

Core Slides

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Risk and Crisis Communication: Presentation Goals

- (1) Share key concepts/best practices**
- (2) Evaluate case studies against these key concepts**
- (3) Identify challenges**

Speed at Which Risk and Crisis Information Flows Through the Media

- **20 years ago: 24 hours**
- **10 years ago: 4 hours**
- **Today (2010): 4 minutes**

Definition

Risk: “a threat of loss, **real or perceived**, to that which we value.”

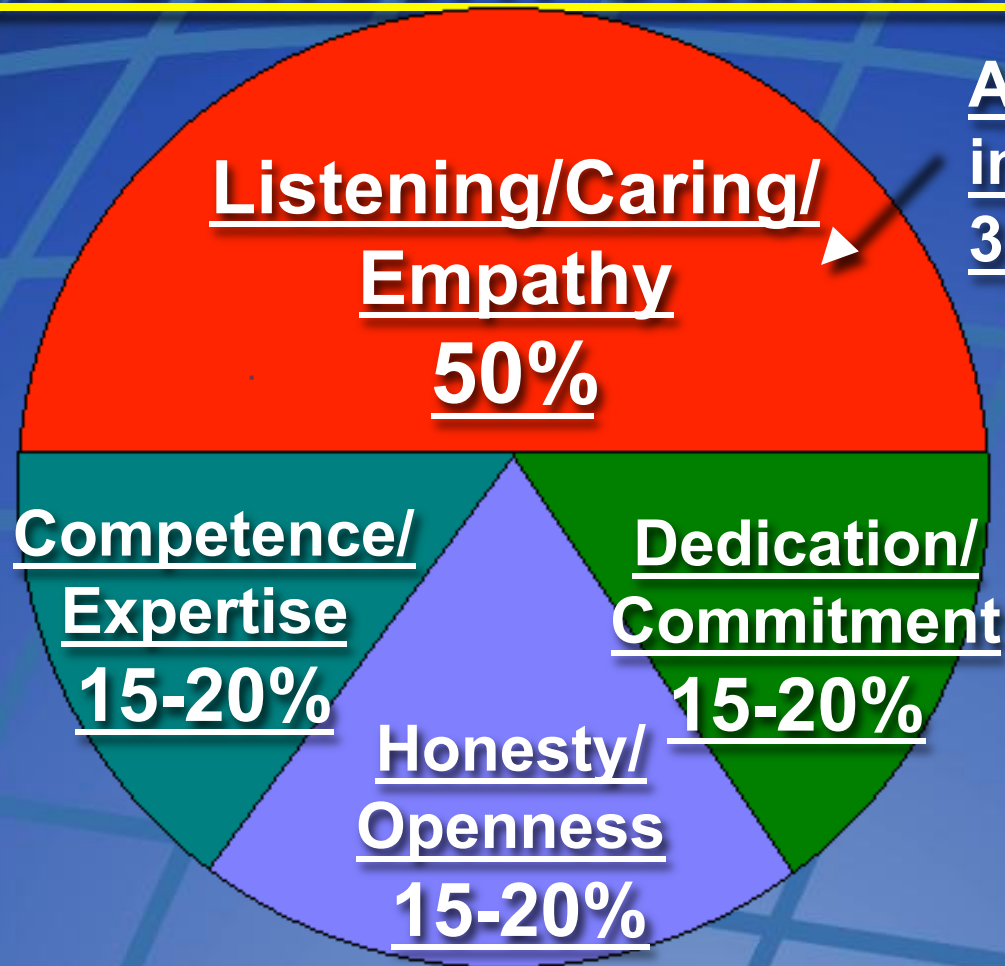
Risk Communication: “the exchange of information about risks.”

Risks = “threats to that which we value”

- Threats produce stress
- Stress produces emotion
- Stress and emotion produce **mental noise**

Mental noise radically affects the way people process information

Trust Factors In High Concern Situations



Assessed
in first
30 seconds

Risk Communication Dynamics: Key Concepts

When people are stressed or anxious, they typically:

- ...have difficulty, hearing, understanding, and remembering information (Rule of 3; 27/9/3)
- ...want to know that you care before they care what you know (CCO)
- ...focus most on what they hear first and last (Primacy/Recency)

Risk Communication: Key Concepts – cont.

