

GETTING BELOW THE SURFACE

TOP 10 TIPS & TRICKS

TO GIVE THE OCEAN
A VOICE



GETTING BELOW THE SURFACE

TOP 10 TIPS & TRICKS TO GIVE THE OCEAN A VOICE



#1

URGENCY + AGENCY = ACTION!

Avoid relying on crisis language, as it triggers apathy not action. To create change, couple urgency with solutions!

Q: Can you highlight some success stories? (To help people feel that change is possible and already happening)



#2

CELEBRATE WHAT'S PRICELESS

When we talk about the ocean's economic value, we reinforce the story that "everything has a price", rather than the idea that "some things are priceless."

Q: Can you offer personal stories that emphasise the priceless value of the ocean, from sunset strolls and beach picnics to encounters with wild beasts?

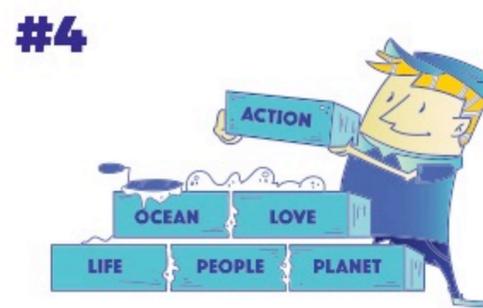


#3

SHOW HOW THE OCEAN HELPS US THRIVE

If we aren't busy talking about money, that frees us up to showcase how the ocean helps to sustain human well-being and allows us to prosper!

Q: Can you sprinkle in a few examples of how the ocean helps us collectively to THRIVE?



#4

BUILD ON WHAT PEOPLE KNOW

Need to explain how algae provides us with bucket-loads of oxygen? Why not compare it to trees? When we start with what people know, we create a bridge to a new understanding of things.

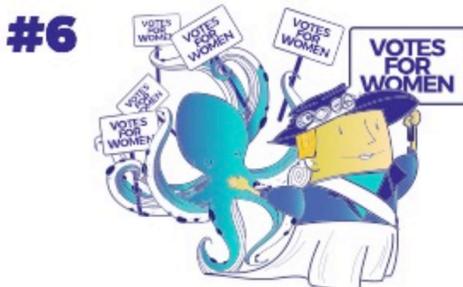
Q: When was the last time you spoke to a seven-year-old about the ocean? They can be a great partner in crafting messages that really sing!



#5

By highlighting "ecosystem disruptions" we can allow people to see how the flourishing or disappearance of one species has a huge impact on the lives of many others.

Q: Are there surprising and delightful ways for you to show the symbiotic relationships between different species and the ways in which the ocean is intricately connected to other natural systems?



#6

SHOWCASE SPECIFIC SYSTEMIC SOLUTIONS

People are busy and the world can be quite overwhelming. You can help them to believe change is possible by pointing to big systemic solutions and by highlighting how they can get involved.

Q: Can you tell stories about big, systemic solutions that have been successful in the past? (Hint: They don't need to be ocean related!)



#7

ZOOM IN ON THE OCEAN

Show your audience the ever-changing, complex richness of ocean life, up close and personal, to help them understand how our actions have a BIG impact on this delicate ecosystem.

Q: How can we use image-rich, poetic language without emphasising the vastness or mystery of the ocean?



#8

BRING THE OCEAN INLAND

To counter the misperception that coastal communities are the only ones impacted by ocean issues, place greater emphasis on widely applicable threats (and opportunities) that affect everyone, wherever they live.

Q: Can we run campaigns that help bring the ocean to areas that feel disconnected from it?

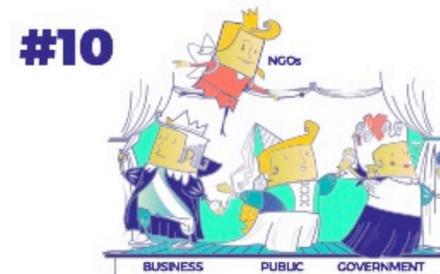


#9

SAY "YES, AND!"

When asking individuals to change their behaviour – like refusing straws – be sure to include a collective ask too – such as banning all single-use plastic – to help drive change at all levels.

Q: How can I couple my individual asks with clear and specific asks for policy change and government action?



