

Risk Communication Slides

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Risk Communication

“A Science-based Approach for
Communicating Effectively in:

- ◆ High-Concern, High Stress
- ◆ Emotionally Charged, or
- ◆ Controversial Situations”

Definition of Risk:

“The probability of loss of
that which we value.”

First Steps

- Anticipate questions and concerns by listening
- Prepare accurate, well crafted, relevant, ethical, consistent, understandable messages
- Practice delivery

Risk Communication Research:

Example: Sound bites

Risk Communication

Sound bite research:

Assumption: national news,
controversial topic

- 7 to 9 seconds (21-27 words, 30 words max.)
- 3 messages
- 9 second knowledge/trust window

Risk Communication:

Overarching Key Messages

- Limited message duration
- Limited message content
- Enhanced knowledge/trust

Key Word Message Map 1			
Message Map			
Stakeholder:		Question/Concern	
Key Message/Fact 1.	Key Message/Fact 2.	Key Message/Fact 3.	
Keywords: Supporting Fact 1.1	Keywords: Supporting Fact 2.1	Keywords: Supporting Fact 3.1	
Keywords: Supporting Fact 1.2	Keywords: Supporting Fact 2.2	Keywords: Supporting Fact 3.2	
Keywords: Supporting Fact 1.3	Keywords: Supporting Fact 2.3	Keywords: Supporting Fact 3.3	

Challenge

“Ethical Communication”

Versus

“Spin”

Spin:

“...making things appear to be that which they are not.”

Risk Communication

Three Primary Goals

- ✦ Increased Knowledge and Understanding
- ✦ Enhanced Trust and Credibility
- ✦ Enhanced Dialogue to Resolve Disagreements

Additional Challenges 1

“There is virtually no correlation between the ranking of hazards by experts and the ranking of those same hazards by the public”

PERCEPTIONS OF RISK (Outrage Factors)

Lower Perceived Risk	Higher Perceived Risk
1. Trustworthy sources	Untrustworthy sources
2. Substantial benefits	Few benefits
3. Voluntary	Involuntary
4. Controllable	Not controllable
5. Fair/equitable	Unfair/inequitable
6. Natural origin	Human origin (man made)
7. Familiar	Unfamiliar/exotic
8. Not dreaded	Dreaded
9. Certain	Uncertain
10. Children not as victims	Children as victims

PERCEPTION OF RISK (Outrage) (cont...)

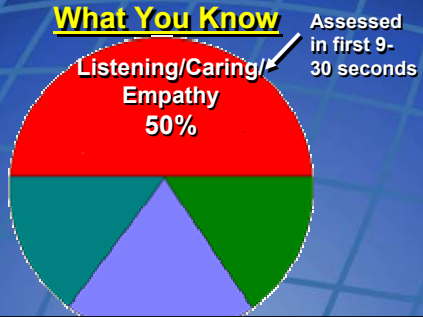
Lower Perceived Risk	Higher Perceived Risk
11. Not memorable	Memorable
12. Moral/ethical	Immoral/unethical
13. Clear non-verbal message	Mixed non-verbal message
14. Responsive	Unresponsive
15. Random/scattered	Catastrophic
16. Little media attention	Much media attention
17. Victims statistical	Victims identifiable
18. Immediate effects	Delayed effects
19. Effect reversible	Effect irreversible
20. Scientifically well	Non scientifically well

Risk Perception (Outrage) Factors

Amplification Weights

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Trust.....	2000
Control.....	1000
Benefits	1000

Additional Challenge 2
In High Concern Situations, People Want to Know That You Care Before They Care

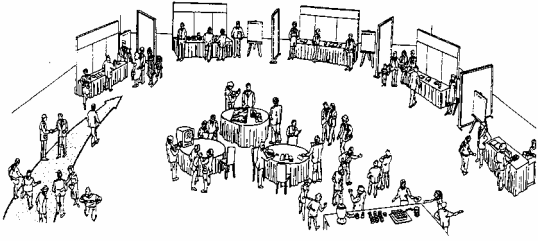


Additional Challenges 3

1 N = 3 P

One negative equals three positives

Public Exhibit and Discussion
(Poster Exhibits / Public Availability Session)



Risk Communication

Sound Bite Construction Exercise

Definition of Risk:

“The probability of loss of that which we value.”

Risk Communication

Part of everyday life:

- ✦ at work
- ✦ at home
- ✦ in the community

At Work: Job Interview Questions

- Why are you the best candidate?
- What are your greatest weaknesses?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?

Values at Risk

- Safety
- Security
- Economic
- Health
- Quality of Life
- etc.

