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## Effective Risk Communication

**Chris Youngberg**  
Director of Account Education  
Non Profit Insurance Program

**NPIP**

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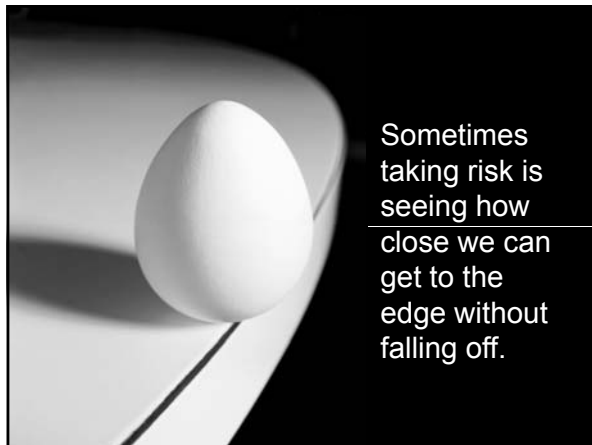
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## Risk Communication

**Defined:**

- Strategy and methods for communicating information about risk to its key audiences and its response to the views, emotional and other reactions of stakeholders; and
- The nonprofit's **approach to communicating** information about and **securing support** for its risk management strategies

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### Key Rules

Adapted from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's "Seven Cardinal Rules" of Risk Communication

1. Accept and **involve** key stakeholder groups, including funders, clients and volunteers, as legitimate partners.
2. Plan carefully and evaluate your efforts.
3. **Listen** to the specific concerns of stakeholders.
4. Be honest, frank and open.
5. **Coordinate and collaborate** with other credible sources.
6. Meet the needs of the media.
7. **Speak clearly** and with **compassion**.

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### Embracing Best Practices



HANG ON A SEC WHILE I READ THE SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS

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### EFFECTIVE RISK COMMUNICATION

- Interpersonal and group communication
- Listening techniques
- Message analysis and development
- Vocal and physical delivery
- Conducting Effective Meetings
- Difficult Messages
- Communicating under pressure
- Overcoming apprehension

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Interpersonal and Group  
Communication



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Communicating **Effectively**  
in a Sea of Doubt

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Five Principles  
that Pave the Way

- Respect
- Honest feedback
- Recognition
- A voice
- Encouragement



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### Why Communication is Important

- Inescapable
- Irreversible
- Complicated
- Contextual

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### Listening Techniques

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### Two ears . . . One mouth

- Active Listening/Reflective Listening
  - Eye contact
  - Body language
  - Response
  - Sincere desire to understand



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### Barriers to Active Listening

- Distractions
- Trigger words
- Vocabulary
- Limited attention span
- Cultural differences
  - Vocabulary
  - Misunderstandings/assumptions
  - Accents

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### Barriers (cont.)

- Personal interpretations
- Attitudes
- Biases
- Prejudices

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### Overcoming Listening Barriers

- Active listening
- Put aside emotions
- Ask questions and paraphrase back to the speaker to clarify
- Consider the speaker's background
  - Cultural
  - Personal

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### Message Analysis and Development

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### The Message

- The content is the message
- The medium is the message
- The person is the message



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### Awareness and Comprehension Measurement

- Was the message received?
  - “**Benchmarking**”
  - Quantitative Measurements
  - Qualitative Measurements



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### Accountability

- The key word in organizations today is accountability, which means taking responsibility for achieving the performance promised.

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### Stakeholder Relations

- Brings people together
- Brings the plan to life
- Predicting questions can help you prepare

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## Worst-Case Scenario Exercise

Worst Case Scenario	Questions	Answers	Revisions Needed
Example Exposure: <b>Swine Flu</b>	How can I be assured that you are taking steps to protect my child?		
	What will you do if my child has cold symptoms?		
	How will you ensure that the organization's doors stay open if an outbreak occurs?		

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## Messages Should be Realistic

- What should people know?
- Is there qualitative or quantitative info available?
- Is there some way to gather information from experts that would help us better understand the risk?

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## Messages Should be Realistic

- Is there an interdisciplinary group that is available to point out barriers, weak spots, the actual people affected?
- Can we create a picture to describe the risk?
- What do we already know about the risk?

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Vocal and Physical Delivery



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Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result.

WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF INSANITY?