#10

CAST ROLES & PARTS

Be as specific as possible about what you need people to do (and don't be afraid to think big). For example, "Shine-on Inc. must invent a completely edible, biodegradable, organic glitter" (because a world in which the ocean and humanity thrive together is something worth celebrating!)

Q: Have you tried mapping out all the different actors' roles like characters in a play? What concrete actions do you want them to take to give your tale a happy ending?

#1

URGENCY + AGENCY = ACTION!



Avoid relying on crisis language, as it triggers apathy not action! To create change, couple urgency with solutions that match the scale of the problem, and watch as people jump off the sofa and into their batmobiles! *

Q: Can you highlight some success stories? (To help people feel that change is possible and already happening)

**Toyota Prius / bike / broomstick*

#2

CELEBRATE WHAT'S PRICELESS



When we look at ocean conservation through the lens of short-term profits, or with extractive eyes, efforts to protect it may seem costly and burdensome. So while tempting, we should avoid framing the ocean as an economic resource, and instead tell stories that reinforce the idea that “some things are priceless”.

Q: Can you offer personal stories that emphasise the priceless value of the ocean, from sunset strolls and beach picnics to encounters with wild beasties?

#3

SHOW HOW THE OCEAN HELPS US THRIVE



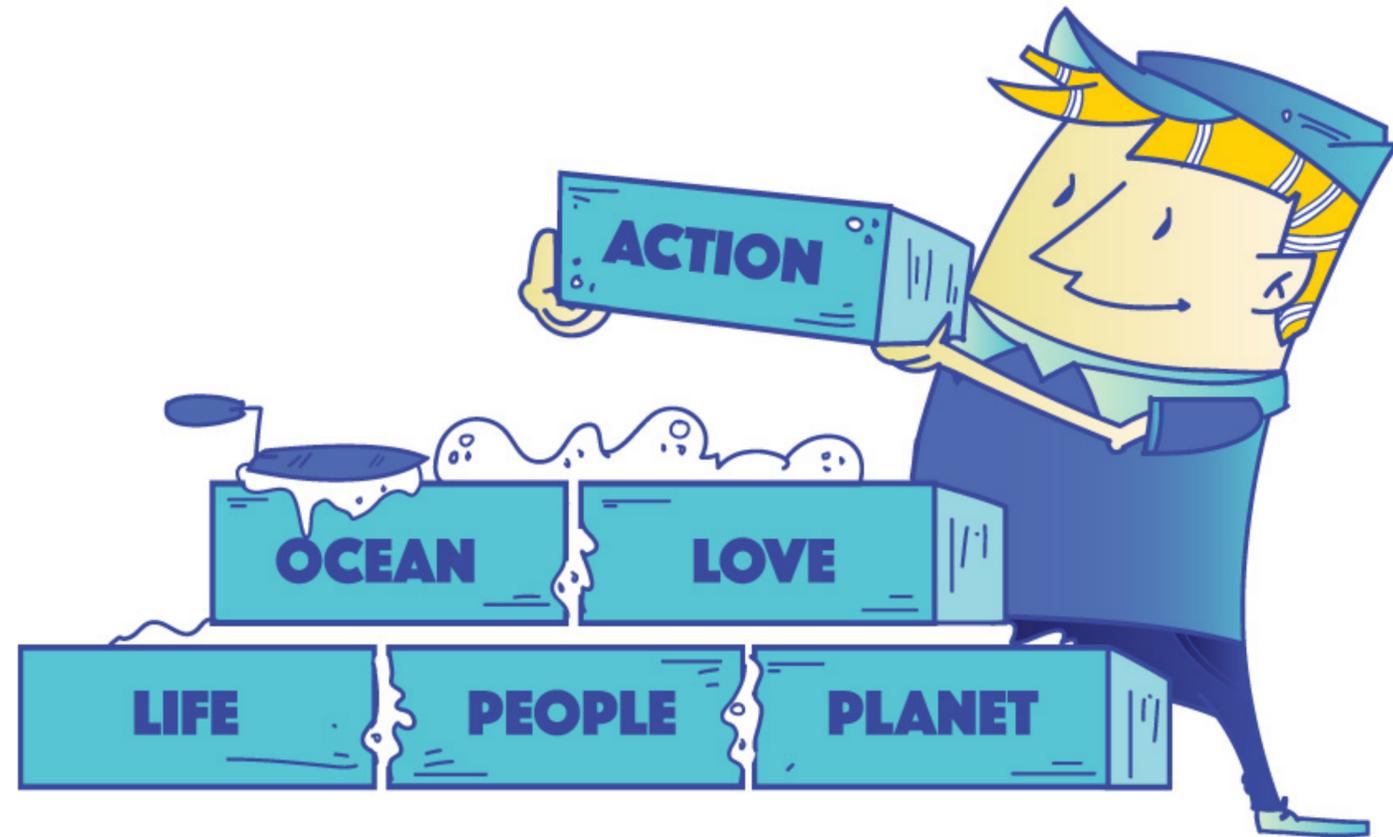
And if we ain't busy talking about money, that frees us up to showcase how the ocean helps to sustain human well-being, and to provide links between marine conservation and human (and more-than-human*) prosperity.

