5 Ingredients for Succesful Online Engagement
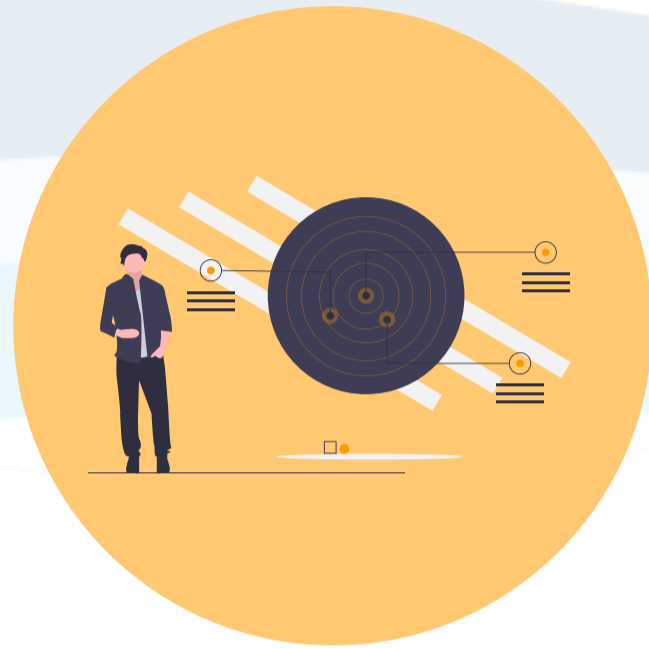
Engaging online requires careful planning and consideration. These are the five essentials to think about before you start engaging.

Have a purpose

Identifying the 'why' should always be the starting point for any engagment - offline or online.

People will become disheartened if they sense you're simply checking a box, or if they have engaged on the topic frequently in the past without action.

Be sure to have a strong justification for conducting the engagement and set clear goals, objectives, and desired outcomes to guide the process forward.

Plan for success

Strategic, upfront planning is key to ensuring success and the more time you spend planning, the better positioned you will be.

Consider what success looks like and determine what questions you'll ask, how data and information will be collected and analysed, how you'll get a diversity of people participating, and how you'll promote and market the engagement.
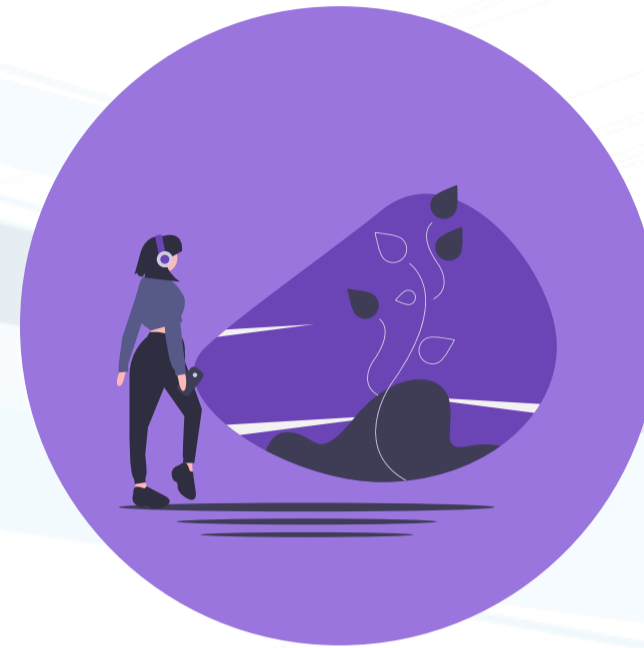
Inspire interest and action

People's time is valuable and you need to **convince them that their participation is worthwhile.**

Dry text, long documents and boring surveys are not enough to compel people to action. Focus on developing digital first-content that delivers a 'wow factor' and explore using a variety of other creative tools to collect feedback.

This will inspire people to take notice and start interacting with you.
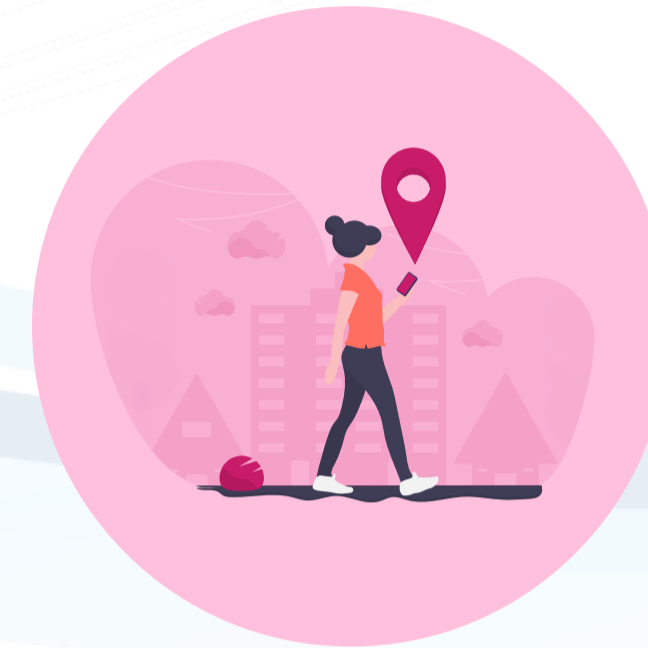
Bring people on the journey

True success can only be achieved when people truly feel like they are a valued part of the process.

Create opportunities to share, learn and grow to keep people involved throughout the duration of the project.

Making the engagment feel like a collaborative effort sends the message that this is a group effort bigger than any one individual's opinion.

Show you listened and learned

Ultimately, people want to know that you've listened to them and understood what they have to say.

Create as many opportunities for listening as you can, and **reflect back what you heard and more importantly, what you learned.**

Explicitly demonstrating how the feedback has influenced the process is the key to creating trust in the process and getting better outcomes.