
Director

Strategic Communications and Public Affairs

Position Description

Who We Are

Established in 2005, Harbage Consulting is a mission-driven national health policy and communications consulting firm with deep policy, operational and outreach expertise in public programs. We help our clients navigate, develop and implement a wide range of health policies related to Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Medicare, and the Health Insurance Marketplace. Our clients span state Medicaid agencies, county/local health services departments, state and national health care foundations, consumer advocacy organizations, hospitals, health systems, trade associations, and labor unions. While the core of our firm's work has historically been in California, we have recently been involved in projects in a number of other states including Alaska, Colorado, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, New York, West Virginia, Virginia, and Washington state.

Our firm is rooted in a commitment to improving and strengthening the health care delivery system. We pride ourselves on our relationship-driven approach to customer service, our ability to adapt to changing landscapes, and our innovative spirit. Our mission is to promote access to affordable, comprehensive, high quality health coverage and care and we pursue clients that enable our firm to stay true to that mission.

Position Description

Harbage Consulting offers a mission-driven, fast-paced environment focused on helping a range of clients improve the health care safety net. Many of our projects involve a combination of policy analysis, program implementation, stakeholder engagement, and communications. The Strategic Communications and Public Affairs Director will play a key role in providing strategic communications strategy and policy integration, stakeholder and partner engagement, media strategy, and public affairs support to multiple teams and clients across the firm.

Key to success in this position is the ability to ensure clear communication and strong project management while working with our firm's internal teams, our client contacts, subcontractors and vendors, community partners and many stakeholders. The Director will effectively apply project management skills so that multiple and concurrent plans are implemented that meet high quality standards and deliver results on time and on budget. The Director will serve as a key client contact on projects and help manage a team of junior staff.

This position requires a full understanding of digital practices and experience designing and implementing online outreach, as well as education and marketing campaigns that engage and activate our audiences. The Director will be skilled in website design, search engine optimization, goal setting, measurement and reporting on performance, trends and key social indicators. A high degree of familiarity with tools used to adjust methodology and resource allocation also is required. Director must have keen ability to identify developing stories and social media conversations on issues relevant to our work

This position also requires strong copywriting and editing skills with the ability to apply those skills across a wide range of deliverables, from key messaging and social media to speeches, op-eds, training documents and partner collateral materials.

The Director also will play a key role in supporting the firm's communications and marketing efforts, including leading firm branding and executive visibility campaigns, This position reports to the Vice President, Strategic Communications and Public Affairs.

Required Skills include:

Staff and Project Management and Implementation: The incumbent must have strong organizational and interpersonal communication skills. and the ability to manage multiple, complex projects at the same time, providing direction to matrixed teams of communicators, policy experts, outside vendors and contractors. They will effectively engage in firm-wide activities such as staff meetings, policy team meetings, and annual company retreats. They will have both project and staff management skills.

Health Policy and Program Skills: The ideal candidate is a creative, critical thinker who knows how to tell a good story, has a passion for exploring and sharing digital media, and harbors a strong affinity for health, data and the Harbage Consulting mission. Applicants must have a working understanding of health policy, California's health care system and key stakeholders. The ideal candidate does not need to be a policy expert, but must have foundational knowledge about California's health care system to communicate effectively about system reforms.

Strategic Communications and Public Affairs: The incumbent will bring innovative thinking, strategic counsel and problem-solving approaches to benefit the work of our firm and the goals of our clients. The Director must be able to develop and implement comprehensive and integrated strategic communications and public affairs strategies that achieve client goals and

drive measurable results mutually established between the client and the Harbage consulting team. S/he follows policy and political developments that affect our clients and firm and is a thought partner, confident and comfortable meeting with and providing counsel to clients, including Administration officials, agency leaders, representatives from the Legislature, nonprofit organizations, associations, and business entities.

Stakeholder Engagement and Mobilization: The Director must work effectively to build relationships with clients, partners and external stakeholders. S/he will bring political experience and acumen with the ability to advance coalition-building activities. While Harbage Consulting does not engage in lobbying or advocacy, we help our clients navigate within political and public environments. The incumbent will lead meetings with executives and senior officials and effectively represent our work with Administration officials, agency leaders, representatives from the Legislature and local governments, nonprofit organizations, associations and business entities. The Director will lead strategic planning and implementation for significant statewide, multi-faceted system reform projects, ensuring we gain input from, and work collaboratively with, our many partners and stakeholders.

Communications Expertise: The incumbent must effectively translate complex policy and programmatic information into easy-to-understand messages and FAQs tailored to multiple audiences and help identify and execute appropriate strategies for delivering those messages across multiple paid, earned, shared, and owned media platforms. This will require strong, persuasive and creative copywriting and editing skills applied to communications plans and toolkits, digital and social media, strategy memos, fact sheets and other collateral materials – all under tight deadlines and with strict reporting requirements. Experience in special events management, speaker’s bureau development, and executive visibility are preferred.

Social and Digital Media Expertise: The ideal candidate must have experience developing and implementing operational plans to disseminate and amplify client voices through online education, awareness, and paid advertising. Competence in building compelling social media campaigns is a must. This will include creating editorial calendars, strategies for effective comment moderation and response, and scheduling and promoting content through multiple digital media channels.

Media Relations Strategist: The Director is a savvy media strategist experienced in developing integrated owned and earned media campaigns that include website design, organic social, paid digital, as well as traditional, trade and specialty media identification and outreach.

Location

This position is located at Harbage Consulting's headquarters in Sacramento, California.

Required Qualifications

Must have:

- At least 10 years of experience in communications, public affairs, marketing, or a related field
- Bachelor's or Master's degree in Communications, Journalism, Public Affairs, Political Science, Public Policy or a related field
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Strong research and persuasive writing abilities
- Extensive experience building and executing a digital marketing and social media editorial plan
- Experience working with senior management and junior staff, and operating in and managing matrixed teams, including other members of the firm and outside vendors and contractors
- Effective project management skills including a strong work ethic, attention to detail, time management, ability to prioritize, critical thinking, problem solving, adaptability, willingness to learn, and a proactive work style
- Supervisory and team-building experience
- Ability to work independently to drive toward client and firm success
- Ability to anticipate firm and client needs and recommend and implement responses
- Demonstrated experience with the Microsoft Office Suite
- An interest in public policy and politics
- A commitment to making health care more affordable and accessible by improving access to health coverage, quality of care, and promoting positive change to the health care system.

Must be:

- A quick study
- A team player with a positive attitude
- Able to quickly adjust to changing client needs, reprioritizing and triaging work as needed
- Excited to work with a team of health care thought leaders who are driving meaningful system change
- Highly reliable and able to manage concurrent, multiple assignments of various priority

and duration

- Able to develop positive working relationships with various kinds of stakeholders, including within state and local government, hospitals, advocacy groups and health plans as well as providers, consumers, subcontractors, local partners, and other stakeholders

Preference will be given to those who have:

- Experience in a health care policy and communications capacity
- Marketing, public relations or public affairs agency experience
- Knowledge of behavioral health and/or Medicaid policy issues
- Language skills such as Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Russian

Compensation

- Competitive salary commensurate with experience
- Comprehensive benefit package and 401(k)

To Apply

Please submit the following documents to careers@harbageconsulting.com with the subject line "Director":

- Resume
- In lieu of a cover letter, please submit a statement on why you care about improving access to health care and improving the health care delivery system (limited to 250 words)
- Three professional references who are willing to be contacted, include phone numbers and email addresses