

Credibility, transparency and integrity workshop

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¿What is credibility? ¿Who has it??

¿Is it different to integrity and transparency?

Credibility definition

- Source credibility is the perception, of the receiver, that the communicator (person, organisation or other) is able and willing to provide information that is correct and true.
- Emphasis on others. To be credible an organisation needs an 'other' to award the credibility.
- Credibility is constructed by the interaction of the qualities and current circumstances of a person/object/organisation and someone who awards it

A credible source is a believable one

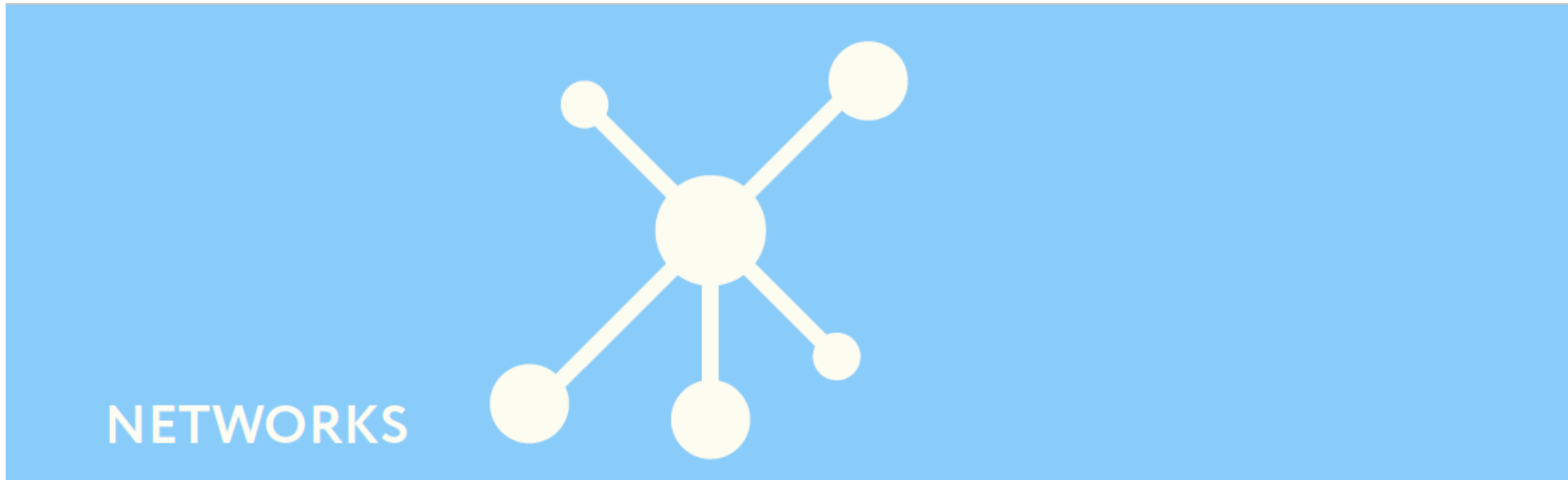
What influences A Think tank's CREDIBILITY

- Credibility is partly in the eye of the beholder. Each person has been exposed to different information and experiences with think tanks, and also has different personal backgrounds which affect their approach and final credibility assessment of a centre
- BUT regardless of variability, there are some commonalities on the factors that are used to judge the credibility of a think tank.



Factors that affect credibility

Credibility Factors



- Connections, alliances, and affiliations that an organisation and its staff and board have.
- They provide access and closeness to various actors
- These can give (or take away credibility) to think tanks, as the mere
- association with certain people or groups validates (and invalidates) them

Credibility Factors



- Any effect that a policy research centre has had on policy, practice, media, or academia.
- Past performance does not guarantee future results but it is a proxy measure of what the think tank could do in the future.
- It signals expertise because their influence shows their competence and authority
- virtuous cycle of well-known policy-effective researchers.

Credibility Factors

INTELLECTUAL INDEPENDENCE



- Intellectual autonomy
- Autonomy on deciding the research agenda, methods, and actions an organisation undertakes
- Independent voice based on research. This does not mean that they are neutral
- Signals the trustworthiness of a think tank, understood as its capacity and willingness to make independent recommendations. In summary that they will provide frank advice guided by objective results.
- Important not only to be but to be seen as...

Transparency



- Publicly disclosing funding sources, agenda, affiliations, partnerships, and conflicts of interests
- Obscuring or not sharing funding sources, affiliations, or conflicts of interest might pass until discovered but, if found, it can cast doubts over the motives of a think tank and hinder its credibility.
- Transparency signals commitment to intellectual independence, integrity, and research quality, and respect for democratic norms

Credentials and authority



- Collected expertise and qualifications that a think tank and its staff have
- Recognised authority in a given subject increases the changes a think tank will be consulted on it and provides social validation.
- Credentials are common heuristics
- In a study policymakers frequently linked the good reputation (of a researcher) with being part of a reputable organisation, and with having degrees from prestigious universities or nstitutes (or having worked for one).
- Revolving door, can be good or bad

Communications and visibility



- Communications and visibility include all the different ways in which a think tank, its staff, researchers and board, present themselves to the public
- Media exposure increases the visibility and respectability of researchers (called more often by policymakers). Proxy to identify expertise...but could also make them a threat.

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- Social media pieces affect credibility; the recency of tweets affected the assessment of credibility of the organisation, a good website also signals credibility despite the content

Research quality



- Following research guidelines to produce policy relevant research in which the quality is assured
- Safeguard against criticism
- Stone (2007) “the worst fate for a think tank is to be seen as delivering unreliable or sloppy analysis” which gives issues of quality and rigour the utmost importance

Ideology and values



- Ideology and values is understood as the set of ideas, ideals, and doctrines that guide an individual or an organisation.
- Strongly ideological think tanks (sources) have less credibility for policymakers than think tanks who have a more neutral stance, which in turn have less than purely academic organisations

Current context



- Context functions differently than all the other factors. It frames the assessment and gives (or takes away) prominence to some factors. It can shift importance assigned to a factor or even change their assessment



THE TRANSPARIFY THINK TANK INTEGRITY CHECK

Transparify

- Transparify provides ratings of the financial transparency of major think tanks
- In early 2017, Transparify conducted a workshop for thinktankers on how to manage reputational risks. Based on that workshop this tool was created. Think Tank Integrity check

Instructions

- In groups of 4 answer the questions in [this](#) form
- In groups please review each statement and decide if “**Yes, this is OK**” or “**No, this is unacceptable**”. For each case, try to address the following key questions:
 - Would you agree to do this – or not?
 - Could this compromise your organization’s intellectual independence and integrity?
 - What systems, safeguards and processes could you have in place to mitigate, monitor and manage all associated risks?

Instructions

- You need to reach a decision as a group.
- Do as many as you can (but you don't have to do all of them)
- Read and register your answers in this form (save answers when you finish)
- If you have doubts, think would you need to do or know to make it ok
- When we finish we will review and comment on the results (and discussion) in a group plenary.



Your answers

