

Risk Communications

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Agenda



1

What is Risk Communication ?

2

What Should I Care ?

3

What are Goals of Risk Communication ?

4

What are Key Concepts ?

5

How Do I Prepare ?

6

What Else Should I Consider ?

"One cannot be prepared for something while secretly believing it will not happen."

Nelson Mandela



"Situations change from time to time ... Life is inconsistent and ever-changing ... We must, therefore, be prepared for unexpected changes coming our way."

His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan



What is Risk Communication?



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

RISK COMMUNICATION



“The exchange of information about risks.”

Why Should I Care?

Is your organization ready now to communicate:

- ❖ Effectively in High Concern, High Stress, or Low Trust Situations?
 - Who communicates to whom? When? How? How often?
 - Who has the decision-making authority? What are the thresholds?
- ❖ Internally to staff and visitors onsite? Offsite?
- ❖ Externally to your stakeholders?
 - Customers
 - Business Partners/Investors
 - Public Authorities/Government Agencies
 - Supply Chain
 - Media

What are Goals of Risk Communication?

- Enhance knowledge and understanding
- Build trust and credibility
- Encourage appropriate attitudes, behaviours and beliefs





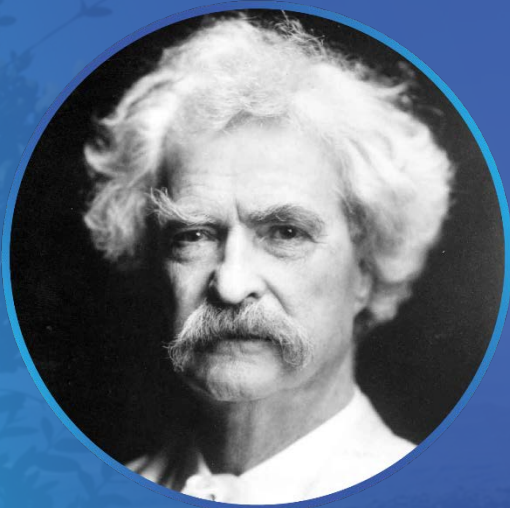
"95 percent of all high concern communication (crisis) work should be done in advance."

Mayor Rudy Giuliani (1995)



"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

Science of Risk Communication

“Five Essential Elements of Immediate and Mid-Term Mass Trauma Intervention: Empirical Evidence”

Psychiatry, 70(4): 2007

Authors: Steven Hobfoll et. al.

Conclusion of Research

Provide people a sense of:

- Hope
- Self- and community efficacy
- Safety
- Calm
- Connectedness

Science of Risk Communication (contd)

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

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

The Psychological Review, 1956, vol. 63, pp. 81–97

Risk Communication: Key Concepts

When people are stressed and concerned, they typically:

1

... want to know that you care before they care what you know

2

... have difficulty hearing, understanding, and remembering information

3

... make rapid decisions about trust that are resistant to change

When people are stressed or concerned

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



When you are stressed or concerned

- Where might you seek additional information?

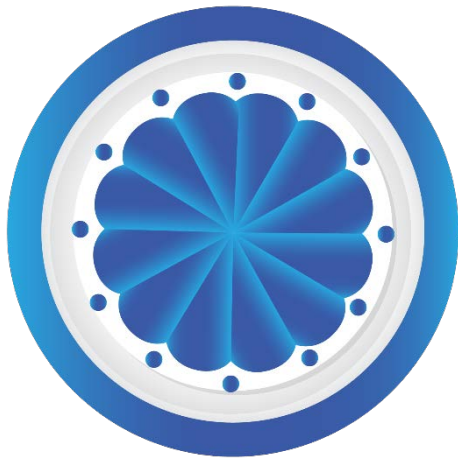


2017 Northwestern University Media Study

- **Mass Media:** Arab nationals are twice as likely as Americans to trust mass media (66 percent, 32 percent)
- **Social Media:** Two-thirds of Arab nationals who are Facebook users get news on that platform (65 percent)
- Two-thirds of Arab nationals trust media from their own country, but only half trust news from other Arab countries (66 percent, 52 percent)