Q: Can you sprinkle in a few examples of how the ocean helps us collectively to THRIVE?

** I mean, most cats like fish, and I've read that dogs are fairly fond of oxygen...*

#4

BUILD ON WHAT PEOPLE KNOW



Need to explain how algae provides us with bucket-loads of oxygen? Then why not compare it to trees? (They're a bit like long-lost cousins).
Want to explain important exchanges between the ocean and the atmosphere? Try starting with the water cycle (and get people all nostalgic about primary school).
Need to talk about pesticide pollution? Why not begin with plastic pollution and build from here? (Pesticide pollution deserves a bit more time in the spotlight, after all....). When we start with what people know, we build a bridge to understanding.

*Q: When was the last time you spoke to a seven year-old about the ocean?
They can be a great partner in crafting messages that really sing!*

#5

REVEAL THE RIPPLES

People know about endangered species, but are less aware of how the loss of one species has a dramatic effect on entire ecosystems. Our communication should help show these “ecosystem disruptions”, and allow people to see how the flourishing or disappearance of a species has a HUGE impact on the lives of many other species.

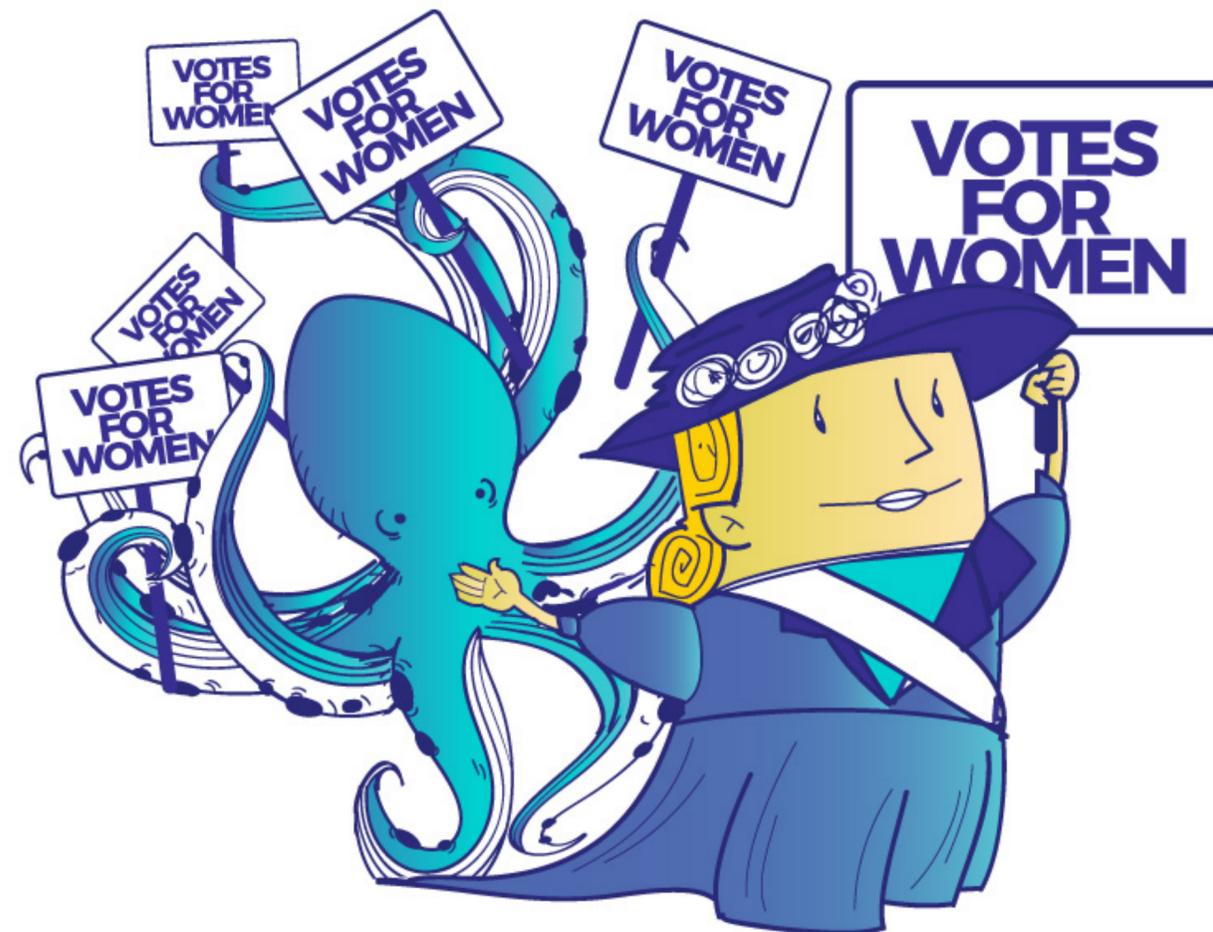
Q: Are there surprising and delightful ways for you to show the symbiotic relationships between different species and the ways in which the ocean is intricately connected to other natural systems?**

