



Homeland Defense & Security
Information Analysis Center

HDIAC Homeland Defense & Security Webinar Applying Risk and Crisis Communication Principles to HDIAC Focus Areas

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Department of Defense Information Analysis Centers



Introduction



Technical

- Quantitative
- Objective
- Population
- Macro



Public

- Qualitative
- Subjective
- Community
- Me

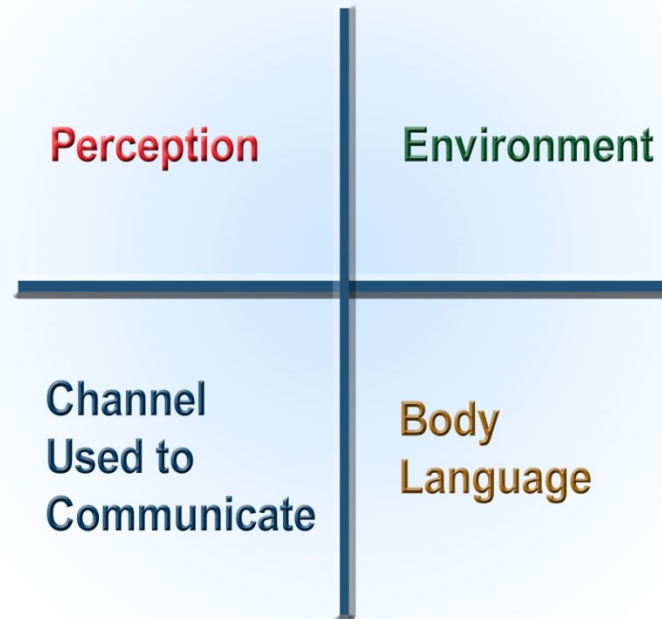
Why Risk & Crisis Communication is Different?



- **Unexpected**
- **High stakes**
- **Urgent**
- **High level of public interest, anxiety, fear, concern**
- **High potential for multi-national/multi-agency involvement**



Barriers to Effective Communication



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- **The public may not react as anticipated**
 - **Potential impacts**
 - Complicated tactical response
 - Greater physical harm for greater numbers of people
 - Higher rate of long-term mental health issues
- **“Behavioral footprint” will outsize physical/medical impact of the event**
- **Lack of assistance for victims**
- **Lack of social support**
- **Stigmatization**
- **Return to normal may not occur**

Theory

Mental noise

Trust determination

Risk perception

Negative dominance

Effect

Blocks communication

Enhances or detracts
from message

Frustration and outrage

Distorts communication

Solution

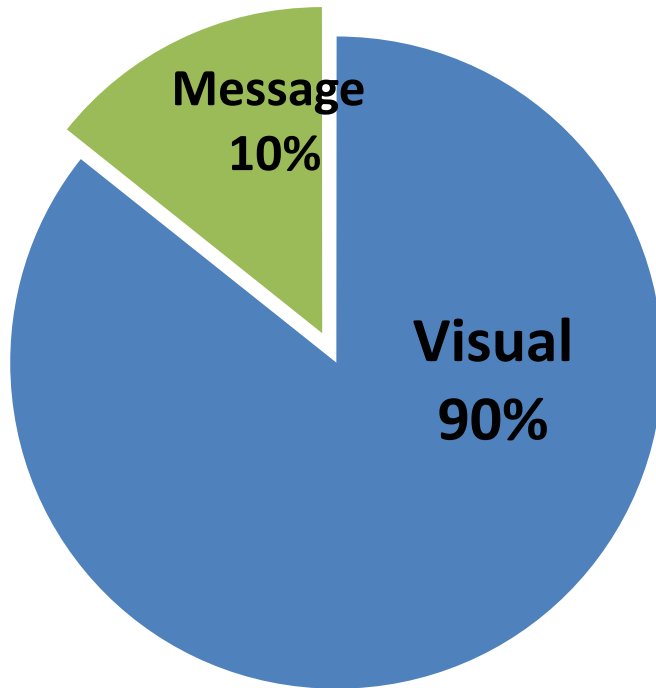
**Use clear,
concise messages &
active listening**

Show that you
care

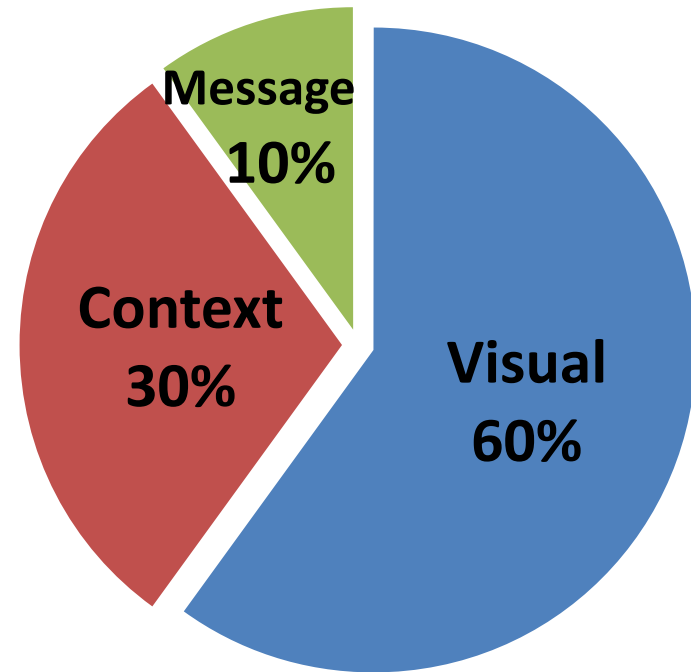
Recognize and
respond to Risk
Perception factors

Develop positive
messages

Risk & Crisis



Typical



- **Risk communication - “preparatory communication”**
 - A science-based communication methodology that prepares the public to accept risk in the event the risk becomes a reality
 - Any purposeful exchange of information about risk or perceptions about risk that informs individuals about the existence, nature, form, severity, or acceptability of risk
 - The probability of losing something of value, such as health, safety, job security, self-esteem, wealth, natural resources or community
 - Communication involving sensitive or controversial issues

Three Risk Questions

What is the issue?