Communication Flow Rate

25 yrs ago



24 hrs

15 yrs ago



4 hrs

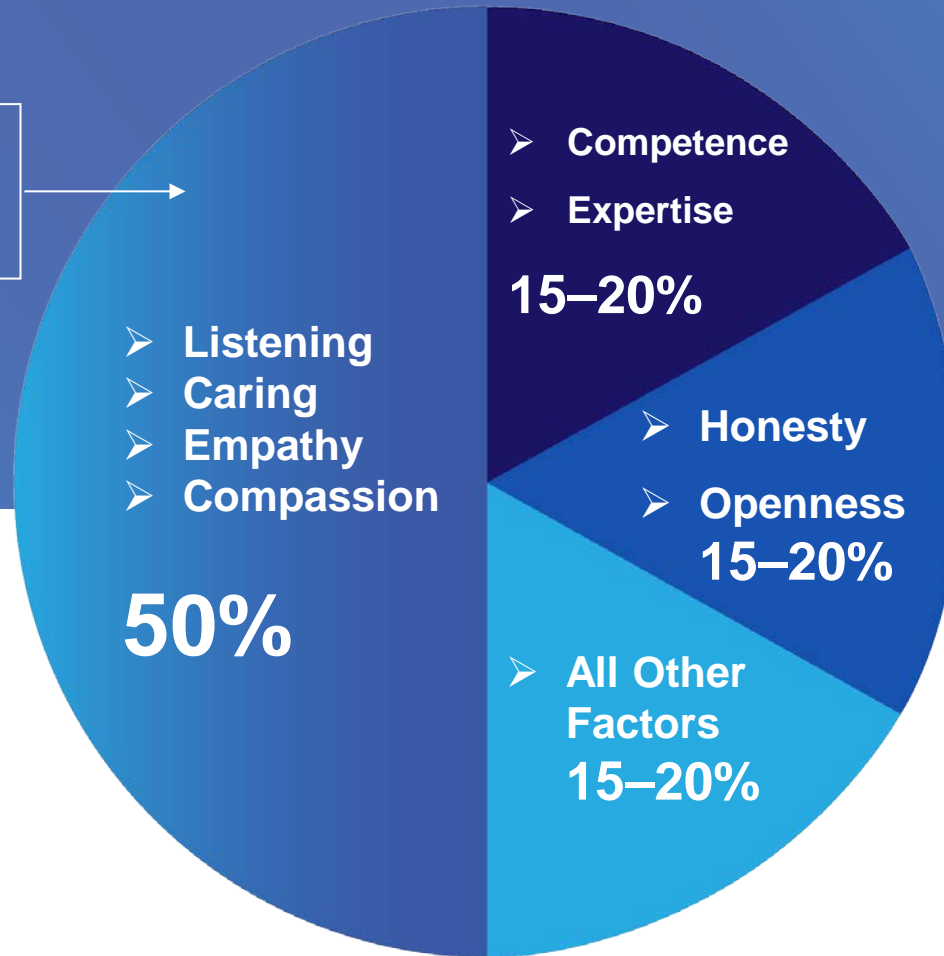
2017



4 min.
or less

People Want To Know That You Care Before They Care What You Know

Assessed in
first 9–30
seconds



Case Study #1



BP Oil Spill



- 11 people killed
- Largest — \$\$\$ manmade disaster in US history
- **BP execs:**
 - Indicted on homicide charges
 - Blamed 3 vendors
- Massive environmental clean-up — wildlife, the land and ocean
- Residents sick
- Fisherman lost their livelihoods

BP Oil Spill (contd)

- CEO Tony Hayward speaks out on the site of the beach



BP Oil Spill (2010): BP CEO Tony Hayward

“I’m sorry. We’re sorry for the massive disruption it has caused their lives. And there is no one who wants this over more than I do. **I’d like my life back.**” (30 May 2010)



Assessment



- What do you think he did right?
- What do you think he did wrong?
- What about his clothes? His “non-verbal” communications facial expression, hand gestures, how he is standing?

Case Study #2 911 Terror Attack



Mayor Giuliani, 9/11

"The number of casualties is more than any of us can bear ultimately."