** Mufasa’s epic speech to Simba about lions, antelopes and grass is well worth watching again*

*** “How Wolves Change Rivers” is a great example of the delightfully unexpected and interconnected nature of our world <https://goo.gl/D92sX3>*

#6

SHOWCASE SPECIFIC SYSTEMIC SOLUTIONS



People are busy and the world can be quite overwhelming. You can help them to believe change is possible by pointing to big systemic solutions and by highlighting how they can get involved. Point to enormous change that has happened in the past to show that protecting the ocean is not a hopeless case.

*Q: Can you tell stories about big, systemic solutions that have been successful in the past?
(Hint: They don't need to be ocean related!)*

#7

ZOOM IN ON THE OCEAN



We love to describe the ocean as vast: but that separates it from us, makes it seem empty and unchanging; makes it feel like something we puny humans couldn't possibly harm. Instead, try bringing the nose of your audience into the water, and show them the delicate, complex, and ever-changing nature of ocean life up close and personal.

Q: How can we use image-rich, poetic language without emphasising the vastness or mystery of the ocean?

#8

BRING THE OCEAN INLAND



Many people think coastal communities are the only ones impacted by ocean issues, yet threats to the ocean are threats to all life – every second breath we take comes from the briny sea – and all of our rivers and canals lead there too. To counter this misperception, we can place greater emphasis on widely applicable threats (and opportunities) that affect everyone, wherever they live.

Q: Can we run campaigns that help bring the ocean to areas that feel disconnected from it?

#9

SAY “YES, AND”!

