

Risk Communication: **Applications to Non-Emergencies**

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Risk Communication:

Applications to Non-Emergencies

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Key Messages

- **Risk communication is a science based discipline**
- **Risk communication can be used effectively in emergency and non-emergency situations**
- **Risk communication often requires radical changes in the way we communicate**

Risk and Crisis Communication

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

Emergency Applications

- **Disease Outbreaks**
- **Natural Hazards**
- **Bio-Terrorism**

2001

“...the major public health challenges since 9/11 were not just clinical, epidemiological, technical, issues. The major challenges were communication. In fact, as we move into the 21st century, communication may well become the central science of public health practice.” (December, 2001) Edward Baker, MD, MPH, Assistant Surgeon General

Non-Emergency Applications

- **Obesity**
- **Smoking**
- **Vaccinations**
- **Other (e.g., restaurant
Inspections)**

Non-Emergency Applications

Marital Disputes

Marital Disputes

- **Money**
- **Children**
- **Chores**
- **Work versus Family**
- **Extended Family**
- **Sex**
- **Communications**

Research

- **Risk Perceptions**
- **Trust**
- **Attention Span**

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The Risk Perception Model

Public perceptions and decisions about risk are influenced by a wide range of factors, technical facts often being the least important (less than 5%)

Problem:

How to Motivate Change in Non-Emergency Situations?

- **Obesity**
- **Smoking**
- **Restaurant Inspections**

Partial Solution

Use risk perception factors to create:

- moderate stress
- that can be managed
- using $1N = 3P$ plus 1

1N = 3 P Template

1. Express Empathy

2. State Opposite to the Negative

3. P (1)

4. P (2)

5. P (3)

6. P (4)

**7. State How/When to Get
More Credible Information**

PERCEPTIONS OF RISK

(Stress Factors)

Lower Risk/Stress

1. Trustworthy sources
2. Substantial benefits
3. Controllable
4. Voluntary
5. Fair / equitable
6. Natural origin
7. Familiar
8. Not dreaded
9. Certainty
10. Children not victims

Higher Risk/Stress

- Untrustworthy sources
- Few benefits
- Uncontrollable
- Involuntary
- Unfair / inequitable
- Human origin
- Unfamiliar / exotic
- Dreaded
- Uncertainty
- Children as victims

PERCEPTIONS OF RISK

(Stress Factors)

Lower Perceived Risk

11. Not memorable
12. Moral / ethical
13. Clear non-verbal signals
14. Responsive
15. Random / scattered
16. Low media coverage
17. Victims as statistics
18. Immediate effects
19. Effects reversible
20. Understood science

Higher Perceived Risk

- Memorable
- Immoral / unethical
- Mixed non-verbal signals
- Non-responsive
- Catastrophic
- High media coverage
- Victims as people
- Delayed effects
- Effects irreversible
- Misunderstood science

PERCEPTIONS OF RISK

Critical Mass Theory

“3-7 factors from right hand side of risk perception chart must be present to create moderate stress”

PERCEPTIONS OF RISK

Factors

- **Control**
- **Benefits**
- **Fairness**

PERCEPTIONS OF RISK

Factors

- **Control**
- **Benefits**
- **Fairness**

Control

Factors

- **Choice (e.g., voluntariness)**
- **Voice (e.g., meaningful dialogue)**
- **Knowledge**
- **Trust**

Control

Factors

- Choice (e.g., voluntariness)
- Voice (e.g., meaningful dialogue)
- Knowledge
- Trust