When people are stressed or concerned:

- ...they focus much more on negative information than positive information.
- ...they process information at well below their education level.
- ...they actively seek out sources of credible information.

Risk and Crisis Communication: Subfields

- **Emergency and Disaster Risk Communication**
- Environmental Risk Communication
- Health and Safety Risk Communication
- Organizational Change Risk Communication
- Economic Risk Communication
- Political Risk Communication
- **Marital/Relationship Risk Communication**

Marital Risk Communication Exercise

According to research, there are seven major topics of marital and family arguments. The seven are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

Marital Risk Communication Exercise

The seven major topics of marital and family argument or dispute are:

- 1. Money**
- 2. Children**
- 3. Work versus Family**
- 4. In-laws**
- 5. Division of Labor at Home**
- 6. Intimacy/Sex**
- 7. Communication**

Key Challenges for Utility CEOs

- **Rising Rates**
- **Water Supply**
- **Infrastructure**
- **Regulations**
- **Human resources**
- **Increased Political Polarization**
- **Other (?)**

Key Challenges for Utility CEOs

- **Rising Rates** – declining consumption, declining supply, with conservation measures, for infrastructure needs (for growth and repair/replacement)
- **Water Supply** – public acceptance of recycled and reclaimed water, cost of new sources (desalination, etc.), water rights issues
- **Infrastructure** – explaining need, funding costs, incurring bond debt

Key Challenges for Utility CEOs

- **Regulations** – explaining cost/benefit considerations
- **Human resources** -- knowledge drain/retirements
- **Increased Political Polarization** – federal, state and local; general opposition to any government spending or revenue increases (water is free/a basic right)

Risk Communication:

Key Messages

- Risk communication is a science-based discipline
- High concern situations change the rules of communication
- The key to risk communication success is anticipation, preparation, and practice

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Risk Communication Literature

- **8000 Articles in Peer Reviewed Scientific Journals**
- **2000 Books**
- **Reviews of the Literature by Major Scientific Organizations (e.g., National Academy of Sciences)**

Risk Communication Literature: Resource

www.riskcomm.org/new

“Risk and Crisis Communication: Best Practices for Government Agencies and Other Organizations”

Web only

Booz Allen, 2012

Risk Communication Literature: Example

Dr. R. Hyer and Dr. V. Covello

“Effective Media Communication During Public Health Emergencies:

A World Health Organization Handbook”

World Health Organization, United Nations:
Geneva, April 2007

(www.amazon.com or www.who.int/bookorders)

Or www.riskcomm.org

Covello, V., (2012), “Guidance on Developing Effective Radiological Risk Communication Messages”

Covello, V. (2012), "Developing an Emergency Risk Communication/Joint Information Center Plan for a Radiological Emergency”

**Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Or**

www.riskcomm.org

Recent Risk Communication Literature: Water Issues

1. “Need to Know: Anticipating the Public’s Questions during a Water Emergency”

EPA (2012)

Authors: S. Minamyer, et al.

2. “Effective Risk and Crisis Communication During Water Security Emergencies”

EPA (2007)

Author: V. Covello et al.

Risk Communication Literature

- J. Lehrer, “*How We Decide: Unexpected Discoveries of Neuroscience*””
- M. Gladwell, “*Blink*”
- P. Ekman, “*Emotions Revealed*” (see also P. Ekman, “*Telling Lies: Clues to Deception*”)

Risk Communication Literature: Example

“The Magic Number Seven, Plus or Minus Two: Some Limits on Our Capacity for Processing Information”

George A. Miller (Department of Psychology, Princeton University)

***The Psychological Review*, 1956, vol. 63, pp. 81-97**

Tools and Templates

1. Rule of 3
2. 27/9/3
3. Primacy/Recency
4. 1N=3P
5. CCO

Tools and Templates

1. **Rule of 3** (Everything in Threes)
2. **27/9/3** (Sound bites: no more than 27 words)
3. **Primacy/Recency** (First and last)
4. **1N=3P** (1 Negative equals three positives)
5. **CCO** (Compassion, Conviction, Optimism)

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APP (Anticipation, Preparation, Practice)



APP

**Anticipate
Prepare
Practice**



Mayor Giuliani, 9/11

“The number of casualties is more than any of us can bare ultimately.”

