Effective Communication

Independent Study

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FEMA

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Appendix A: Job Aids

Course Overview

About This Course

Being able to communicate effectively is a necessary and vital part of every emergency manager, planner, and responder's job. This course is designed to improve your communication skills. It addresses:

- Basic communication skills.

- How to communicate in an emergency.

- How to identify community-specific communication issues.

- Using technology as a communication tool.

- Effective oral communication.

- How to prepare an oral presentation.

FEMA's Independent Study Program

FEMA's Independent Study Program is one of the delivery channels that the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) uses to provide training to the general public and specific audiences. This course is part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) Independent Study Program. In addition to this course, the Independent Study Program includes courses in radiological emergency management, emergency manager, hazardous materials, and disaster assistance.

FEMA's independent study courses are available at no charge and include a final examination. You may test individually or through group training.

If you need assistance, or if you have questions contact the Independent Study Program.

FEMA's Independent Study Program

FEMA Independent Study Program
Administrative Office
Emergency Management Institute
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727
(301) 447-1200

Information about FEMA's Independent Study Program also is available on the Internet at:

http://training.fema.gov and click on FEMA Independent Study

Final Examination

This course includes a Final Examination, which you must complete and submit to FEMA's Independent Study Office for scoring. To obtain credit for taking this course, you must successfully complete (75% correct) this examination regardless of whether you complete this course through self-instruction or through group instruction.

You may take the Final Examination as many times as necessary.

Course Completion

Effective Communication has no prerequisites. It is recommended that you complete this course before taking others in the PDS Series, however.

How To Complete This Course

Work through this course at a pace that is comfortable for you. You should resist the temptation to rush through the material, however. Take enough time with each unit to ensure that you have mastered its content before proceeding to the next.

Knowledge Checks
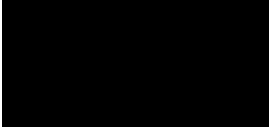
To help you know when to proceed, each unit is followed by a Knowledge Check that addresses the material contained in the unit. The Knowledge Check asks you to answer questions that apply to what you have learned in the unit. The answers to the Knowledge Check follow each Knowledge Check.

When you finish each exercise, check your answers, and review the parts of the text that you do not understand. Do not proceed to the next unit until you are sure that you have mastered the current unit.

When you have completed all of the units, complete the final exam online, or use the answer sheet (if provided in your course packet). EMI will score your test and notify you of the results.

Begin the Course

You may begin the course now.

Unit 1: Course Introduction

Introduction

As an emergency manager, you must be a skilled communicator to achieve your objectives. You are required to convey information to a broad audience that includes public and private sector organizations, the media, disaster victims, and co-responders. Even during non-emergency situations, you will need to rely on strong communication skills to coordinate with staff and to promote safety awareness.

Unit 1 Objectives

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

- Review the main topics that will be covered in this course.

- Relate the topics to your job and community.

- Determine a strategy for completing the course successfully.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to enhance the communication and interpersonal skills of local emergency managers, planners, and responders. At the conclusion of this course, you should be able to:

- Describe the basic communication process.

- Appreciate the value of empathic listening and effective feedback.

- Understand how emergency communications differ from daily communication and how to be most effective under emergency circumstances.

- Assess the multicultural communication needs of your audience and adjust your verbal and nonverbal message accordingly.

- Use technology appropriately to enhance communication success.

- Tailor your message to your audience.

- Use nonverbals to enhance your message and accurately read the nonverbal cues of your listener.

- Prepare an effective oral presentation.

Course Overview

This course comprises eight units.

- *Unit 1* offers an overview of the course content.

- *Unit 2* discusses basic communication skills and styles.

- *Unit 3* examines communication during emergency situations.

- *Unit 4* addresses community-specific communication needs and the particular needs, risks, sensitivities, expectations and norms that are relevant to disaster communication.

- *Unit 5* presents both low- and high-technology communication tools and discusses how to choose among them.

- *Unit 6* focuses on effective oral communication, the role of nonverbal cues, and ways to match your message to your audience.

- *Unit 7* discusses how to develop a successful oral presentation.

- *Unit 8* summarizes the course content. At the conclusion of Unit 8, you will have an opportunity to evaluate the course and your success in meeting your personal course goals.

Communicating Effectively

During an emergency, it is especially challenging and important to communicate accurate information clearly to the target audience. Disaster victims generally look for someone who can communicate valuable guidance, provide leadership, and lead them in problem solving. When you successfully fill that role, you act to reassure victims that their government and private organizations are working toward community recovery.

Finely tuned communication skills are also important tools during the emergency planning phase when educating the public about preparedness.

Communicating Effectively (Continued)

It is easy to take communicating for granted because it is a daily activity. How much thought have you given to communication?   Are you aware that:

▪ The average worker spends 50 percent of his or her time communicating?

▪ Business success is 85 percent dependent on effective communication and interpersonal skills?

▪ Forty-five percent of time spent communicating is listening?

▪ Writing represents nine percent of communication time?

▪ One-fourth of all workplace mistakes are the result of poor communication?

▪ A remarkable 75 percent of communication is nonverbal?

Activity: If I Could Do It Over Again

Think of a recent example at work in which you were involved in a miscommunication and answer the following questions.

1. Why did the miscommunication occur?

2. What impact did it have?

3. If you had a chance to do it over again, what specifically would you do differently?

Various Groups Respond Differently

In the units that follow you will examine how different segments of your audience respond to emergency communication and how an identical message can have different meanings for different groups.

Your target audience can be described generally as "everyone who can benefit from the information." Described specifically, your audience is "John Doe, 42, high school diploma, primary language Spanish," and "Mary Kahn, 87, hard-of-hearing," etc. Definitions of your target audience will fall between these extremes.

You cannot control how much preparation time you will have before you need to communicate. You may have a week to prepare a presentation or a split second to make your point to a reporter. What you *can* do is broaden your awareness of and sensitivity to the differences between people and how they communicate.

With practice, you can develop the skills to customize your message to reach the elderly, the low-income, various ethnic groups, and any other group within your target audience.

Activity: Personal Learning Goals

1. Review your own communications skills and assess which skills you need to strengthen to become a more effective communicator.

2. Based upon the content outlined for this course and the course objectives, identify two or three specific learning goals for yourself. If possible, set goals that will help you to strengthen the skills you identified in the previous question. Write your goals on the worksheet on the following page and use them as a reference for the course.

Summary and Transition

Unit 1 provided an overview of the course content and asked you to identify personal communication goals. Unit 2 discusses the essence of basic communication.

Personal Learning Goals

Instructions: Think about your own communication skills. Consider:

- The kinds of communication required in your job.
- Your past experiences with communications.
- Miscommunications you have experienced (such as the one you identified at the beginning of this unit).

Also consider these questions:

- Do you know what it takes to be a good communicator in an emergency?
- Do you know how to make communication a two-way street (e.g., are you as good a listener as you are a speaker)?
- Do you understand the impact of your nonverbal cues? Do they send the same message as your words?
- How skilled and comfortable are you with public speaking (talking with the media, making presentations, giving briefings, etc.)?
- Do you know when to use written communication, when oral communication is more appropriate, and when technology can help?

When you have considered these things, list below two or three specific learning goals you would like to accomplish to improve your communication skills.

Goal #1:

Goal #2:

Goal #3:
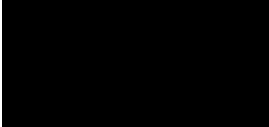
Unit 2: Basic Communication Skills

Introduction

This unit examines the basic components of communication: sending and receiving messages. Sending and receiving are not simple actions. In fact, how you deliver information and how you listen to others can dramatically alter how others respond to your message. But although communication is complex, it can be analyzed and refined. That is the purpose of this unit.