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*Christine Youngberg*

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### Communication Impact

• WORDS	7%
• TONE & PACE	38%
• PHYSIOLOGY	55%

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### Appropriate Body Language

- Start with eye contact
- Smile!
- Express emotion with your facial muscles
- Avoid distracting mannerisms
- Telling a story?
- Stay true to your personality
- Make gestures convincing
- Vary your position

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## Conducting Effective Meetings



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### The Good (and the Bad) About Meetings

<b>Good News</b>	<b>Bad News</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meetings are empowering</li><li>• Meetings are a great way to communicate</li><li>• Meetings develop work skills and leadership</li><li>• Meetings are morale boosting</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meetings may not have focus</li><li>• Companies have too many meetings</li><li>• Attendees are unprepared</li><li>• Most meeting time is wasted</li></ul>

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### Effective Meetings Need to Have:

- Good structures
- Good processes
- Good leadership/facilitation



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### Eight Ways to Make Meetings Better

1. Be prepared
2. Have an agenda
3. Start on time and end on time
4. Have fewer (but better) meetings
5. Include, rather than exclude
6. Maintain the focus
7. Capture and assign action items
8. Get feedback

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### Communicating a Difficult Message



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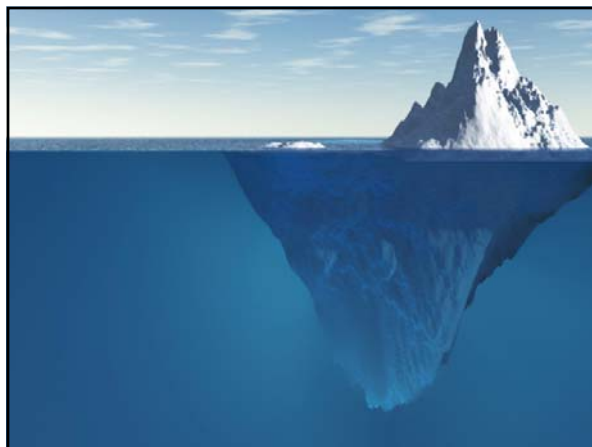
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### Communicating a Difficult Message

- Do your research and get the facts
- Define/understand your role
- Draft help/delegate



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### Communicating a Difficult Message

- Define target audiences
- Define message in threes
- Special considerations



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### Communicating a Difficult Message

- Determine communication vehicles
- Communicate
- Evaluate/Monitor



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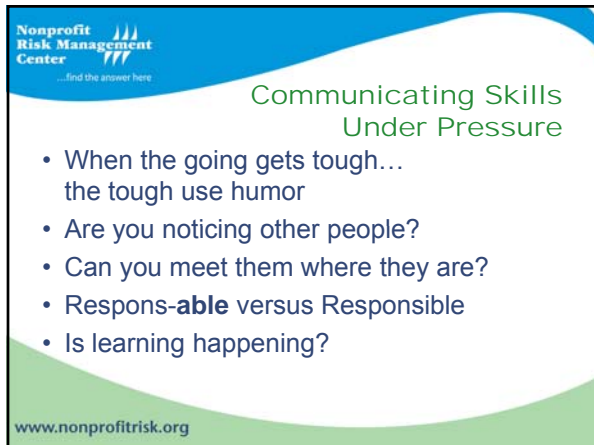
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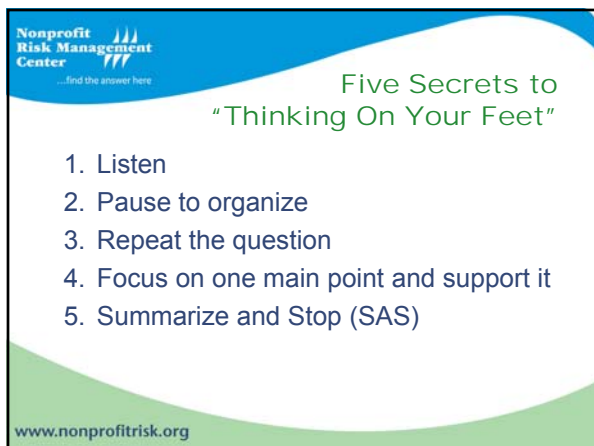
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### Difficult Messages

**A**

- Access to site is restricted to employees only – no family or friends permitted unless on company business in which case formal pass and security procedures to be followed.

**B**

- No employees are allowed to use personal cell phones during work hours.

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### Overcoming Apprehension



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### Identify the Source...

- Past performance failures
- Fear of rejection
- Low self-esteem

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### Public Speaking Anxiety

- The anxious anticipation to a situation that is unfamiliar or associated with past negative experiences.
  - **Unfamiliar Situations**
  - **Past Negative Experiences**

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### Symptoms of Anxiety: Feeling Out of Control

- Feeling sick to your stomach
- Shaking hands
- Heart beating hard and fast
- Quivering voice
- Sweating
- Shaking legs
- Inability to get the words out

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### Three Solutions

1. Practice, practice, practice
2. Use your anxiety during your speech
3. Do things that set you up for success

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## Building Confidence

- Baby steps
- Realistic goals
- Positive thoughts
- Know your topic, audience, yourself
- Know your speech
- Focus on the message, not yourself.

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