

# Applying Lessons Learned for Strategic Communication

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*"I'll have the chicken Tamiflu."*

# Risk Communication

An interactive process of exchange of information and opinion among individuals, groups, and institutions.

Nat Res Council (US), Committee on Risk Perception and Risk Communication.

*Improving risk communication* National Academy Press; c1989 Washington (DC):

# Common elements that shape risk communications

- Uncertain outcomes
- Scenarios that provoke fear or dread
- Conflict and controversy as regards causes, solutions, consequences
- Trust and distrust of communicators
- Technical information
- Multiple stakeholders

# 4 types of risk communications

- **Public relations** – high hazard /low outrage
  - the polar ice cap is melting
- **Stakeholder relations** – medium hazard, medium outrage
  - perchlorate residues in old aerospace factories
- **Outrage management** – low hazard, high outrage
  - Beverly Hills High school is on top of a toxic waste dump
- **Crisis communications** – high hazard, high outrage
  - a tsunami is coming, Avian flu is coming
  
- [Http://www.petersandman.com](http://www.petersandman.com)

# Risk communication continuum

- Stakeholder relations

- How can we get people to the table, resolve differences, get solutions and negotiate a reasonable truce between stakeholders?

- Crisis risk communications

- How can we calm people down or give them hope while communicating information that is useful, accurate, and meaningful for them and the larger community ?

- Pre–event planning for crisis risk communications

- How can we preplan or pre position risk communication messages ages in anticipation of a catastrophe?

# Risk Communication Theories

(Covello,2001; Fischhoff 2005)

- Mental Noise Theory
- Trust Dominance Model
- Negative Dominance Theory
- Risk Perception Theory
- Mental Models Theory

# Risk Communication Theories

## Theory

Mental noise

Trust determination

Risk perception

Negative dominance

Mental models

## Effect

Blocks communication

Enhances or detracts  
from message

Frustration and outrage

Distorts communication

People have pre-existing  
models of reality

## Solution

Use clear, concise  
messages and active  
listening

Show that you care

Recognize and  
respond to RP factors

Develop positive  
messages

Develop messages that  
respect those models



# Message Mapping (Covello, 2001)

- "Message maps" are risk communication tools used to help organize complex information and make it easier to express current knowledge.
- Objective : to distill information into easily understood messages written at a 6th grade reading level.
- Messages are presented in short sentences that convey key messages.
- The approach is based on surveys showing that lead or front page media and broadcast stories usually convey only three key messages usually in less than 9 seconds for broadcast media or 27 words for print.

# Message Mapping

1. Identify stakeholders
2. Anticipate stakeholder concerns
3. Organize information
4. Encourage clear, concise message delivery
5. Open dialogue
6. Provide user-friendly guidance
7. Ensure consistent information
8. Encourage the use of “one voice”

# Message Mapping

1. Identify and prioritize stakeholders
2. Identify and prioritize stakeholders' questions and concerns

# Prepare to answer these types of questions

## Risk and survival

- How are those who are ill getting help?
- Is this thing being contained?
- What can we expect?

## Meaning

- Why did this happen?
- Why wasn't this prevented?
- What does this information/results mean?

## Reassurance

- Who is doing something about this?
- What are you doing to alert people / fix this ?

## Trust/credibility

- What else can go wrong?
- When were you notified about this?
- What bad things aren't you telling us?

# Message Mapping

3. Analyze the questions and concerns to identify commonalities.
4. Develop key messages.
  - Overcome mental noise barriers
  - Produce accurate messages for diverse audiences
  - Achieve maximum communication effectiveness within mental noise constraints

# Message Mapping

4. Develop key messages.
  - Limited in number (3)
  - Brief
  - Understandable
5. Develop supporting materials.
6. Conduct message testing . . . if you can!
7. Deliver messages

# Message Maps

Stakeholders:	Concern:	
Key Message 1	Key Message 2	Key Message 3
Supporting Fact 1-1	Supporting Fact 2-1	Supporting Fact 3-1
Supporting Fact 1-2	Supporting Fact 2-2	Supporting Fact 3-2
Supporting Fact 1-2	Supporting Fact 2-3	Supporting Fact 3-3

Stakeholders: General public	Concern: What is pandemic flu?	
Key Message 1	Key Message 2	Key Message 3
<b>Pandemic influenza is a global outbreak caused by a new influenza virus.</b>	<b>Pandemic influenza is different from seasonal influenza (or “the flu”).</b>	<b>Preparing now can limit the effects of pandemic influenza.</b>
Supporting Fact 1-1	Supporting Fact 2-1	Supporting Fact 3-1
Supporting Fact 1-2	Supporting Fact 2-2	Supporting Fact 3-2
Supporting Fact 1-2	Supporting Fact 2-3	Supporting Fact 3-3



