

Small Groups Communication in Mayor Election Campaigns

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to study how mayors used small group communication in form of “coffee forum” during election campaigns in the aspects of 1) process; 2) format; 3) content; and 4) approaches to develop coffee forum usage.

This was a qualitative research based on participatory observation and in-depth interviews with 6 key informants, consisting of 3 mayors of municipalities and 3 campaign managers, purposively chosen from among people involved in mayor election. Data were analyzed through descriptive analysis.

Results: **1) process:** (a) set target groups; (b) study their needs; (c) set topics; (d) make outlines; (e) write a script; (f) rehearse; (g) find coffee forum communicators; (h) train communication skills; (i) hold coffee forum conversations; (j) evaluate people’s understanding and satisfaction; (k) improve the work; **2) formats:** (a) educate about election laws; (b) change negative attitudes about the candidate; (c) inspire people to join in community development; (d) capture people’s attention through storytelling; (e) tell jokes with local humor; **3) content:** (a) the candidate’s biography; (b) the candidate’s and party’s ideals; (c) motivation for being the mayor ; (d) leadership vision; (e) community development policies; (f) responses to attacks and questions; (g) election method; (h) inspiration to get out and vote; **4) approaches to develop coffee forum usage:** (a) develop professional small group discussion skills; (b) develop interesting storytelling methods; (c) develop conversation topics that will captivate listeners; (d) incorporate coffee forum conversations with print media and social media.

Keywords: coffee forum, small group communication, mayor election campaign, political communication