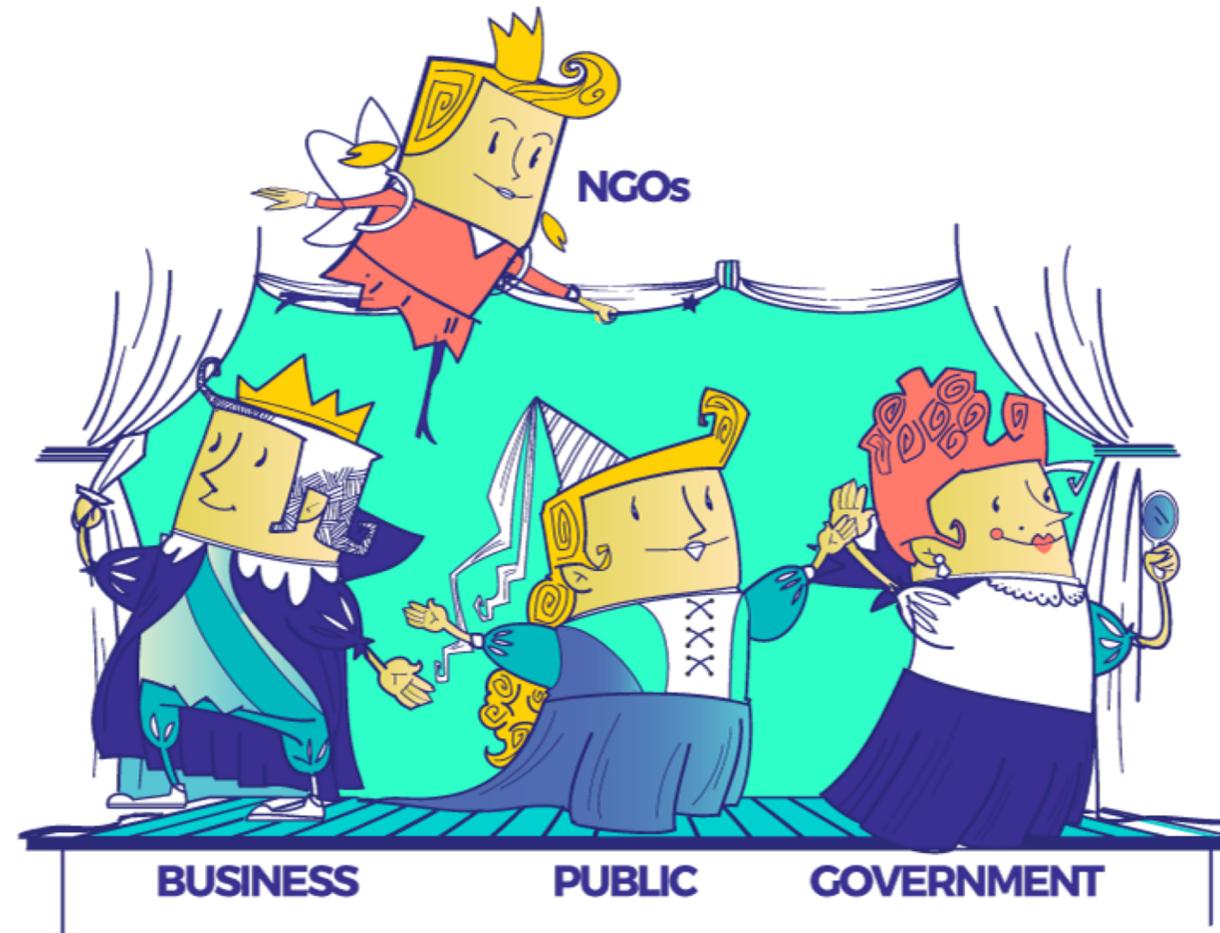


Calling for individual action? Perfect, just be sure to pair it with calls for policy change and government action too. We absolutely need to give people concrete actions they can take as individuals, but given the scale of the problems and solutions needed, we also need to add actions for other actors to take too ,and make clear how individuals can help drive those stakeholders to take action through their actions.

Q: How can I couple my individuals asks with clear and specific asks for policy change and government action?

#10

CAST ROLES & PARTS



Avoid generic, soggy phrases like “we all” and “everyone should” and be laser focused about what roles different actors need to play – and then be as specific as possible about what they need to do. Use examples, and don’t be afraid to think BIG. From “The council needs to create a plastic recycling scheme” to “Shine-on Inc. must invent a completely edible, biodegradable, organic glitter” (because a world in which the ocean and humanity thrive together is something worth celebrating!)

*Q: Have you tried mapping out all the different actors' roles like characters in a play?
What concrete actions do you want them to take to give your tale a happy ending?*



A FEW CHEEKY END NOTES

This guide was pulled together by the scallywags at Dancing Fox on behalf of those delightful folks at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, drawing on the insights gathered by the Frameworks Institute as part of their brilliant report "Getting Below the Surface".

Full report accessible here: <https://goo.gl/yUjQFP>