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Supporting Fact 1-1	Supporting Fact 2-1	Supporting Fact 3-1
The virus may spread easily, possibly causing serious illness and death		
Supporting Fact 1-2	Supporting Fact 2-2	Supporting Fact 3-2
Because so many people are at risk, serious consequences are possible.		
Supporting Fact 1-3	Supporting Fact 2-3	Supporting Fact 3-3
Historically, pandemic influenza has caused widespread harm and death		

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The virus may spread easily, possibly causing serious illness and death	Seasonal flu outbreaks are caused by viruses already among people	
Supporting Fact 1-2	Supporting Fact 2-2	Supporting Fact 3-2
Because so many people are at risk, serious consequences are possible.	Pandemic influenza is caused by an influenza virus that is new to people	
Supporting Fact 1-3	Supporting Fact 2-3	Supporting Fact 3-3
Historically, pandemic influenza has caused widespread harm and death	30% of public could be infected in a flu pandemic, a higher rate than seasonal flu	

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Supporting Fact 1-1	Supporting Fact 2-1	Supporting Fact 3-1
The virus may spread easily, possibly causing serious illness and death	Seasonal flu outbreaks are caused by viruses already among people	Health agencies throughout the world have developed emergency plans for a pandemic influenza
Supporting Fact 1-2	Supporting Fact 2-2	Supporting Fact 3-2
Because so many people are at risk, serious consequences are possible.	Pandemic influenza is caused by an influenza virus that is new to people	Informed public participation & cooperation will be needed for effective public health
Supporting Fact 1-3	Supporting Fact 2-3	Supporting Fact 3-3
Historically, pandemic influenza has caused widespread harm and death	30% of public could be infected in a flu pandemic, a higher rate than seasonal flu	Individuals, communities and business should stay informed & prepare as they would for any emergency

<p>Stakeholders: Administration, satellite offices, franchises</p>	<p>Concern: <b>What can businesses do to prepare for pandemic flu?</b></p>	
<p>Key Message 1</p>	<p>Key Message 2</p>	<p>Key Message 3</p>
<p><b>Determine your business's risks from pandemic influenza &amp; develop an emergency response plan</b></p>	<p><b>Learn about community resources that can help in a pandemic</b></p>	<p><b>Time invested in preparation can protect your company's future.</b></p>
<p>Supporting Fact 1-1</p>	<p>Supporting Fact 2-1</p>	<p>Supporting Fact 3-1</p>
<p>Supporting Fact 1-2</p>	<p>Supporting Fact 2-2</p>	<p>Supporting Fact 3-2</p>
<p>Supporting Fact 1-3</p>	<p>Supporting Fact 2-3</p>	<p>Supporting Fact 3-3</p>