Message Map

Stakeholder:
Question or Concern:

Key Message 1

9 words on
average

Key Message 2

9 words on
average

Key Message 3

9 words on
average

—

Message Map

Area of Concern

Key Message 1

Key Message 2

Key Message 3

SF1

SF1

SF1

SF2

SF2

SF2

SF3

SF3

SF3

West Nile Virus Map:

Question: What can people do to protect themselves from West Nile Virus?

Message
Map:
Haiti, 2011

Key Message

“Remove Standing Water”

Key Message

“Wear Protective Clothing”

Key Message

“Use Insect Repellent”

1.1

Puddles

2.1

Long Sleeves

3.1

DEET

1.2

Flower Pots/
Bird Baths/
Old Tires

2.2

Long Pants

3.2

23%

1.3

Cup of Water

2.3

Dusk and
Dawn

3.3

Medical
Research

Power Point Briefings

- 3 bullets per slide

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- 10
- 20
- 30

Power Point Briefings: High Concern Issues

- 3 bullets per slide

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- 10 slides (maximum)
- 20 minutes (maximum)
- 30 words per slide (maximum)

10/20/30 Risk Communication Model

Slide 1. Empathy/Caring/Listening

Slide 2. Three Key Messages (max. 27 words)

Slide 3. Key Message 1 with support

Slide 4. Key Message 2 with support

Slide 5. Key Message 3 with support

Slide 6. Repeat Three Key Messages

Slide 7. Next Steps/Future Actions

Slides 8-10. Visuals

Stakeholder Predictability

“For most high stress situations, over 95 percent of stakeholder concerns and questions can be predicted in advance.”

- **Information Questions**
 - **Challenge Questions (e.g., allegations, accusations, “what if” questions, “guarantee” questions, “yes/no” questions)**
- **Strange/Dumb Questions**

Stakeholder Predictability

- **“77 Most Frequently Asked Questions by Journalists in a Disaster”**

Stakeholder Predictability

**“50 Most Frequently Asked Questions
by Terminally Ill Patients”**

Stakeholder Predictability

- “65 Most Frequently Asked Questions about Bird Flu and Pandemic Influenza” (www.pandemicflu.gov)
- “108 Most Frequently Asked Questions at Environmental Clean Up Sites” (www.riskcomm.org)
- “203 Most Frequently Asked Questions Following a Water Contamination Incident” (www.epa.gov/nhsrc)
- “420 Most Frequently Asked Questions Following a Radiological Incident”

Japanese Risk and Crisis Communication Model

- **Respect for Others**
- **Courage**
- **Teamwork**
-
-
-

Hispanic Risk and Crisis Communication Model

- Family Oriented
- Religiosity
- Traditional Gender Roles
-
-
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CREDIBILITY LADDER: Environmental Health Issues

Most
Credible

Advisory Committees (Community, expert,
etc.)

Professors/Educators

Physicians/Nurses

Professional Health Associations

Pharmacists

Media

Paid Consultants

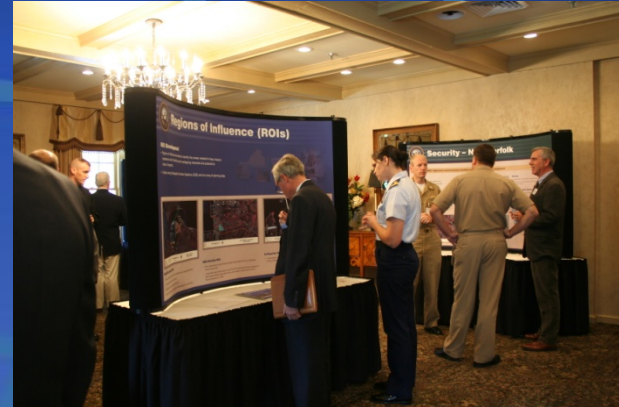
You?