Unit 2 Objectives

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

- Define "communication" and apply that definition to various forms of communication.

- Describe why effective communication is important to emergency management.

- Understand different communication styles and how they affect interaction.

Communication Models

The value of a model is that it simplifies a complex process. Communication is just such a complex process, and using a model will help you send and receive communications—and will help ensure that others respond as required in an emergency.

Immediately before, during, and immediately after an emergency, emergency and response personnel must respond quickly. Time to communicate is limited, and often a specific message that must result in practical action must be relayed to a large group. A very simple model that <u>sends</u> the message efficiently and <u>elicits the desired response</u> will be most useful.

During the recovery phase, when sensitivity to the community's cultural values and attitudes is perhaps most important, a more complex, culturally based model may be more appropriate. Failure to discern attitudes, beliefs, values, and rules implicit in different groups could disenfranchise some citizens and harm the community's return to productivity and health. A cultural model is useful because it recognizes community members' shared interest in the community's future.

Communication Is a Two-Way Process

As speakers, we sometimes focus exclusively on the information that we want to relay. But your listener or reader may understand your message, understand only a portion of your message, or miss your point entirely—even though you transmitted the information accurately by your standard. It is not enough merely to deliver a message. The message must be <u>received</u> for communication to be successful.

The steps involved in the send–receive model of communication are shown below.
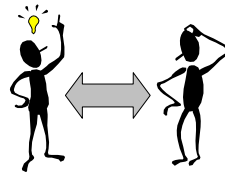
- The sender sends a message.

- The receiver gets the message and personalizes it.

- The receiver, in turn, sends feedback and thus becomes a sender.

- The original sender now becomes a receiver and reacts to the feedback.

- Generally, a new communication sequence is then initiated.

In the send–receive model, receiving or <u>listening</u> is as critical as sending the message because, without listening, it is impossible to personalize and respond to the message.

Listening Behaviors

When you focus only on yourself, you often forget to listen, and as a result, the chances for successful communication are poor. Listening is the basis of effective communication and entails much more than just hearing sound.

Think about the last time you noticed someone obviously not paying attention when you were trying to communicate. What specific behaviors did the person exhibit that led you to believe that he or she was not attending to you? What impact did the person's behavior have on you?

Perhaps you felt alarm that your important message was not getting through properly, or frustrated that your audience was not "getting it." You may have been offended by your listener's inattention or felt an urge to repeat your message.

You can learn more about listening behavior by examining the type of listener you tend to be. Use the following activity to learn more about your listening style.

Activity: Listening Self-Assessment

Read each item and then check the box indicating how frequently you actually use this skill when talking with others. Remember, this is a self-assessment, so be honest!

	Usually Do	Do Sometimes	Should Do More Often
1. I try to make others feel at ease when I am talking with them.	❏	❏	❏
2. I try not to think about other things when listening to others.	❏	❏	❏
3. When I listen, I can separate my own ideas and thoughts from the speaker's.	❏	❏	❏
4. I can listen to others with whom I disagree.	❏	❏	❏
5. I try not to form a rebuttal in my head while others are talking.	❏	❏	❏
6. I observe others' verbal <u>and</u> nonverbal behaviors.	❏	❏	❏
7. I let others finish speaking before I begin talking.	❏	❏	❏
8. I listen to what others say rather than assume that I know what they are going to say.	❏	❏	❏
9. I concentrate on others' messages rather than on their physical appearance.	❏	❏	❏
10. As I listen, I figure out how others are feeling.	❏	❏	❏
11. I ask others to clarify or repeat information when I am unsure what was meant.	❏	❏	❏
12. I can remember the important details of what others tell me during conversations.	❏	❏	❏
13. I restate information given to me to make sure that I understand it correctly.	❏	❏	❏
14. If I find I'm losing track of what others are saying, I concentrate harder.	❏	❏	❏

Hearing vs. Listening

Hearing is the special sense by which noises and tones are received as stimuli. Hearing is a sensory experience that gathers sound waves indiscriminately. We can hear something without choosing to listen.

Listening is a voluntary activity. Listening includes more than just sound being received by the ear and transmitted to the brain. Listening includes interpreting or processing that sound. Active listening involves listening with empathy.

Active Listening

When you listen empathically, you don't just hear words. You hear thoughts, beliefs and feelings. Empathic listening is highly active and requires hard work. Following the steps below will help you to improve your listening skills.

1. The first step is to <u>decide to listen and concentrate</u> on the speaker.

2. Then, use your imagination and <u>enter the speaker's situation</u>. Concentrate and try to imagine his or her frame of reference and point of view.

3. <u>Observe</u> the speaker's vocal inflection, enthusiasm or lack of it, and style of delivery. These are essential components of the message. If you are speaking face-to-face, pay attention to the speaker's facial expressions and other nonverbal cues for more insight into the message.

4. <u>Listen without interruption</u>. Note key phrases or use word associations to remember the speaker's content.

5. Use paraphrasing or clarifying questions to <u>confirm</u> that you received the intended message. Check your perceptions of how the speaker is feeling to put the text of the message in emotional context.

6. Finally, <u>provide feedback</u> to the speaker.

Practice Active Listening

Tips

Like other skills, listening skills improve with practice. Ask a trusted friend to rate you honestly on the listening self-assessment that you conducted earlier in this unit. Then, the next time someone comes to you with a problem, work on the listening skills that need improvement. Practice empathic listening by attending, paraphrasing, and asking questions.

Roadblocks to Effective Listening

Roadblocks to effective listening can be external or internal. External roadblocks can include distracters such as: noise, an uncomfortable temperature or seating, or an inappropriate location. Try to be aware of external roadblocks and offset them if possible.

Internal roadblocks include a variety of conditions or reactions within the speaker or audience, such as:

- Emotional interference.

- Defensiveness.

- Hearing only facts and not feelings.

- Not seeking clarification.

- Hearing what is expected instead of what is said.

- Stereotyping.

- The halo effect (i.e., the tendency for something to be influenced by a loosely associated factor.).

- Automatic dismissal (e.g., "We've never done it that way before.")

- Resistance to change.

Tips for Active Listening

The following are additional techniques to help ensure active listening:

- **Make eye contact.** Eye contact increases the chances of "getting" the message and demonstrates interest and attention. When listening to someone on the phone, try <u>not</u> to look at things that will take attention away from the speaker.
- **Adjust your body posture.** Posture—facing the speaker and slightly leaning in— suggests that you are paying attention and helps you to stay tuned in. When on the phone, position yourself so that you're comfortable but not so relaxed that you lose the ability to attend to the speaker.

- **Give verbal or nonverbal acknowledgment.** Acknowledging the speaker helps involve you in the communication process and shows you are paying attention.

Tips for Active Listening (Continued)

▪ **Clear your mind.** Clear your mind of your own thoughts to avoid wandering mentally.

▪ **Avoid distracting behaviors.** Distracting behaviors—playing with a pencil, drumming your fingers, grimacing, jingling change in your pocket, or others—may take away from your ability to listen and distract the speaker.

Communication Variables

There are numerous variables involved in the communication process. Some of these variables are described below.

▪ <u>Differences between the sender and receiver</u> affect the odds of successful communication.

- **Attitudes.** How different are the attitudes between the sender and the receiver?
- **Information levels.** Is the sender or receiver significantly more informed than the other?
- **Communication skills.** The greater the difference in the sender's and the receiver's communication skills, the less likely it is that communication will be successful.
- **Social systems** provide a context or background for interpreting messages. If the sender and receiver do not share a similar social system, successful communication is more of a challenge.
- **Sensory channel.** The five senses (i.e., seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling) are the basic channels of communication. Using more channels increases the chance that communication will be successful. Does the person attending a meeting via a conference call have the same communication advantages as on-site attendees?