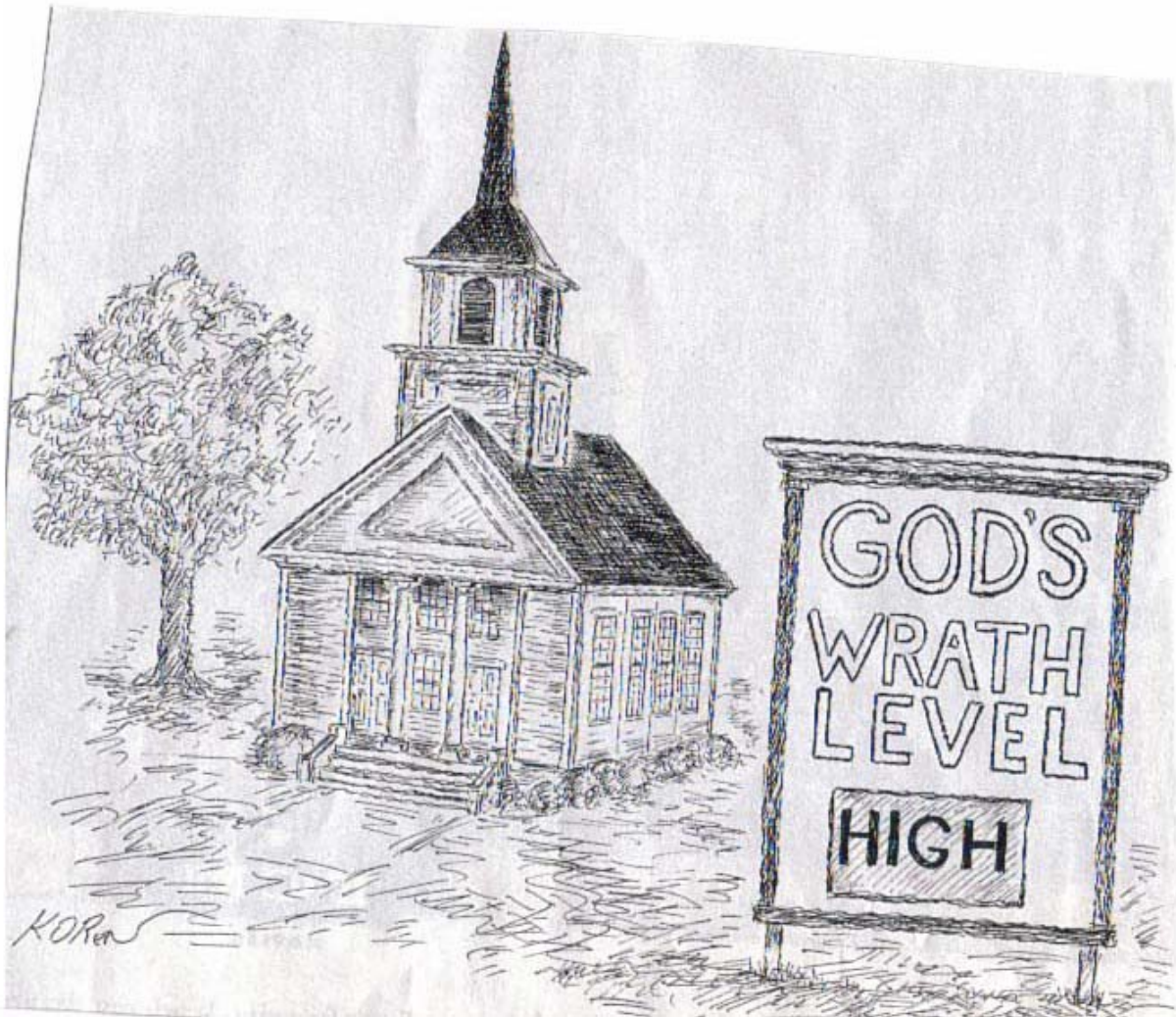
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Supporting Fact 1-1	Supporting Fact 2-1	Supporting Fact 3-1
Consider what challenges you might face in a pandemic and how to address them		
Supporting Fact 1-2	Supporting Fact 2-2	Supporting Fact 3-2
Identify essential functions and personnel needed to keep business running		
Supporting Fact 1-3	Supporting Fact 2-3	Supporting Fact 3-3
Create a plan using social distancing for most employees		

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Consider what challenges you might face in a pandemic and how to address them	State and local health departments can help identify resources <a href="http://www.pandemicflu.gov">http://www.pandemicflu.gov</a>	
Supporting Fact 1-2	Supporting Fact 2-2	Supporting Fact 3-2
Identify essential functions and personnel needed to keep business running	Trade associations and employee groups may have helpful information	
Supporting Fact 1-3	Supporting Fact 2-3	Supporting Fact 3-3
Create a plan using social distancing for most employees	See what other businesses are doing	

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Supporting Fact 1-1	Supporting Fact 2-1	Supporting Fact 3-1
Consider what challenges you might face in a pandemic and how to address them	State and local health departments can help identify resources <a href="http://www.pandemicflu.gov">http://www.pandemicflu.gov</a>	Work to minimize disruption to you and your customers
Supporting Fact 1-2	Supporting Fact 2-2	Supporting Fact 3-2
Identify essential functions and personnel needed to keep business running	Trade associations and employee groups may have helpful information	Work with your medical advisor on ways to protect employees
Supporting Fact 1-3	Supporting Fact 2-3	Supporting Fact 3-3
Create a plan using social distancing for most employees	See what other businesses are doing	FIREDRILL: Keep business open 2-3 mos with skeleton staff, social distancing

Stakeholders: Employees	Concern: <b>What can individuals do to prepare for pandemic flu?</b>	
Key Message 1	Key Message 2	Key Message 3
<b>If pandemic flu starts, public health officials will provide more specific information</b>	<b>People preparing now for pandemic influenza can help protect themselves and their families later</b>	<b>It may take a few days for alternative systems to come on line</b>
Supporting Fact 1-1	Supporting Fact 2-1	Supporting Fact 3-1
More information will become available as the circumstances of the pandemic become known.	Keep a supply of essential supplies at home, such as food, water, medicine and a thermometer	Have enough food water and medicines to stay home and away from crowds for 4 – 7 days
Supporting Fact 1-2	Supporting Fact 2-2	Supporting Fact 3-2
Daily life could change, such as school and work closings and travel limitations.	Prepare as you would for any emergency that affects large segments of society, such as an earthquake or blizzard	
Supporting Fact 1-3	Supporting Fact 2-3	Supporting Fact 3-3
Vaccine might be in short supply		





GOD'S  
WRATH  
LEVEL  
HIGH

KOR