The Art of Communication

Communication is not a Science
★ Preacher’s Ass Places! ★
Preacher’s Ass Out Front!
Daily Press

Bishop Scratches Preacher’s Ass
Nun Has Best Ass In Town!
Nun Peddles Ass For Ten Bucks!
“the vacuum created by a failure to communicate will quickly be filled with rumor, misrepresentation, drivel, and poison”

Parkinson’s Second Law

Dr. C. Northcote Parkinson
“It is morally wrong to perpetuate ignorance and through ignorance ...fear!”

Charlotte Sine
Executive Vice President
Meister Publishing Company
Definition of Communication

“The act and technique of using words effectively and with grace in imparting one’s ideas.”

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language
We are better informed, better educated, and healthier than ever before in the history of mankind, yet many people suffer from an almost overwhelming anxiety about both today and the future. Is the world really a better place in 2002 than it was 60 years ago, or are we slowly destroying this planet by pollution and indifference?

*Life Is In The Balance. Weighing the Questions of Risk and Benefit in Today's World.* Elyse M. Rogers
Risk Communication

- Risk communication is much more than merely disseminating information. One must also be able to communicate the complexities and uncertainties of risk.
Seven Cardinal Rules of Risk Communication

1. Plan carefully and evaluate your efforts
2. Accept and involve the public as a partner
3. Listen to the public’s specific concerns
4. Be honest, frank, and open
5. Work with other credible sources
6. Meet the needs of the media
7. Speak clearly and with compassion

Factors Influencing Risk Perception

Risks perceived to be...

...voluntary are more accepted than risks perceived to be imposed

...under an individual’s control are more accepted than risks perceived to be controlled by others

...have clear benefits are more accepted than risks perceived to have little or no benefit

...fairly distributed are more accepted than risks perceived to be unfairly distributed

...natural are more accepted than risks perceived to be manmade
...statistical are more accepted than risks perceived to be catastrophic

...generated by a trusted source are more accepted than risks perceived to be generated by an untrusted source

...familiar are more accepted than risks perceived to be exotic

...affect adults are more accepted than risks perceived to affect children

Factors in Assessing Trust and Credibility

- Empathy and caring
- Competence and expertise
- Honesty and openness
- Dedication and commitment

Trust and credibility are difficult to achieve; if lost, they are even more difficult to regain

Some Dos and Don’ts

- Don’t use technical jargon
- If you use humor, direct it at yourself
- Remain calm. Don’t let your feelings interfere with your ability to communicate
- Do not assume that you are understood
- Use examples, stories, and analogies to establish a common understanding
- Don’t allow body language, your position in the room, or your dress to be inconsistent with your message
Dos and Don’ts

- Don’t promise that which you cannot deliver
- Do not speculate
- Take responsibility for your share of the problem
- Assume everything you say and do is part of the public record
- Be careful making risk comparisons – don’t compare unrelated risks
- Listen! Listen! Listen!
Ten Deadly Sins of Communication

1. Appearing unprepared
2. Handling questions improperly
3. Apologizing for yourself or the organization
4. Not knowing knowable information
5. Unprofessional use of audiovisual aids
6. Seeming to be off schedule
7. Not involving participants
8. Not establishing rapport
9. Appearing disorganized
10. Providing the wrong content
Some Thoughts

- Risk (Hazard) = Toxicity x Exposure
- Exposure = Amount x Duration
- The Dose Makes the Poison
Definition of Communication

- The exchange of thoughts, messages, or information, as by speech, signals, writing or behavior.

-The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language
For further information:

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry: A Primer on Health Risk Communication Principles and Practices

http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/HEC/primer.html
Their Legacy is the Land. May They Find it as Beautiful and as Bountiful as Their Forbearers Did
Remember:

It’s not what you say but how you say it!