▪ <u>Differences in communication styles</u> often create an extra challenge. General behavior patterns of our personalities form our personal communication styles. These patterns can be productive, nonproductive, or even counterproductive, and the interplay of these styles affects the communication's effectiveness.

Imagine a relatively shy gentleman, in a public place, who needs to locate ice for an injured wrist. Would it be more challenging for him to communicate his need to four boisterous people playing video games or to someone quietly reading a book to a child? While he may be successful with either group, the difference in communication styles will pose more of a problem with the first group.

Communication Variables (Continued)

- Differences in previous experiences create a filter through which we hear the world. Inference, judgment, and generalization can become as significant as facts. The statement "There is a dog in the room" will be heard differently by someone who has been bitten than by someone with a well-loved pet.

- Cultural differences will be covered in more detail in Unit 4. Like the three variables described above, cultural differences impact how a message is sent as well as the manner in which a message is received. To be effective, you need to be sensitive to cultural differences without stereotyping.

Activity: Communication Habits

Fold your arms. Now do it the opposite way. Notice how it felt to fold your arms automatically and then to fold your arms the opposite way. When you tried the opposite way, did it feel strange and uncomfortable?

The experience you just had illustrates how a habit feels. Habits are ingrained and second nature. They can either be good or bad. Your communication habits will either enhance or detract from your effectiveness.

1. Identify some of your good communication habits. An example of a good habit is asking questions to understand a persons' frame of mind. Write down some of your good habits below.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Identify some of your bad communication habits. Some examples include interrupting or thinking about what you're going to say next (rather than actively listening). Write down some of your bad habits below.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

You can substitute good communication behaviors for bad and, with practice, they will become habits.

Summary and Transition

Now that you have learned the basic communication model, the next unit will explore the added dimensions of communicating in an emergency. Before you begin applying what you've learned thus far to real-life scenarios in Unit 3, take a few minutes to complete the Knowledge Check on the next page.

Knowledge Check

Check

Carefully read each question and all of the possible answers before selecting the most appropriate response for each test item. Circle the letter corresponding to the answer that you have chosen. Complete all of the questions without looking at the course material.
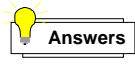
1. In most cases of unsuccessful communication:

    a. The speaker is concerned with the listener's feelings.
    b. The speaker is focused only on his or her own message.
    c. The speaker is a good listener.
    d. The listener is a good speaker.
    e. The listener is not a good speaker.

2. Empathic listening is a part of active listening.

    a. True
    b. False

3. Communication is likely to increase in difficulty when there are significant differences in the _____ of the speaker and audience.

    a. Cultural backgrounds
    b. Elevation
    c. Previous experiences
    d. B and C
    e. A and C
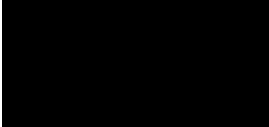
4. Which of the following internal roadblocks to effective listening is exemplified by the statement, "We've never done it that way before?"

    a. Halo effect
    b. Stereotyping
    c. Hearing only facts and not feelings
    d. Resistance to change
    e. Hearing only what is expected

5. Communication is a one-way process.

    a. True
    b. False

Answers

Knowledge Check (Continued)

1. b
2. a
3. e
4. d
5. b

Unit 3: Communicating in an Emergency

Introduction

In an emergency, people depend on information for physical and emotional comfort. To be effective, emergency communications must be timely, accurate, and clearly stated.

This unit discusses differences between day-to-day and emergency communications and the types of communications most commonly used in emergencies.

Unit 3 Objectives

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

- Describe how day-to-day communication differs from emergency communication.

- Select the most appropriate form of communication for a given situation.

- Identify appropriate and inappropriate uses of e-mail, the Internet, and other technologies.

Characteristics of Emergency Communications

Whenever we communicate, we must consider the differences between emergency and day-to-day communications. These differences are described briefly in the points that follow.

Emergency information is important
Studies show that during an emergency, information is as critically important to people as food or water. Not only can accurate information mean the difference between life and death, it can provide reassurance that response and recovery are truly underway.

Timeliness is essential
If official answers are not available, rumor and speculation quickly fill the information vacuum. Then, not only must you disseminate correct information, but you also need to counter the misinformation that circulated.

To use media in a timely fashion, learn local media news cycles and deadlines. For example, if news occurs at 4:00 p.m., you can most likely get it on the radio immediately, on television in time for the 5:00 p.m. report, and into the next morning's edition of the local paper.

Warnings require response
Emergency warnings differ from other kinds of messages because their purpose is to elicit a specific response from the public—rather than merely raise awareness or provide knowledge.

Barriers to communication
It is more difficult for people to hear messages during an emergency. Stress, change of routine, and lack of sleep all can be hurdles to overcome when communicating during emergencies.

Partner to ensure that all messages are consistent
There may be many responders participating in the emergency. It is important that information is shared and that information made public "speaks with one voice."

Characteristics of Emergency Communications (Continued)

Tips

Make sure your message is clear. When communicating in an emergency, you should always:

- Present the information in sequence; present the reason for the message, the supporting information, and the conclusion.

- Word the message precisely, making every word count.

- Avoid jargon, codes, and acronyms.

- Use common names for all personnel and facilities.

- Omit unnecessary details.

- Speak in sync with other related authorities.

- Keep messages consistent across various media.

Activity

Take a few moments to jot down lessons learned about timely and accurate communication from emergencies or crises you have experienced.

Types of Communication

Communication media range in complexity from handwritten notices to international satellite broadcasts. The communication tools most frequently used in emergencies and the advantages of each type are listed below.

Emergency Alert System (EAS)

The EAS is an established communication method that warns a community quickly of impending dangers. All local partners should be well versed in the use of warning tones, crawl messages (a message that moves across the bottom of a TV screen), cable television override, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio, and other warning technologies linked to EAS.

Types of Communication (Continued)

Oral Communication

Types of oral communication include:

- Individual briefings.

- Phone conversations.

- Public speeches.

- On-air interviews.

- Public Service Announcements (radio and/or television).

Oral communication is fluid and dynamic, and is shaped by both the speaker and the audience. Oral communication is enhanced by nonverbal communication such as body language and tone of voice.

Print Communication

In many emergency situations, it is best to use written communication.

Types of print communication include:

- Fax

- E-mail

- Public notice

- Fact sheet or flier

- Press release

- Feature article

Never underestimate the value of documentation. It allows the information to:

- Be consulted in the future.

- Exist independent of human memory.

- Be reviewed and revised before it is delivered.

- Be passed on intact to a second audience.

Types of Communication (Continued)

Tips

Samples of various kinds of print communications are featured in Job Aid 3-1: Templates for Written Communications on pages 3.23 through 3.32. This Job Aid is also included in Appendix A.

Choosing the most effective communication tool.

The most effective communication tool is one that:

- Reaches the identified target audience.

- Gets information to the audience when they need it, for as long as they need it.

- Can be expected to deliver the message reliably.

- Enhances comprehension of the message content.

- Can be accessed within resource limitations.

While technology is not a communication solution in itself, the right technology can support and enhance your communication. Most often, you will use a combination of methods to deliver a consistent message. Other times, one communication tool is sufficient. Your selection will depend upon the reach and frequency you want to achieve, as well as the message content and audience.

Each of the seven following pages gives a communication goal with strategy considerations in the first two columns. The last column is for you to fill in with the communication method or type you think would best achieve the goal. You may refer to the types of communication listed on pages 3.3 and 3.4. However, there may be a variety of other methods that apply to a given communication situation and you are not limited to those in the book. Consider your choice or choices realistically and add it or them to the last column.