Least
Credible

Types of Public Meetings



Town Hall

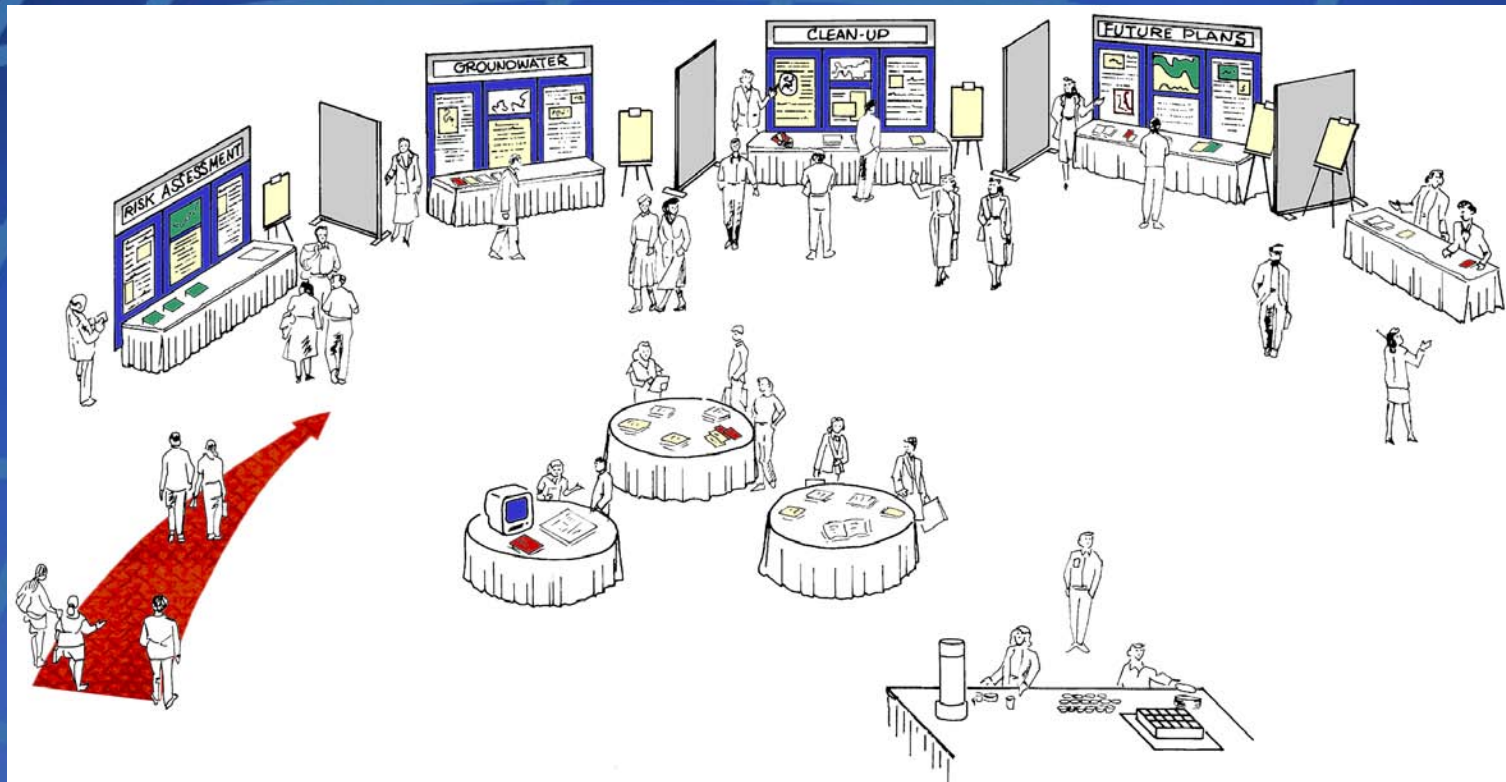


Open House

Town Hall



Open House Meetings



Open House/Forum/Information Exchange



**“If I had all day to cut a large tree,
I would spend most of the day
sharpening my axe.”**

—Abraham Lincoln—

**“It takes me an average of two weeks
to prepare an impromptu speech.”**

—Mark Twain—