Bonus Lessons Your Communicator Wants to Tell You

1. Finalize your text BEFORE giving it to me.
2. Brand rules aren't just there to quash creativity. They are to bring uniformity and professionalism to our communication.
3. Respect deadlines. Your inability to plan cannot consistently make your work my emergency.
4. If you've liked your organization's Facebook page, but don't actually like posts when they show up on your feed, you are actually hurting us. Facebook assumes people scroll past because an item is boring.
5. Let me read and proof your stuff. It's not personal; it is really hard for anyone to see their own errors (and that's assuming you'd know you made one).
6. No offense, but your idea isn't going viral, and the media won't cover that.
7. Your document had multiple writers? Great. I don't care whose style you pick, but choose one and use it throughout. (Tip: Changing everything from two spaces to one after a period is much easier find/replace for one to two. Also, some communicators will care about the style so ask them.)
8. A good story is the one you'd share at the dinner table.
9. Yes, it can be hard to describe what you want before you see it. Show me examples of things you like and explain what you do/don't like so we can get a feel for what you want.
10. Read your organization's social media and email communications. I know you're busy, but it is the best way for you to know what we're telling people (and I laugh at you in my head if you ask me to publicize something that I just sent out).
11. Yes, you do need a signed photo release for that, especially if a minor is involved.
12. When editing, please use the "track changes" option in Word and "suggesting" in Google Docs. Otherwise, you are expecting me to spot each change you made.
13. Use a microphone when you are presenting even if you think you speak loud enough. This is about accessibility and fairness.
14. If the media calls, send them to the designated person. Don't talk to them yourselves.
15. Journalist are real people. You don't need to be terrified of them, but you also shouldn't say too much to fill silence. Also, presume "off the record" doesn't exist.
16. No, you can't stick a pop song in your video and expect us to post it. Facebook and YouTube have rules about that.
17. Graphic design is not DYI. If you aren't trained, just stop. Also, don't expect professional graphic designers (even student designers) to do your work for free; it's insulting.
18. Yes, I know how to use a computer, but no, I am not part of the IT staff.