Types of Communication (Continued)

Tips

Choosing Among Communication Methods		
Goal	**Strategy Considerations**	**Communication Method or Type**
Choose methods that reach your identified target audience most quickly and effectively. (Who is the audience?)	▪ Are you sending your message to the general public? ▪ Does your message apply only to people living in a specific geographic area? ▪ Is your message intended for emergency management personnel only? ▪ What is the primary language of the audience? Are there other languages that must also be accommodated? ▪ Where does this audience usually obtain news—TV? Radio? Newspapers? Community venues? ▪ How many people are in the target audience?	

Types of Communication (Continued)

Goal	Strategy Considerations	Communication Method or Type
Match the speed and frequency of the media to how quickly and long your audience needs to know. (How quickly do they need this information?)	- Is this information immediately safety related? - Is this referral information for future recovery? - Should urgency take priority over style and format? - When do various media air, publish, or broadcast information?	

Types of Communication (Continued)

Goal	Strategy Considerations	Communication Method or Type
Ensure that your choice of media is reliable during the emergency. (During *this emergency situation*, which media are functional?)	▪ Are the radio, television, and newspaper companies functioning normally? ▪ Is mail delivery interrupted? ▪ Are there widespread power outages that affect some or all media outlets?	

Types of Communication (Continued)

Goal	Strategy Considerations	Communication Method or Type
Choose appropriate media to enhance comprehension. (Which medium is the best fit for my message?)	▪ Is your message too sensitive to send via fax? ▪ Is your audience geographically concentrated enough to make a public meeting possible? ▪ Can you make your point on a billboard?	

Types of Communication (Continued)

Goal	Strategy Considerations	Communication Method or Type
Consider your resources in your media choice. (What may be required when you choose each communication tool?)	▪ Which staff will you need to implement this media approach? ▪ Can your budget afford a televised public service announcement? ▪ Can you deliver an effective public speech?	

Types of Communication (Continued)

Possible additional considerations include:

Choosing Among Communication Methods		
Goal	**Strategy Considerations**	**Communication Method or Type**
Choose methods that reach your identified target audience most quickly and effectively. (Who is the audience?)	▪ What is the primary language of the intended audience? ▪ Where does this audience usually obtain news? ▪ How many people does the information need to reach?	
Match the speed and frequency of the media to how quickly and long your audience needs the information. (When do they need this information?)	▪ How long will this information be useful to the audience? ▪ How many times do you think your audience needs to see or hear your information before they act on it? ▪ Should urgency take priority over "crossing every t and dotting every i" in producing the communication?	
Ensure that your choice of media is reliable during the emergency. (During *this emergency situation*, which media are functional?)	▪ Are residents currently located at their normal mailing addresses? ▪ Can you identify public places where your audience can assemble? ▪ Is your after-hours contact information for key emergency partners up-to-date?	

Types of Communications (Continued)

Goal	Strategy Considerations	Communication Method or Type
Choose appropriate media to enhance comprehension. (Which medium is the best fit for my message?)	▪ Should you prepare explanatory handouts to support a public speech that presents complicated ideas? ▪ Does the urgency of this information warrant an immediate press conference? ▪ Will your audience want to refer to this information repeatedly?	
Consider your resources in your media choice. (What may be required when you choose each communication tool?)	▪ Are on-site interpreters needed? ▪ Do you have sufficient desktop publishing skills? ▪ Are the batteries fresh in your hand-held radio?	

Activity

Take a fresh look at your Warning and Communication annexes.

Obtain copies of the Warning and Communication annexes to your State and local emergency plans. Review them in terms of the information you have learned in this unit and determine:

▪ How does your community issue emergency communications?

▪ What areas of emergency communications can be improved?

▪ What steps can you take to implement these improved communications?

▪ Should you partner with others in this effort?

In addition to these planning considerations, the next section will explain some of the recent changes in emergency planning requirements.

Recent Changes to Emergency Planning Requirements

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, illustrated the need for all levels of government, the private sector, and nongovernmental agencies to prepare for, protect against, respond to, and recover from a wide spectrum of events that exceed the capabilities of any single entity. These events require a unified and coordinated national approach to planning and to domestic incident management. To address this need, the President signed a series of Homeland Security Presidential Directives (HSPDs) that were intended to develop a common approach to preparedness and response. Two HSPDs are of particular importance in effective decision making for your jurisdiction:

- **HSPD-5, Management of Domestic Incidents**, identifies steps for improved coordination in response to incidents. It requires the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to coordinate with other Federal departments and agencies and State, local, and Tribal governments to establish a National Response Plan (NRP) and a National Incident Management System (NIMS).

- **HSPD-8, National Preparedness**, describes the way Federal departments and agencies will prepare. It requires DHS to coordinate with other Federal departments and agencies—and with State, local, and Tribal governments to develop a National Preparedness Goal.

Together, NIMS, the NRP, and the National Preparedness Goal define what needs to be done to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from a major event; how it needs to be done; and how well it needs to be done. These efforts align Federal, State, local, and Tribal entities; the private sector; and nongovernmental agencies to provide an effective and efficient national structure for preparedness, incident management, and emergency response.

<u>NIMS</u>

NIMS provides a consistent framework for incident management at all jurisdictional levels, regardless of the cause, size, or complexity of the incident. Building on the Incident Command System (ICS), NIMS provides the nation's first responders and authorities with the same foundation for incident management for terrorist attacks, natural disasters, and all other emergencies. <u>NIMS requires that ICS be institutionalized and used to manage all domestic incidents</u>.

NIMS (Continued)

According to the NIMS Integration Center, "institutionalizing the use of ICS" means that government officials, incident managers, and emergency response organizations at all jurisdictional levels adopt the Incident Command System. Actions to institutionalizing ICS takes place at two levels—policy and organizational/operational.

At the policy level, institutionalizing ICS means government officials:

- Adopt ICS through executive order, proclamation or legislation as the jurisdiction's official incident response system.

- Direct that incident managers and response organizations in their jurisdictions train, exercise, and use ICS in their response operations.

At the organizational/operational level, incident managers and emergency response organizations should:

- Integrate ICS into functional, system-wide emergency operations policies, plans, and procedures.

- Provide ICS training for responders, supervisors, and command-level officers.

- Conduct exercises for responders at all levels, including responders from all disciplines and jurisdictions.

NIMS integrates existing best practices into a consistent, nationwide approach to domestic incident management that is applicable at all jurisdictional levels and across functional disciplines. Six major components make up the NIMS system approach:

NIMS (Continued)

- **Command and Management:** NIMS standard incident command structures are based on three key organizational systems:

  - ICS: ICS defines the operating characteristics, interactive management components, and structure of incident management and emergency response organizations engaged throughout the life cycle of an incident.
  - Multiagency Coordination Systems: Multiagency coordination systems define the operating characteristics, interactive management components, and organizational structure of supporting incident management entities engaged at the Federal, State, local, Tribal, and regional levels through mutual-aid agreements and other assistance arrangements.
  - Public Information Systems: Public information systems refer to processes, procedures, and systems for communicating timely and accurate information to the public during crisis or emergency situations.

- **Preparedness:** Effective incident management begins with a host of preparedness activities conducted on a "steady-state" basis, well in advance of any potential incident. Preparedness involves an integrated combination of planning, training, exercises, personnel qualification and certification standards, equipment acquisition and certification standards, and publication management processes and activities.

- **Resource Management:** NIMS defines standardized mechanisms and establishes requirements for processes to describe, inventory, mobilize, dispatch, track, and recover resources over the life cycle of an incident.

- **Communications and Information Management:** NIMS identifies the requirements for a standardized framework for communications, information management (collection, analysis, and dissemination), and information sharing at all levels of incident management.

