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From: Navigator Research  
To: Interested Parties  
Re: Do's and Don'ts of Communicating about the Trump Administration's Tariffs  
Date: February 1, 2025

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Rising costs were one of the top concerns for Americans in the [2024 election](#) and [remains one of their top concerns](#). The Trump Administration is implementing a new tariffs regime — imposing a 25% tariff on goods coming to the U.S. from Canada and Mexico and a 10% tariff on those from China. These countries are the U.S's three largest trading partners, each supplying billions of dollars worth of imported goods every year.

And while costs remain one of Americans' top issues, we don't need to convince them that tariffs will only raise their costs further: 57% of Americans believe tariffs will result in costs going up, compared to only 17% who think tariffs will reduce costs. This is a critical opportunity to remind the American people that instead of delivering on the cost cutting measures he promised voters, President Trump is introducing policies that will harm American consumers and businesses—causing their everyday costs to rise.

Navigator's findings reveal three critical steps to communicating about these tariffs.

Step 1: Reinforce Americans' top concern, and a belief Americans already hold: These tariffs will increase costs on everything we buy.

Step 2: Forcefully reject the framing from supporters of tariffs that this is about creating leverage over other countries. If tariffs are framed as an increase in the price of everyday items, the public opposes it (-28). If the same policy is allowed to be described as a way to force other countries into better negotiation, the public can support (+40).

Step 3: Don't let them win on manufacturing. While Americans rightly believe tariffs will hurt jobs and businesses, they do believe it could help spur manufacturing—so we have to make clear that it won't.

| ✔ DO...   | ✖ DON'T...   |
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| Tell the story of how tariffs will drive costs increases on everyday goods, hurting the middle class and working families the most. | Let Trump frame this as part of his plan to penalize foreign countries and create leverage to force concessions from them. |
| Clearly make the case that these tariffs are more chaos from the Trump administration   | Assume arguments about cost increases live in a vacuum.  |

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| and provide evidence-based explanations that tariffs will not bring back manufacturing.                               |  |
| Talk about the impact on everyday families from costs going up.   | Overfocus on the nuances of international trade or macroeconomics. This is about people, not trade wars or America's global competitiveness. |
| Define the tariffs as a NEW tax/cost on almost everything we buy.   | Allow the tariffs to be defined as more of the same or a continuation of 2016 Trump administration policy.                                   |
| Highlight how tariffs are the wrong answer to raise revenue, but ending tax breaks for billionaires is the right one. | Let tariffs be the "answer" for how to generate revenue and pay for government spending.   |