Research

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PERCEPTIONS OF RISK

Factors

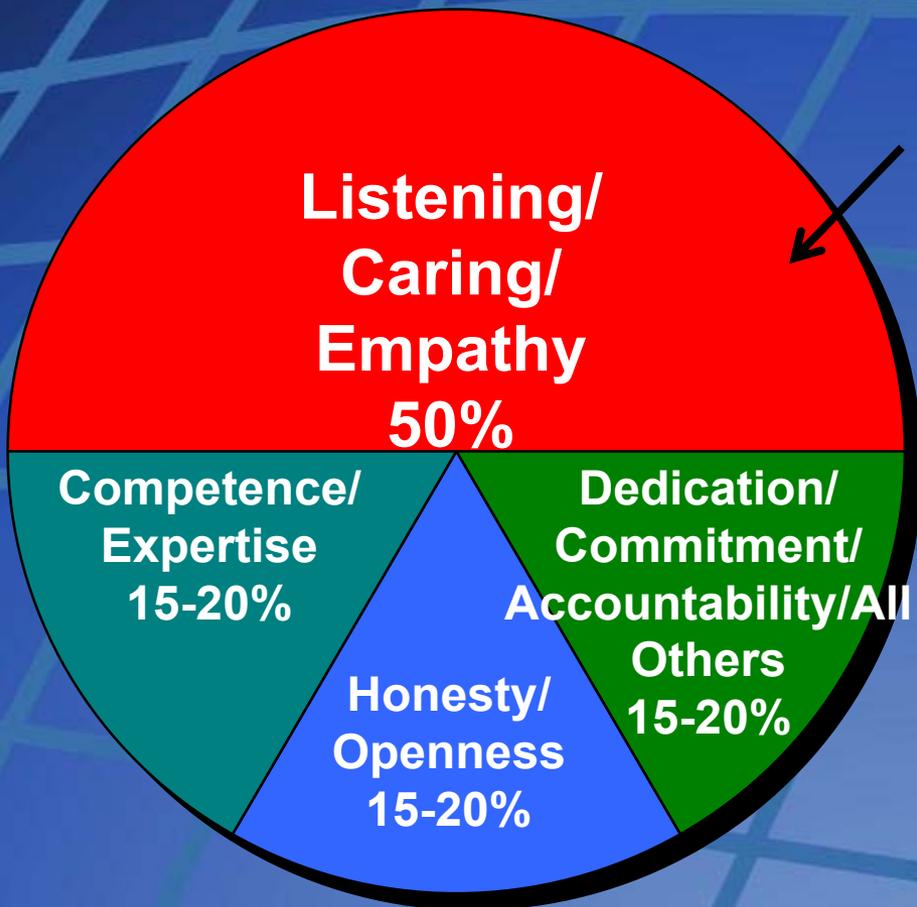
- **Trust**
- **Control**
- **Benefits/Fairness**

TRUST FACTORS

Low Stress Situations



Trust Factors: High Stress Situations



Assessed
in first
30 seconds

Research

- Risk Perceptions
- Trust
- Attention Span

Attention Span

- **Rule of 3**
- **T1/T2 Theory**
- **Visuals**

Attention Span

- **Rule of 3**
- **T1/T2 Theory**
- **Visuals**

Rule of 3

Everything in Threes

- **Three Key Messages**
- **Key Message Repeated Three Times**
- **Each Message Supported by Three Supporting Messages**

Message Map



Message Map
Stakeholder:
Question/Concern

Key

Message/Fact 1.

I came

Key Message/Fact

2.

I saw

Key

Message/Fact 3.

I conquered

Keywords:
Supportin
g Fact 1.1

Long
journe

The journey
was long and
hard.

Keywords:
Supportin
g Fact 2.1

Large
armies

The enemy
armies were
large.

Keywords:
Supportin
g Fact 3.1

Engage

We engaged
them
immediately

Keywords:
Supportin
g Fact 1.2

Heavy
Losses

We suffered
heavy losses
along the
way.

Keywords:
Supportin
g Fact 2.2

Well
armed

They were well
Armed and
equipped.

Keywords:
Supportin
g Fact 3.2

Fought
bravel

Our legions
fought bravely

Keywords:
Supportin
g Fact 1.3

Arrived
safely

Despite the
difficulties, we
arrived safely.

Keywords:
Supportin
g Fact 2.3

Well
positione
d

They were well
positioned.

Keywords:
Supportin
g Fact 3

Defeated
enemy

The enemy is
(totally)
defeated.

Attention Span

- Rule of 3
- **T1/T2 Theory**
- Visuals

T1/T2 Theory



Attention Span

- Rule of 3
- T1/T2 Theory
- **Visuals**

Diversity Issues

- taking turns during conversations
- opening or closing statements
- interrupting others
- uses of silences
- degree of loudness
- signs of attentiveness
- appropriate topics of discourse or conversation

Diversity Issues

- distance between speakers
- uses of humour or laughter
 - times to smile
 - gestures to emphasize points
- uses of story telling and narrative
- length of a presentation, briefing, conversation or speech
- length of time allocated to each speaker

Diversity Issues - continued

--length of time to respond to another's point

--speed of delivery

--sequencing of narrative elements

-- risk perception factors and weights

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