NIMS (Continued)

- **Supporting Technologies:** Technology and technological systems provide supporting capabilities essential to implementing and refining NIMS. These include voice and data communications systems, information management systems (e.g., recordkeeping and resource tracking), and data display systems. Also included are specialized technologies that facilitate ongoing operations and incident management activities in situations that call for unique technology-based capabilities.

- **Ongoing Management and Maintenance:** This component establishes an activity to provide strategic direction for and oversight of NIMS, supporting both routine review and the continuous refinement of the system and its components over the long term.

Additional information about NIMS can be accessed online at www.fema.gov/NIMS or by completing EMI's IS 700 online course.

The NRP

The NRP is an all-discipline, all-hazard plan for the management of domestic incidents. The NRP provides the structure and mechanisms to coordinate and integrate incident management activities and emergency support functions across Federal, State, local, and Tribal government entities; the private sector; and nongovernmental organizations.

The NRP:

- **Builds on what works from previous plans and incident responses.** The NRP represents a true "national" framework in terms of both product and process. The NRP development process included extensive vetting and coordination with Federal, State, local, and Tribal agencies; nongovernmental organizations; private-sector entities; and the first-responder and emergency management communities across the country. The NRP incorporates best practices from a wide variety of incident management disciplines, including fire, rescue, emergency management, law enforcement, public works, and emergency medical services. The collective input received from public- and private-sector partners has been, and will continue to be, absolutely critical to implementing and refining the core concepts included in the plan.

- **Forges new approaches and mechanisms to address today's threats.** The NRP is not just a compilation of elements. The whole is vastly more than the sum of its parts.

The NRP (Continued)

- **Addresses the complete spectrum of incident management activities.** The NRP is unique and far reaching. For the first time, the NRP eliminates critical seams and ties together a complete spectrum of incident management activities, including the prevention of, preparedness for, response to, and recovery from terrorist incidents, major natural disasters, and other major emergencies.

- **Uses NIMS to establish a framework for coordination among Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments; nongovernmental organizations; and the private sector.** The NRP is built on NIMS, which provides a consistent doctrinal framework for incident management at all jurisdictional levels, regardless of incident cause, size, or complexity.

The NRP incorporates relevant portions of and supersedes the following plans:

- The Federal Response Plan (FRP).

- The U.S. Government Interagency Domestic Terrorism Concept of Operations Plan (CONPLAN). The Terrorism Incident Law Enforcement and Investigation Annex of the NRP revises and replaces the CONPLAN. The annex describes the coordination of law enforcement and investigation efforts during terrorist attacks.

- The Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan (FRERP). The Nuclear/Radiological Incident Annex of the NRP revises and replaces the FRERP. The annex provides guidelines for radiological incidents that are considered Incidents of National Significance and for those that fall below the threshold of an Incident of National Significance.

- Initial National Response Plan (INRP).

These plans are linked to the NRP in the context of Incidents of National Significance, but remain as stand-alone documents in that they also provide detailed protocols for responding to routine incidents that normally are managed by Federal agencies without the need for DHS coordination. The NRP also incorporates other existing Federal emergency response and incident management plans (with appropriate modifications and revisions) as integrated components, operational supplements, or supporting tactical plans.

The NRP (Continued)

The NRP, as a core operational plan for national incident management, also establishes national-level coordinating structures, processes, and protocols that will be incorporated into certain existing Federal interagency incident- or hazard-specific plans (for example, the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan) designed to implement the specific statutory authorities and responsibilities of various departments and agencies in specific contingency scenarios.

The main benefit of the NRP is that it <u>fully integrates emergency response and law enforcement elements into a single national strategy</u>.

The full text of the NRP can be downloaded at <u>http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nrf/</u>

What These Changes Mean to You

Depending on your jurisdiction, the changes to the emergency planning requirements may mean little—or a lot. Minimally, the changes mean that your jurisdiction must:

▪ Use ICS to manage all incidents, including recurring and/or planned special events.

▪ Integrate all response agencies and entities into a single, seamless system, from the Incident Command Post, through department Emergency Operations Centers (DEOCs) and local Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs), through the State EOC to the regional- and national-level entities.

▪ Develop and implement a public information system.

▪ Identify and type all resources according to established standards.

▪ Ensure that all personnel are trained properly for the job(s) they perform.

▪ Ensure communications interoperability and redundancy.

Remember that, depending on the cause, size, and complexity of an incident, the number of responders participating can vary widely. Regardless of the circumstances, it is always critical that information is shared and that those responsible for making information public "speak with one voice."

Summary and Transition

In this unit, you reviewed various communication media and considered the relationships among the method of delivery, the message, and the target audience. You also applied what you learned to your community's Warning and Communication annexes. In the next unit, you will learn how to identify groups within communities that require different types of communication to meet their needs.

Before proceeding to the next unit, take a few minutes to complete the Knowledge Check on the next page.

Reference Library

For More Information

- FEMA EMI Course 272: Warning Coordination

- English Online: http://eleaston.com/english.html

- Gunning Fog Index: http://pimacc.pima.edu/~ddoell/tw/gfiex.html

- Guide to Grammar and Writing: http://webster.commnet.edu/mla/

- Plain Language Action Network (PLAN): http://www.plainlanguage.gov

USFA – Fire Safety Education Resource Directory – DEALING WITH THE MEDIA – Book/Manual/Guide:

- www.usfa.fema.gov/fserd/pro_med1_list.htm

- "Talking About Disaster" www.fema.gov/pte/talkdiz

- "Needed: The Right Information at the Right Time": www.annenberg.nwv.edu/pubs/disas/disas5.htm

- National Incident Management System (NIMS): www.fema.gov/NIMS

- National Response Plan (NRP): http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nrf/

Knowledge Check

Check

Carefully read each question and all of the possible answers before selecting the most appropriate response for each test item. Circle the letter corresponding to the answer that you have chosen. Complete all of the questions without looking at the course material.

1. Which of the following methods of communication is <u>least</u> useful to inform the public of a collapsed bridge?

    a. AM radio traffic update
    b. Television
    c. Magazine feature story
    d. Ham radio

2. During an emergency, which of the following is likely to be true?

    a. People will listen more closely because they need the information badly.
    b. People are automatically able to filter out unnecessary information.
    c. People are busy with survival and do not need information.
    d. People have additional challenges that make it harder to comprehend information.

3. Which of the following pieces of information could be deleted from a 15-second Public Service Announcement on drinking water safety?

    a. The city water supply is contaminated.
    b. Paul Lining has been named Director of Public Works.
    c. Water should be boiled before it is used or consumed.
    d. The "boil water" edict is in force until further notice.

4. Which statement is most useful to commuters listening to their radios on their morning drive to work?

    a. Avoid Interstate 80 between exits 12 and 13 because of a major accident. Seek alternate routes to I-80 to enable emergency personnel to respond.
    b. There is a problem on I-80.
    c. Are you noticing that traffic is building on Interstate 80? There were work crews on I-80 between exits 12 and 13, which required all traffic to merge into a single lane as it passed. Traffic has been backed up for an average of 6 miles all morning. Then there was a multiple-car accident that was reported by a driver from his cellular phone. The event is still unfolding.
    d. Taking advantage of matching Federal funds, our Department of Public Works is making long overdue repairs to I-80. Local road crews will be hard at work this week, including today.

Knowledge Check (Continued)

Check

5. An effective warning message is designed to elicit a response from the public and includes which of the following components?
    a. Hazard
    b. Magnitude
    c. Likelihood
    d. Protective actions
    e. All of the above

Match each of the following messages with an appropriate medium from the second list.