**Why audience should be
concerned about the issue?**

**What/how do you want your key
stakeholders to think/react about
the issue?**

Risk Message Mapping Template



Key Message 1
Why Concern?

Key Message 2
What is issue?

Key Message 3
**How do you want
stakeholders to
think/react?**

Supporting Fact 1

Supporting Fact 1

Supporting Fact 1

Supporting Fact 2

Supporting Fact 2

Supporting Fact 2

Supporting Fact 3

Supporting Fact 3

Supporting Fact 3

- **Crisis Communication – “in the moment communication”**
 - Unique moments that are:
 - A surprise
 - Pose a threat
 - Have a short response time
 - An **unexpected** and **un-routine** event or series of events that create a high levels of **uncertainty** and simultaneously present an organization with both **opportunities** and **threats** to its **high-priority goals**.

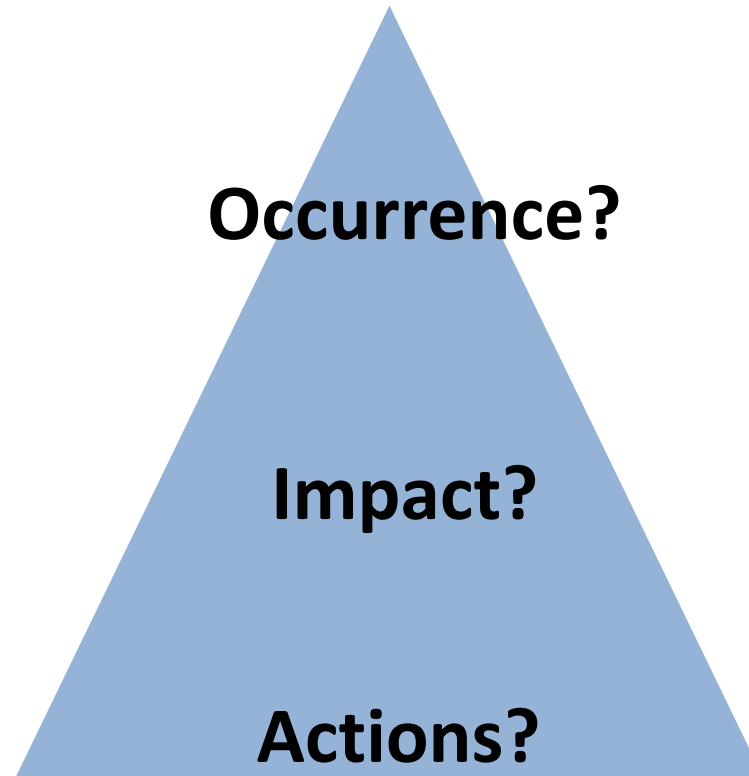
危機

Danger **Opportunity**

“In every crisis lies the seed of opportunity”



Three Crisis Questions



Crisis Message Mapping Template



Key Message 1
Occurrence?

Key Message 2
Impact?

Key Message 3
Actions?

Supporting Fact 1

Supporting Fact 1

Supporting Fact 1

Supporting Fact 2

Supporting Fact 2

Supporting Fact 2

Supporting Fact 3

Supporting Fact 3

Supporting Fact 3

Trust & Credibility



1. People simplify
2. Cling to current beliefs
3. Remember what is seen/previously experienced
 - ❖ **First messages carry more weight**
4. People limit intake of new information
 - ❖ **3-7 bits**



- 1. Mixed messages from multiple experts**
- 2. Information released late**
- 3. Paternalistic attitudes**
- 4. Not countering rumors and myths in real-time**
- 5. Public power struggles and confusion**







Messaging



Concern:

1. Gain wanted facts
2. Empower decision-making
3. Involved as a participant, not spectator
4. Provide watch-guard over resource allocation
5. Recover or preserve well-being and normalcy

Solutions:

1. Execute response and recovery efforts
2. Decrease illness, injury, and deaths
3. Provide action plan
4. Avoid misallocation of limited resources
5. Reduce rumors surrounding recovery

- **Decrease illness, injury, death, and suffering**
- **Assist with response and recovery efforts**
- **Support others (i.e., public, responders, organizations, doctors, advocacy groups, governments, etc.)**
- **Maximize resources**
- **Advise decision-makers**
- **Reduce rumors/misinformation**





Risk & Crisis Messaging must be:

- Simple**
- Timely**
- Accurate**
- Relevant**
- Credible**
- Consistent**

Wrap Up!

1. **Pre-event (risk)**
2. **Event (crisis)**
3. **Post-event (risk/crisis)**
4. **Media**
 - Social
 - Print
 - Electronic
5. **Public education**
6. **Partners**
 - Local, state , federal agencies
 - Public health, law enforcement, fire, EMS, schools, businesses and industry







Crisis Communications & Understanding the Neuroscience Behind Connecting with Audiences

Helio Fred Garcia



Effective Crisis Communication: Moving from Crisis to Opportunity

Ulmer, Sellnow, Seeger
Sage Publications

The Power of Communication: Skills to Build Trust, Inspire Loyalty, and Lead Effectively

Helio Fred Garcia
Pearson Education, Inc. (FT Press)



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