

Orion Knight

☎ (916) 555-4176 ✉ orion.knight@example.com 💻 linkedin.com/example/orionknight 📍 Sacramento, CA 95818

SUMMARY

Director level communications leader with 13 years of progressive experience across **public sector**, nonprofit, and civic organizations, including more than seven years **supervising communications professionals**. Leads integrated communications, public affairs, media relations, executive messaging, crisis response, marketing, brand governance, and **internal communications** in complex public service environments. Translates policy and operational priorities into clear narratives for media, employees, community partners, and other stakeholders. Experienced spokesperson and writer who develops press strategy, executive speeches, briefing materials, media pitches, public announcements, and thought leadership. Directs **cross functional teams** and budgets while using audience data and campaign analytics to guide decisions. Brings sound judgment, discretion, and steady collaboration to public facing work that strengthens transparency, trust, and organizational alignment.

EXPERIENCE

Director of Communications

March 2022 - Present

Capital Region Public Services Collaborative

Sacramento, CA

Leads an eight person communications team across **media relations**, **public affairs**, marketing, internal communications, and community outreach. Advises senior officials, manages communications planning and budgets, and protects message quality across sensitive public service initiatives.

- Led integrated media, **marketing**, and outreach planning around public service priorities and announcements.
- Advised **senior officials** on sensitive issues, reputation risks, and **public engagement** message frameworks.
- Built reporter relationships and pitched substantive stories tied to leadership priorities and community services.
- Coordinated crisis fact gathering, approvals, media response, employee **messaging**, and digital updates.
- Managed annual communications budgets across campaign production, digital tools, outreach needs, and staff capacity.
- Set brand and editorial standards for releases, speeches, presentations, web content, and campaigns.

Senior Communications Manager

January 2019 - February 2022

Western Civic Policy Foundation

Davis, CA

Managed a five person **communications** group serving a large civic nonprofit through public affairs, executive communications, media relations, and digital campaigns. Connected research, stakeholder outreach, web content, social channels, and leadership visibility through coordinated communication plans.

- Managed **public affairs**, **media relations**, executive communications, and digital campaigns for civic initiatives.
- Built integrated campaign plans connecting research releases, stakeholder outreach, web content, and social channels.
- Drafted executive **speeches**, opinion pieces, press materials, talking points, and **thought leadership**.
- Pitched media and prepared background briefings that positioned experts for substantive coverage.
- Established **rapid response** approval paths for sensitive developments and timely public statements.
- Used media monitoring, web analytics, email performance, and audience feedback to refine campaigns.

Communications Manager

June 2016 - December 2018

Sierra Metropolitan Council

Roseville, CA

Supervised three communications specialists supporting regional public programs, meetings, launches, and community initiatives. Managed editorial quality, media work, internal announcements, visual standards, events, vendor relationships, and campaign spending across departments.

- Supervised three specialists supporting regional programs, media work, events, and editorial deadlines.
- Managed communications for public meetings, program launches, stakeholder notices, and community initiatives.
- Prepared spokespeople for interviews and organized press briefings with accurate program information.
- Established visual and editorial guidelines that improved consistency across recurring publications and presentations.
- Created internal message sequences that kept employees informed during organizational changes.
- Administered vendor and campaign spending within approved **budgets** and communications priorities.

Public Affairs Specialist

August 2013 - May 2016

Community Impact Network

San Jose, CA

Developed **public affairs** content and outreach support for community initiatives, public agencies, and service programs. Prepared executive materials, coordinated media logistics, maintained digital calendars, tracked engagement, and strengthened relationships with community organizations.

- Developed releases, advisories, stakeholder updates, presentations, and event materials for initiatives.
- Researched policy topics before drafting executive talking points and **briefing materials**.
- Pitched local media on service programs, coordinated interviews, and prepared subject matter experts.
- Supported announcements and **outreach events** through logistics, speaker materials, and follow up communications.

- Tracked web and email engagement data to refine message timing and audience targeting.
- Built organized outreach records for **community organizations** and public agency relationships.

Communications Coordinator

October 2010 - July 2013

Valley Community Alliance

Fresno, CA

Produced communications for community programs across a multi county service area. Supported senior review, media coordination, public forums, recurring presentations, staff notices, and communication records while building dependable editorial and outreach practices.

- Produced newsletters, web updates, event communications, and media materials for community programs.
- Drafted releases and executive correspondence under senior review for public interest audiences.
- Maintained media lists and coverage records for efficient reporter inquiry response.
- Coordinated forums and program announcements across speakers, venues, and outreach materials.
- Created reusable Word, **Excel**, and **PowerPoint** templates for recurring communications activities.
- Assembled clear internal staff updates from multiple departments into timely organizational notices.

PROJECTS

Public Service Crisis Response Framework 📅 2024

Created a practical crisis communications framework connecting fact gathering, approvals, spokesperson preparation, employee messaging, media response, and digital updates. Clear roles helped teams respond calmly during sensitive public service moments.

Civic Research Launch Campaign 📅 2021

Coordinated research release messaging across earned media, stakeholder outreach, web content, social channels, and executive appearances. Audience feedback and media monitoring guided channel choices and message timing.

LEADERSHIP & AWARDS

- Volunteer Mentor, Public Sector Communicators Roundtable, 2021 to Present
- Recognized by civic nonprofit leadership for clear executive messaging and dependable rapid response support

EDUCATION

Bachelor's Degree in Journalism

2010

California State University, Fresno GPA: 0

Fresno, CA

***Coursework:** Public affairs, news writing, media relations, editing, communications law*

CERTIFICATIONS

- FEMA IS 29 Public Information Officer Awareness 📅 2023
- DOJ FBI Live Scan Security Clearance 📅 2026

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- **Productivity Platforms:** Google Workspace, Word, Excel, PowerPoint
- **Collaboration Platforms:** SharePoint, Teams, Google Drive
- **Communications Strategy:** Integrated campaigns, public affairs, media relations
- **Executive Communications:** Speeches, briefing materials, talking points
- **Media Relations:** Press releases, media advisories, media pitches
- **Crisis Communications:** Rapid response, crisis protocols, spokesperson preparation
- **Marketing Analytics:** Web analytics, email analytics, audience feedback
- **Brand Management:** Visual identity, editorial standards, brand governance
- **Public Engagement:** Community outreach, stakeholder engagement, outreach events
- **Content Development:** Thought leadership, web content, social content
- **Internal Communications:** Employee messaging, organizational notices, transparency
- **Event Communications:** Press conferences, public announcements, run of show

SKILLS

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| • Strategic Communications | • Executive Communications | • Reputation Management | • Campaign Analytics |
| • Public Affairs | • Marketing Strategy | • Thought Leadership | • Team Leadership |
| • Media Relations | • Brand Management | • Press Strategy | • Budget Management |
| • Crisis Communications | • Internal Communications | • Community Outreach | |

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Public Sector Communicators Roundtable, Volunteer Mentor
- Community communications networks supporting public outreach, media relations, and civic information access

LANGUAGES

- English (Native)
- Spanish (Beginner)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Work Status : Authorized to work in United States. No sponsorship required.

REFERENCES

AVAILABLE ON REQUEST