Message   **Media**

a. 4:00 p.m. staff meeting   __ Classified newspaper ads
b. In-depth status of recovery   __ Town assembly
c. Tornado warning   __ Feature article
d. Foster homes needed for displaced dogs   __ Fax
e. Register by phone for disaster assistance __ Emergency Alert System

Answers
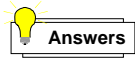
Knowledge Check (Continued)

1. c
2. d
3. b
4. a
5. e

An effective match of message and medium reads: d, e, b, a, c.

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications

Sample business letter:

July 3, 2001

Mr. John Burgess
The Salvation Army
Bismarck, ND 58501

Dear Mr. Burgess:

The tireless efforts and valuable resources your organization contributed to our community after the recent flood were remarkable. The speed with which you fed and provided shelter for the 75 people left homeless demonstrated the experience and preparation that marks all Salvation Army operations.

There is no way to thank you enough for your support of Bismarck residents. However, I hope you will share my gratitude with your staff and volunteers. We appreciate every one of them.

Again, thank you for your active partnership in Bismarck's emergency management efforts.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Siebert
Emergency Manager

MS:gn

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

Sample EAS Message:

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN CENTRAL CITY HAS ISSUED A TORNADO WARNING FOR LIBERTY COUNTY UNTIL 300 PM EDT.

AT 150 PM . . . DOPPLER RADAR INDICATED A POSSIBLE TORNADO IN WESTERN LIBERTY COUNTY JUST SOUTH OF APPLE VALLEY. AT 205 PM . . . A TORNADO TOUCHED DOWN NEAR LEWISBURG IN STRAMFORD COUNTY CAUSING CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE.

THE STORM WAS MOVING NORTHEAST AROUND 30 MPH AND WILL REACH CENTRAL CITY AT ABOUT 215 PM.

THE SAFEST PLACE TO BE WHEN A TORNADO HITS IS IN A BASEMENT UNDER A STURDY PIECE OF FURNITURE SUCH AS A WORK BENCH. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A BASEMENT . . . GO TO AN INTERIOR ROOM OF YOUR HOME SUCH AS A BATHROOM OR CLOSET.

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

Sample Public Service Announcement:

BEWARE OF FRAUD

Every disaster has its share of con artists trying to take advantage of disaster victims, so be careful who you let into your home. If your house was damaged in the (disaster) and someone appears at your door claiming to be a (type of disaster) official, ask for identification.

Depending on your needs, inspectors from one or more agencies may visit your home after you have registered for disaster assistance. These inspectors will be able to show you official ID to prove their identity. Never let anyone inspect your home without first asking for identification.

If you want to verify someone's identity, call the Disaster Information Helpline at 1-800-525-0321 (TDD: 1-800-660-8005 for hearing and speech impaired), (hours of operation), (days of operation).

Some people may show up at your door and insist that you make expensive or unnecessary repairs. Others may offer to process your disaster application for a fee. Remember, disaster inspectors do not recommend repairs and NEVER charge a fee for any inspection of your home.

####

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

Sample News Release:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INFORMATION FROM:
(Emergency Management Office)
(Street Address)
(City, State, Zip)

(Date)

MEDIA CONTACTS: (PAO name)   (phone)

RESIDENTS WARNED TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS WHEN
RETURNING TO FLOOD DAMAGED HOMES

(CITY, STATE)—Federal and State disaster officials are urging people returning to flood-damaged homes, apartments, or businesses to take extra precautions before and during their clean-up efforts.

"The dangers are not over after the water goes down," (SCO NAME) said. "Flood hazards such as a weakened foundation, exposed wires or contaminated floodwater are not always obvious and can be potentially life-threatening if precautions are not taken."

"If, at any time, you are unsure of or feel uncomfortable with a situation, do not hesitate to ask for help or seek advice from an expert," (FCO NAME), serving as Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) for the disaster recovery, cautioned. "Play it safe."

Disaster officials are urging people to keep these safety tips in mind:

BEFORE ENTERING A BUILDING:

Check the outside of the building: Call the utility company immediately if you find downed power lines or detect gas leaks. (Gas leaks will emit an odor of rotten eggs.)

Look for external damage: Examine the foundation for cracks or other damage. Also examine porch roofs and overhangs to be sure they still have all their supports. Look for gaps between the steps and the house.

-more-

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

page 2

If any supports or portions of the foundation walls are missing or the ground has washed away, the floor is not safe.

If you see obvious damage, have a building inspector check the house before you go in.

Enter the building carefully: If the door sticks at the top it could mean the ceiling is ready to fall. If you force the door open, stand outside the doorway away from falling debris.

AFTER ENTERING A BUILDING:

Look before you step: The ground and floors are covered with debris including broken bottles and nails. Floors and stairs can be very slippery.

Be alert for gas leaks: Do not strike a match or use an open flame when you enter a building unless you know the gas has been turned off and the area ventilated. Use a flashlight to inspect for damage.

Turn off the electricity: Even if the power company has turned off electricity to the area, be sure to disconnect your house's power supply. Do not use appliances or motors that have gotten wet unless they have been taken apart, cleaned and dried.

Replace exposed wires: Electrical wires that have been exposed to salt water are recyclable junk and must be replaced.

Watch for animals, especially snakes: Small animals that have been flooded out of their homes may seek shelter in yours. Use a stick to poke and turn items over and scare away small animals.

Carbon monoxide exhaust kills: Use a generator or other gasoline-powered machine outdoors. The same goes for camping stoves. Charcoal fumes are deadly; cook with charcoal outdoors.

Drain your basement carefully: Water in the ground puts pressure on your basement walls and floors. Drain the basement gradually to minimize further structural damage.

Hose the house: Most of the health hazards brought by a flood are in the mud and silt that is left after the water drains away. Shovel out as much mud as possible and hose the house down, inside and out.

Be aware of health hazards: Flood waters have picked up sewage and chemicals from roads, farms, factories, and storage buildings. Many flooded items, such as wallboard and mattresses, will hold mud and contamination forever. Spoiled food, flooded cosmetics and medicine are also health hazards. When in doubt, throw them out.

#####

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

Sample Incident Fact Sheet:

(DATE)

INCIDENT PERIOD: (DATE OF INCIDENT)

AREAS AFFECTED: (LIST COUNTIES/TOWNS AFFECTED)

OFFICE: (ADDRESS)

HOURS: (HOURS)

KEY TELEPHONE NUMBERS:
COMMERCIAL:	xxx-xxx-xxxx
INFO HOTLINE:	800-xxx-xxxx
INFO TDD:	800-660-8005 (for hearing impaired)
FAX:	xxx-xxx-xxxx
OFF-DUTY:	xxx-xxx-xxxx (NAME, TITLE)
JIC:	xxx-xxx-xxxx

KEY PERSONNEL:
Emergency Manager	(Name)	(Number)
Operations Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Planning Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Logistics Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Safety Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Public Affairs Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Police Chief	(Name)	(Number)
Fire Chief	(Name)	(Number)
Public Works Chief	(Name)	(Number)
Administration Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Other Key Personnel (List)	(Name)	(Number)

STATE KEY PERSONNEL:
Governor's Authorized Representative	(Name)	(Number)
Alternate GAR	(Name)	(Number)
State Coordinating Officer (SCO)	(Name)	(Number)
Alternate SCO	(Name)	(Number)
Public Assistance Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Public Information Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Hazard Mitigation Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Individual Assistance Officer	(Name)	(Number)

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

page 2

OTHER AGENCIES:

American Red Cross	(Name)	(Number)
Salvation Army	(Name)	(Number)
Others (List)	(Name)	(Number)

####

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

Sample Information Sheet:

TIPS TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM DEBRIS FLOWS (MUDSLIDES)

As spring approaches, the burned hillsides of (locations) look green and inviting. But the steep slopes left bare by (last month's) firestorms are still very susceptible to debris flows, popularly called mudslides or mud flows. The danger is greatest during rainstorms and the few days after each rain.

