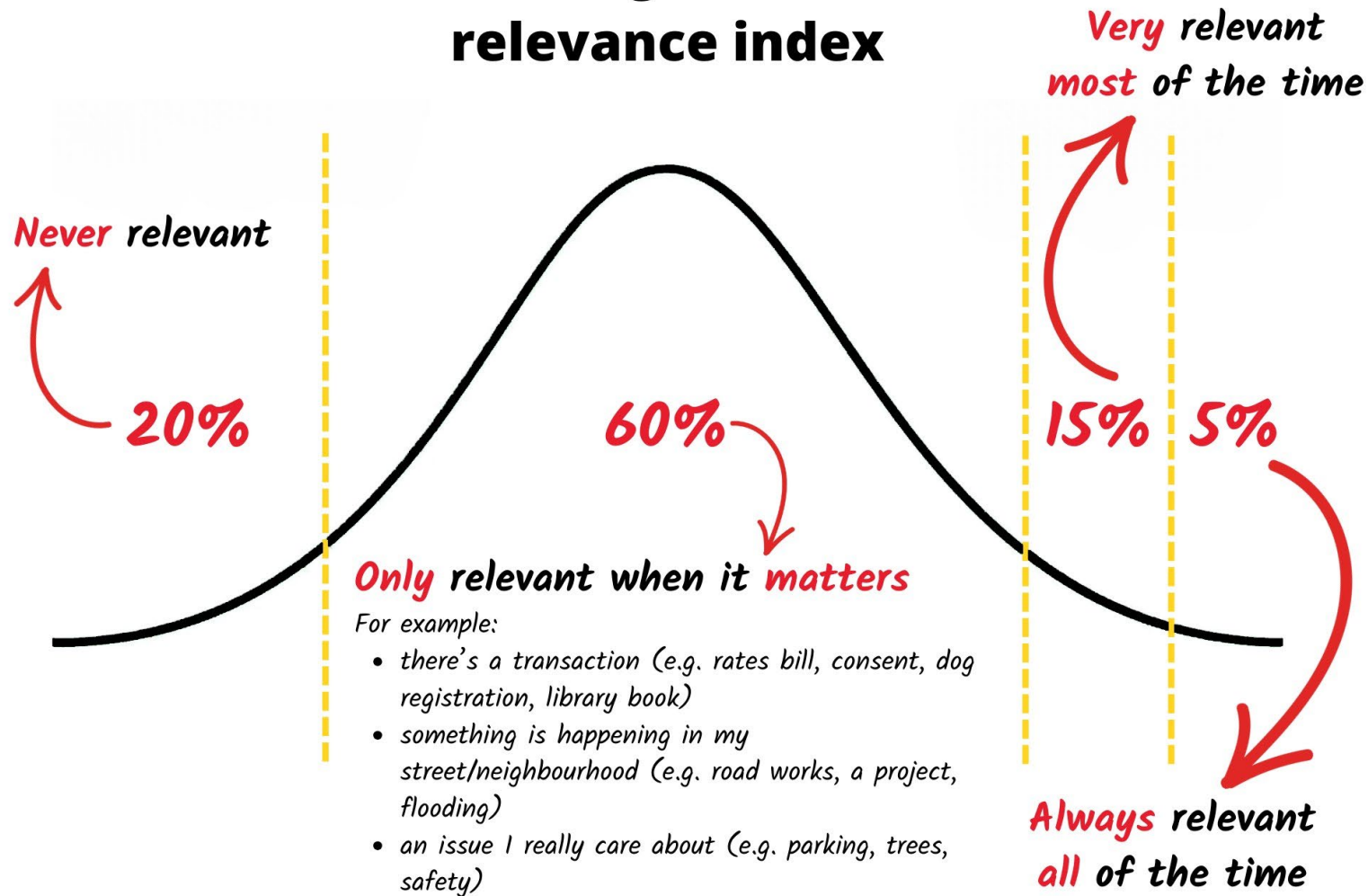
1. Content
2. Processes

Question

What might be a simple and sensible way to 'divide' up the district into "communication rohe" (not using Ward boundaries) so we can be better relevant and targeted?

The local government relevance index

Never relevant

20%

Very relevant
most of the time

15% **5%**

60%

Only relevant when it **matters**

For example:
- there's a transaction (e.g. rates bill, consent, dog registration, library book)
- something is happening in my street/neighbourhood (e.g. road works, a project, flooding)
- an issue I really care about (e.g. parking, trees, safety)

Always relevant
all of the time

What do we mean by *communication*?

What is "communication"?

DATA
IS A LIST OF FACTS
Facts belong to content owners
Data is an **input** to **information**

Content Owners
- Gather, store, retrieve and assure data about a project, activity or service
- Deliver information – internally and externally

INFORMATION
IS DATA IN A SENTENCE
Information = **words** that tell a **truth**

COMMUNICATION
IS INFORMATION WITH ADDED VALUE
Communication may need **specialist skills applied**

Communication is:
- strategic– reputational and/or community risks and opportunities
- story-telling – key messages, big picture narratives
- campaigns – promotions, education, engagements

ENGAGEMENT
IS COMMUNICATION THAT IS A CONVERSATION
Engagement is **listening** with the **intent** of using that **feedback** and **input** to **inform a decision**

Engagement is:
- informal
- fluid and evolving
- requires relationships
- has a listen-respond-adapt-listen-respond approach

CONSULTATION
IS COMMUNICATION TO GET A SPECIFIC TYPE OF FEEDBACK
Consultation is what you undertake to **'test'** options determined **based on input** from engagement

Consultation is:
- a statutory process
- time-bound and prescriptive
- requires transactions
- a receive-record-respond approach