First Steps

- Identify key audiences and stakeholders.
- Anticipate questions and concerns
- Prepare accurate, well crafted, well delivered messages

First Steps

- What are the three most important things you would like your audience to know
- What are the three most important things your audience would like to know
- What are the three most important things your audience is most likely to get wrong unless they are emphasized

Examples

Message Map Stakeholder: Question/Concern			
Key Message/Fact <u>1.</u>	Key Message/Fact <u>2.</u>	Key Message/Fact <u>3.</u>	
Keywords: Supporting Fact 1.1	Keywords: Supporting Fact 2.1	Keywords: Supporting Fact 3.1	
Keywords: Supporting Fact 1.2	Keywords: Supporting Fact 2.2	Keywords: Supporting Fact 3.2	
Keywords: Supporting Fact 1.3	Keywords: Supporting Fact 2.3	Keywords: Supporting Fact 3.3	

Smallpox Questions

- How contagious is smallpox?
- Is there enough vaccine?
- What are the signs and symptoms of smallpox?

Question: How contagious is smallpox?

- ✦ Key Message 1: Spreads slowly
- ✦ Key Message 2: Time to contact
- ✦ Key Message 3: Vaccination

Smallpox Questions: CDC Message Mapping Project

- ✦ Over 60 draft maps prepared
- ✦ Sources for questions
- ✦ Focus group testing

Message Mapping

Follow-up Questions

Stakeholder: Construction Workers Question/Concern/Issue: <i>Worker Exposure to silica dust</i>					
Key Message/Fact 1. Keywords: Personal protection		Key Message/Fact 2. Keywords: Health screening / monitoring		Key Message/Fact 3. Keywords: Engineering / administrative controls	
Keywords: Supporting Fact 1.1	Environment / equipment	Keywords: Supporting Fact 2.1	Baseline physical exams	Keywords: Supporting Fact 3.1	Dust source reduction
Keywords: Supporting Fact 1.2	Hazard communication	Keywords: Supporting Fact 2.2	Periodic screening / surveillance	Keywords: Supporting Fact 3.2	Dust suppression
Keywords: Supporting Fact 1.3	Education / awareness program	Keywords: Supporting Fact 2.3	Workplace air monitoring	Keywords: Supporting Fact 3.3	Limited exposure times

Risk Communication

Origins of the Field

Risk Communication

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- ◆ Emotionally Charged, , or
- ◆ Controversial Situations”

Risk Communication

Origins of the Field

- Deep Historical Roots
 - Mental Noise Theory
 - Trust Determination Theory
- More Recent Roots
 - Risk Perception Theory

Risk Communication

“...in high concern...”

High Concern
Low Trust
(essential)

High Concern
High Trust
(essential)

Low Concern
Low Trust
(recommended)

Low Concern
High Trust
(optional)

Risk Communication

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Risk Communication

Origins of the Field

- Deep Roots
 - Mental Noise Theory
 - Trust Determination Theory
-

Mental Noise Theory

When people are stressed or upset, they have difficulty :

- hearing information
- understanding information
- remembering information

Mental Noise Theory: Verbal Messages Implications -- Core

- Limited time (e.g., attention span)
- Limited content (e.g., 3 messages)
- Clear (e.g., 6th grade)

Mental Noise Theory: Verbal Message Implications -- Add-Ons

- Repetition (e.g., internal and external)
- Prioritized (e.g., first and last)
- Visuals (graphics, demos)
- 1N = 3P

Mental Noise Theory: Non-Verbal Messages

- ✦ Provides up to 50-75% of message content
- ✦ Noticed intensely and negatively interpreted
- ✦ Overrides verbal communication

Risk Communication

Origins of the Field

- Deep Roots
 - Mental Noise Theory
 - Trust Determination Theory
-

Trust Determination Theory

When people are stressed or upset, they often distrust that others are:

- listening, caring, empathy
- honest, open
- competent, expert

Trust Determination Theory

Mirroring

Question: Genetically Modified Food and Allergies

Key Message 1: Tested

Key Message 2: Conventional Foods

Key Message 3: Identify Gene

Risk Communication

Origins of the Field

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 - Risk Perception Theory

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Higher Perceived Risk

- Memorable
- Immoral/unethical
- Mixed non-verbal message
- Unresponsive
- Catastrophic
- Much media attention
- Victims identifiable
- Delayed effects
- Effect irreversible
- Non scientifically well understood

Risk Perception (Outrage) Factors

Amplification Weights

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Trust.....	2000
Control.....	1000
Fairness	500

Control Factors

- ✦ Choice
- ✦ Voice
- ✦ Knowledge

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