Debris flows are sudden gushes of mud, rocks, tree trunks, and other debris that break loose from steep slopes and race downhill, sometimes over long distances. After one surge or wave of a mudslide, more surges or waves may follow, at intervals of minutes to hours.

The (State emergency service) advises residents and visitors to take the following safety precautions.

▪ Keep an eye on the weather. If it looks like rain, listen to a weather report on the radio. Even if it is not raining in the foothills, it might be raining hard in the mountains.

 Listen for National Weather Service advisory messages. A flash flood **watch** for a particular area means that heavy rains with mud and debris flow potential have been predicted for that area. A flash flood **warning** means flooding and debris flow are already occurring and may continue.

▪ Cancel or postpone plans for hiking, biking, or horseback riding if it has rained recently or if rain is predicted.

▪ Plan ahead:

 ☐ Arrange a meeting place for your family or companions outside your neighborhood or outing destination.

 ☐ Plan to wear or carry appropriate clothing and footwear that is warm, wetproof, and sturdy.

 ☐ Have an adequate supply of emergency food and water.

 ☐ Have an emergency supply kit that includes a flashlight, spare batteries, a portable radio, and potable water. Store the kit in an easily accessible and safe area.

 ☐ Purchase flood insurance, if living in an area at risk for flood or mudslides.

For more information about flood and mudslide preparedness, as well as disaster assistance programs, residents are invited to visit the (center location).

The Center is located at **(address), (city).** It is open **(days),** from **(hours),** and is a joint effort of the (State emergency services) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
####

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

Sample Checklist:

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW IF YOU HAVE TO EVACUATE

In spite of tireless sandbagging efforts by friends and charitable strangers, the powerful floodwater cannot always be stopped. Some of us have already evacuated our homes. For others, evacuation is imminent. Whenever the water wins the battle, there is pain and loss. And by the time someone is forced to leave, often their energy is depleted and safety may be threatened. By preparing an evacuation plan in advance, flood victims can ensure that necessities are packed and the route is planned.

If possible, gather important family documents and place them in a waterproof, portable container. Examples of documents you may save include:

- Insurance policies, wills, contracts, deeds, stock certificates and bonds
- Passports, social security cards, immunization records
- Bank account numbers, safe deposit box information
- Credit card account numbers and companies
- Inventory of valuable household goods, important telephone numbers
- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)
- Valuable photographs

Here is a checklist of what you should have ready before you are forced to leave:

- Battery operated radio and spare batteries
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit and manual
- Three-day supply of nonperishable foods and water (one gallon per day per person)
- Essential prescription and nonprescription medicines
- Mess kit (or paper plates, cups, and plastic utensils)
- Baby supplies such as formula, bottle, diapers, powdered milk and medications
- Nonelectric can opener
- All purpose knife
- Toilet paper
- Soap, liquid detergent
- Feminine supplies
- Personal hygiene items
- Contact lenses, solution, and extra eyeglasses
- Denture supplies
- Complete change of clothing and footwear for each household member
- Sturdy shoes or work boots
- Rain gear

-more-

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

page 2

- Cash or traveler's checks, change
- Whistle
- Entertainment—books, games, journal

It is important to map your evacuation route before the time comes. Identify your evacuation destination (nearest shelter, relative's home, etc.) and plan to triple the travel time to account for traffic and road conditions.

These ideas are part of a 56-page booklet named "Repairing Your Flooded Home". Published jointly by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the American Red Cross, copies are available free at all disaster application centers. Copies can also be obtained by writing to FEMA Publications, P.O. Box 70274, Washington, DC 20024.

####

Unit 4: Identifying Community-Specific Communications Issues

Introduction

So far in this course, you have learned basic communications skills and how communicating in an emergency is different from communicating day-to-day. But have you considered that some people in your community may have specific communications needs that may require you to change the way you communicate with them in an emergency? In this unit, you will learn about why traditional messages don't always work across cultures or with special-needs groups.

Unit 4 Objectives

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

- Identify potential verbal and nonverbal communication issues related to age, culture, language, or disability.

- Analyze your community to identify groups requiring special consideration when preparing and delivering emergency communication.

- Develop a strategy for refocusing your emergency communication to meet the special needs of the community.

Why Traditional Messages Don't Always Work

To illustrate how cultures shape behavior, read the short case study on the following page. Then, try to analyze what you think occurred.

Case Study **Case Study 4.1: Town Meeting**

Your community has a large population of immigrants and their descendants from India. As part of a community preparedness campaign, you have been asked to speak at a town meeting about how to be prepared for extreme temperatures.

On the evening of your talk, you arrive early to check out the audience and notice that a large percentage is Indian. As you begin your talk, you notice that the Indian members of the audience are slowly shaking their heads back and forth sideways. You don't understand why they don't understand your message because the others in the audience are obviously engaged.
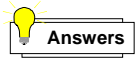
Answers

Case Study 4.1: Town Meeting (Continued)

Answers to Case Study

What happened during your talk?

Were the Indian members of the audience not listening? Did they not understand? Did they disagree?

Slowly shaking one's head back and forth sideways does not always mean "no." Rather, it signals "I'm listening" in parts of India. The Indian members of your audience were paying every bit as much attention to your message as others.

Why Traditional Messages Don't Always Work (Continued)

We in America have strong cultural traditions based on the influence of the Western Europeans who originally established our government. Whether we realize it or not—and we often don't—these traditions shape the way we interact with other people. As our country has evolved, however, our population has experienced a huge influx of immigrants who have brought their languages, cultures, and traditions to the United States. Today, America hardly resembles the country that the Founding Fathers envisioned more than two centuries ago.

We are older and more diverse. We are more accepting of others whose languages, cultures, and traditions are different from ours. And we recognize the inherent value of all Americans, regardless of culture, age, or disability.

As you saw from the case study, cultural differences reflect internal beliefs and thought patterns that cause people to react differently to the same situation.

Cultural issues aren't your only considerations when communicating. Differences in age and sex, the presence of a disabling condition—and even the part of the country you live in—can affect how you communicate.

To a large extent, the misunderstandings that occur involving people from different cultures have nothing to do with what they said—it's how they said it, what they did when they said it, or even who they said it to.

Activity

Activity: Analyzing Community-Specific Needs

Take some time to analyze your community's special communications needs. Use the worksheet below and on the next page to help you organize your analysis.

1. What ethnic communities/cultural groups are represented in your community?

2. Where are these groups located?

3. Does your community include large percentages of:

   ☐ Non-English speakers?
   ☐ Elderly?
   ☐ Disabled?
   ☐ Other special-needs groups?

4. Where are these groups located?

Activity: Analyzing Community-Specific Needs (Continued)

5. What are the implications for these groups in communication during:

☐ Public information?

☐ Emergency communications?

6. Where can you find additional information about each of these groups that can help you plan your communications with them?

How To Recognize When a Message Isn't Being Communicated

How can you tell when your message is not being communicated? It's not realistic to become an expert on every culture that you may encounter. However, it *is* reasonable for you to learn about the populations who make up major parts of your community.

Tips

Take the time to learn the basic customs of the ethnic groups in your community. The tips below may help your learning process.

- Many communities sponsor special days on which the various cultures represented in the community can share their food, artwork, and other entertainment with their neighbors. Take the time to attend these events. Pay careful attention to what you see and hear.

- Talk to the leaders of the cultural groups in your community. You will find that most will be pleased that you care enough to make the effort and will be very willing to share key attributes of their culture with you.

- Read news articles about the groups represented in your community. Frequently, these articles can provide good insight into the people and the behaviors that are part of their cultures. (This strategy is especially helpful when you are new to a community or are from a different part of the country.)

