



Ilene V. Smith, MS, RD

Founder and Principal

I ON FOOD

Contributing author:

Chapter 37: “Market Products, Programs, and Messages to Maximize Response”

For the past 20-plus years, Ilene has combined her expertise, knowledge and skills in food, nutrition and public relations to create game-changing communications strategies for leading companies and organizations in the food industry. Among the companies she has counseled are McDonald’s, Frito-Lay, Tropicana, Quaker, Kellogg, Wendy’s, the Almond Board of California, Pfizer Consumer Healthcare and ConAgra. As a senior counselor, she has worked with companies to shift corporate reputation, build brand stories, deliver influencer support and endorsement and drive business results. She has overseen the execution of major media events, scientific symposia, brand and product launches, and client news bureaus. As a former journalist, she understands how to craft client stories that resonate with desired audiences, whether they are consumers, consumer media, health professionals or influencers, and to develop media strategies that deliver results that meet client objectives. She is widely considered to be a thought leader in the field of nutrition communications and is asked to speak on the topic at industry conferences and to write articles for professional publications.

What led you to contribute your time and expertise to writing *Communicating Nutrition*?

Communications has always been at the center of my professional and personal life. As someone who loved to write, I got my first degree in Journalism and Mass Communications and worked as a journalist for eight years before pursuing my career in dietetics. Once I became a dietitian, I realized that I would never leave my communications background behind. I was excited to write a chapter for *Communicating Nutrition* because I wanted to be part of something that would instill the same passion for communicating among up-in-coming dietitians who may never have envisioned the role it would play in their careers. Being an effective communicator is essential no matter what you do in life and building those skills early on will lay your foundation for a lifetime.

What is one piece of advice you would like to share with current and future nutrition communicators?

Learn to write. We may be in the era of short-form communications but that makes it all the more important to be as impactful as you can in 140 characters or less. Learn grammar. Learn punctuation. Read and learn to spot those who are excellent writers and read them more often. Practice the art. Step out of your comfort zone.

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