USING THE DESIGN THINKING PROCESS TO CRAFT

INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATIONS

One of the most compelling arguments in favor of inclusive communications is that it can be seen as the logical and necessary evolution of marketing and communications practices.

Inclusive communications aim to get a deeper understanding of our audience's social identities, essentially allowing us to know our audiences better and craft more meaningful messaging.

Inclusive communications are strategic and align other frameworks such as the popular design thinking process.

If you are unfamiliar with the design thinking process, it is a solutions-based approach to problem-solving that, amongst other things, prioritizes curiosity, listening, testing, and feedback, which are all integral to inclusive communications.

YW Boston has prepared this worksheet to help guide you as you craft more inclusive communication strategies.

This worksheet is based on the design thinking process, a solution-based approach to solving problems. The five-stage design thinking model was proposed by the Hasso-Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford.

1. Sympathize

What assumptions am I making about my audience?

How much knowledge do I have about the subject matter?

Should I be telling this story or crafting this message?

What else is part of my audience's current and historical reality?

2. Define (the problem)

What is purpose of my message?

What understanding do I have of my audience's social identities?

3. Ideate

What are my intentions?

What is my potential impact?

How much knowledge does my audience have about the subject?

How could I engage more people with our mission?

4. Prototype

What language should I use for this audience?

Am I using deficit-based framing?

Which perspectives am I centering?

Have I gathered informed consent to share these stories?

5. Test

What was reception like?

Am I providing opportunities to provide feedback?

How will I incorporate feedback?

How do my outcomes compare with my intended impact?