



#8 Foreground public health's data expertise

The Goal & The Challenge

When the goal is... to highlight the particular knowledge, skills, or other assets that public health professionals bring to cross-sector collaborations...

The challenge is... that other sectors have a limited understanding of what the field of public health entails, much less what public health professionals do. All sectors value and rely on data, but none has a very robust appreciation of how public health professionals could help them meet their data needs. The potential for this can be extremely enticing to other sectors, but without sufficient emphasis and foregrounding within communications, it gets easily lost in the mix.

Before Framing

When You Say... *Public health professionals have a wealth of knowledge and skills that can be useful to other sectors. We can function as chief health strategists and problem-solvers, valuable influencers, community connectors, expert analysts, and policy advocates.*

They Think... *Some of that sounds okay, but isn't necessarily pertinent to the immediate objectives or long-term goals of my sector. I have been doing this job for many years, so I know from experience how best to improve our practices. We don't need to bring in outside help.*

Framing can help

Framing can help establish an association in other sectors' minds between public health and not just datasets but data analysis and proficiency. Messages that vividly exhibit public health professionals' data expertise, particularly by describing their ability to use data as a problem-solving tool, can help other sectors appreciate the utility and applicability of the field.

An effective reframe would look something like this:

Public health professionals use data to help other sectors evaluate program impact, determine appropriate interventions, monitor progress, identify barriers to care, target populations for services, and influence public policy. We also work to optimize data sharing processes, which ensures that knowledge and insights can be easily exchanged across multiple sectors. In these ways, public health's data expertise is highly innovative and infinitely adaptable, and can contribute to partnerships with other sectors that address the issues facing our community.

Remember, the reframe isn't a ready-made talking point. It's a sample iteration that models the framing recommendation in action.

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HOUSING SECTOR | An effective reframe would look something like this:

Public health's expertise with population data can be a powerful mapping tool for housing professionals. Our careful analyses can inform decisions about housing improvements—for example by indicating the locations of asthma hotspots that may be the result of substandard housing. In this way, data-sharing partnerships between housing and public health increase our combined potential to create healthier communities.



Tip: *Highlight the fact that housing and public health professionals share many of the same objectives, and that data-sharing between the two sectors, as well as public health's expertise in working with those data, are essential to achieving mutual goals.*



EDUCATION SECTOR | An effective reframe would look something like this:

Public health can help the education sector address persistent challenges like student absenteeism and staff turnover. Our proficiency with data enables a deeper understanding of these problems, and also connects the dots to needed solutions.



Tip: *Focusing on data-driven solutions can help education professionals appreciate that public health professionals are innovative and proactive, and do more than diagnose problems.*



HEALTH SYSTEMS SECTOR | An effective reframe would look something like this:

Patient outcomes are shaped by more than just clinical interactions. Public health has data expertise that can assist health systems in their work to identify trends and develop strategies that lower health care costs, reduce repeat admissions, and improve patient outcomes.



Tip: *Highlight data expertise—collecting it, generating insights through it, and sharing it—as a key function and skill that public health brings to partnerships.*



BUSINESS SECTOR | An effective reframe would look something like this:

Public health professionals have analytical expertise that can support businesses in their strategic planning. We can use data to help predict and track the needs and attributes of the community—from crime rates to food sources—which is critical information for employers seeking to recruit and retain talent.



Tip: *Foregrounding public health's data expertise helps business professionals see the field as forward-thinking and relevant.*