Assessment



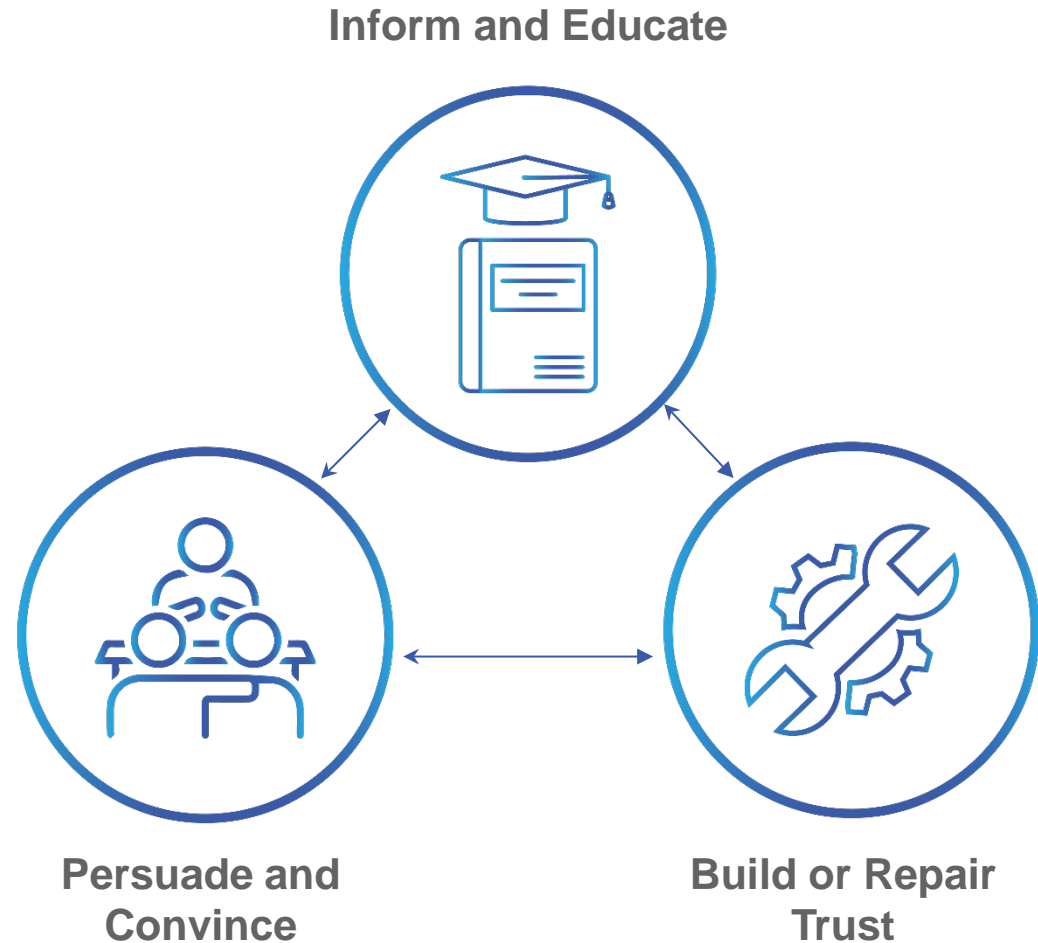
- What do you think he did right?
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Risk Communications Goals

“Most of the concerns and questions of upset or concerned people can be predicted in advance.”

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Mayor Rudolf Giuliani, 1995



How Do I Prepare?



➤ **Develop and Document a Crisis Communications Plan**

- Stakeholders (internal and external)
- Pre-scripted messages for most probable scenarios
 - Use 27/9/3 message map
- Modes of communication

➤ **Test/Exercise Plan**

Seven Step Risk and Crisis Communication Message Development Strategy



1. Identify a risk issue or scenario
2. Identify key stakeholders (audiences)
3. Identify stakeholder questions and concerns
4. Develop key messages using message maps
5. Develop supporting information, including visuals and credible third parties
6. Conduct testing
7. Plan for delivery

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Three Risk and Crisis Communication Challenges



- **Cultural Diversity**
 - Message Timeliness, Coordination, and Consistency
 - Social Media

Cultural Diversity Communication Challenge

- How do we reach segmented target audiences?
- How do we manage the communication expectations of different groups?
- How do we have the **right conversations** with the **right people** at the **right time**?



Any Key Messages for your Communications Team?

- Risk communication is a **science-based discipline**
- High concern/high stress/low trust situations change the rules of communication
- You have 4 minutes to protect your brand reputation
- The key to risk communication success is **Anticipate, Prepare, and Practice**





THANK YOU