Making yourself aware of key cultural and other differences that you will need to address during an emergency will help you learn what to expect of the groups and whether your message is being communicated.

So what do you do "in the moment" to determine whether your message is being communicated? You might find some of the tips below helpful.

Tips

- Be sensitive to "puzzled" looks from your audience. Nearly all people of all cultures show it on their faces when they don't understand.

- Look for changes in body language.

Case Study

Case Study 4.2: What Did I Do Wrong?
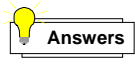
Read the case study below. Then, analyze the case to determine what went wrong.

You are the assistant emergency planner in a small Midwestern town. As this is your first job out of college, you are excited about being able to help your community in its preparedness efforts.

One of your first responsibilities involved touring a local nursing home and assisting the administrator, Mrs. Jones, with the facility's evacuation plan. Your call to schedule an appointment with Mrs. Jones went well, and you arrive just a few minutes after your appointment time. Mrs. Jones keeps you waiting for 10 minutes more before seeing you.

After exchanging initial pleasantries, Mrs. Jones, who appears to be in her early sixties, takes you on a tour of the facility and introduces you to the residents that you meet along the way. As Mrs. Jones introduces you, she takes time to chat with the residents, whom she addresses by first name. Following her lead, you chat briefly with the residents, also addressing them by first name. For the remainder of the tour, you notice that Mrs. Jones has little to say, but that doesn't bother you. It gives you time to think about how the facility can rewrite its evacuation plan.

By the time that you finish your tour, you are very excited because of all the ideas you have for helping with the evacuation plan. When you return to Mrs. Jones's office, you immediately begin telling Mrs. Jones the improvements you have in mind. Imagine your surprise when the look she gives you stops you in your tracks.

Answers

Case Study 4.2: What Did I Do Wrong?

Answers to Case Study

<u>What might you have done to turn Mrs. Jones off</u>?

While there are no definitive answers provided in the case study, some points you might consider are:

- You may have gotten off on the wrong foot by being late for the appointment. Some people view punctuality as a sign of respect for their time. The fact that Mrs. Jones kept you waiting for 10 minutes might indicate a last-minute phone call—or it might indicate her irritation with the fact that you were tardy.
- There is quite an age difference between Mrs. Jones and you—and an even greater age difference between the residents and you. Referring to the residents by their first names was probably a mistake, which Mrs. Jones took as a sign of disrespect. Her quiet attitude following your discussion with the residents might very well have indicated her annoyance.
- You probably also made a mistake by starting on "improvements" immediately upon returning to Mrs. Jones's office without thanking her for showing you around, complimenting her on the facility, or even acknowledging the strengths of the existing facility plan.

Improving Communications With the Community

It is critical that you take into account cultural differences when addressing communications across cultures or to those with special needs. The tips listed below will get you started.

Tips

- **Don't assume sameness**. It is important that you not assume that everyone thinks and reacts the same way you would to a situation. When confronted by a response that you don't expect, ask yourself: Could this response be culturally based—or could the response be based on age, sex, or other special need?

- **Don't assume that you understand what the other person means**. Be aware of customs and other communications that are different from what is traditional in the United States.

- **Don't inadvertently cause the behavior**. Ask yourself: Did I do anything that may have caused the individual's or group's reaction? (For example, common hand signals used to motion an individual to come toward you may be seen as a rude gesture in some countries.) Watch for cues that would indicate that your behaviors or statements inadvertently were seen as threatening or insensitive. If you think there could be possibly be a misunderstanding, assume responsibility and regroup.

Activity: Personal Improvement Goals

Think about the special communication needs that you identified in the previous activity. Select one or more groups from the list. Then, using the space provided below, list five things that you can change to improve your next communication with the group(s) you selected.

Group:

Changes I can make to improve communication:

Summary and Transition

In this unit, you have learned some of the community-specific issues that can affect your day-to-day and emergency communications. You have also identified some of the specific communications needs in your community and identified how you can change what you do to communicate better with those groups.

In the next unit, you will learn how the various technologies that are available can help you communicate.

Reference Library

For More Information

- Online tutorial: Cultural Issues in Business Communication: http://www.bena.com/ewinters/OnlineTutorial.html

- AMPU Guide: Common Cross-cultural Communication Challenges: http://www.wwcd.org/action/ampu/crosscult.html

- Cross-cultural Communication: http://expert.cc.purdue.edu/~qguo/crossculture.html

- Cross-cultural, Online Resources: http://www.prov.co.jp/resources.html

- Online Language Translator: http://babelfish.yahoo.com

- "Communicating With and About People With Disabilities": http://dol.gov/dol/odep/public/pubs/fact/comucate.htm

Knowledge Check

Carefully read each question and all of the possible answers before selecting the most appropriate response for each test item. Circle the letter corresponding to the answer that you have chosen. Complete all of the questions without looking at the course material.

1. Which statement is true?

   a. All people who live in the United States communicate in the same way.
   b. Gestures that Americans take for granted can be offensive to others.
   c. Communication is not affected by geographic area of the country.
   d. Emergency managers only need to be concerned with cross-cultural communication.

2. Our cultural traditions:

   a. Have no bearing on how we communicate.
   b. Are not offensive to others who live in the United States.
   c. Affect how we think, act, and communicate.
   d. Should not be reflected in how we speak or write.

3. Cultural differences reflect internal beliefs and thought patterns that cause people to react differently to the same situation.

   a. True
   b. False

4. A first step in communicating across cultures or with special-needs populations is to:

   a. Not assume sameness.
   b. Learn to speak their language.
   c. Place responsibility for communications on the receiver.
   d. Immerse yourself in all represented cultures.

5. A good indicator that an individual has not understood what you said is:

   a. A smile.
   b. The ability to paraphrase what was said.
   c. Asking questions that require further detail.
   d. A puzzled look.

Answers

Knowledge Check (Continued)

1. b
2. c
3. a
4. a
5. d

Unit 5: Using Technology as a Communication Tool

Introduction

Technology can assist you in meeting your communication goals. On the other hand, choosing the wrong technology can interfere with your message. In this unit, you will learn:

- How and when technology can assist you with communication.

- Appropriate and inappropriate uses of e-mail, the Internet, and other technologies.

- How to select the best mix of high- and low-tech media.

Technology as a Tool

Selecting the best technology to support your message maximizes its impact. Selecting a different technology, however, is rarely the solution to a communication problem. Also, certainly, there is no correlation between the complexity of the technology and the effectiveness of the communication.

A table listing various communication technologies, their appropriate purposes and audiences, and tips and cautions for their use is shown on the following pages.

Technology as a Tool (Continued)

Technologies That Can Support Communication		
Technology	**Used To. . .**	**Audience Characteristics**
Telephone	- Communicate immediately - Communicate among people at different locations - Convey private information	- Limited in number - Identified
Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD)	Provide information, registration, or hotline numbers	Hearing-impaired
Radio	- Communicate immediately - Relay information to, from, or among emergency responders	- Limited in number - Identified - Equipped with radios
Fax	- Transmit emergency information - Transmit detailed or reference information - Transmit maps and other visuals - Provide a hard copy of information for documentation or future reference	- Identified - On-site to receive message
E-mail	Provide an individual or a homogeneous group with a single message	- Limited - Identified - Recipients share a common language - Sometimes limited to "subscribers"
Microphone and Overhead Projection Equipment	- Communicate with a group - Reinforce verbal message with maps or other graphics	Assembled group of any size
Public Address System (mobile)	Communicate with the public when other forms of communication are not available or are not working	Specific, limited geographic area
Emergency Alert System (EAS)	Provide an emergency warning message when a larger-scale emergency is imminent	Identified geographic area

Technology as a Tool (Continued)

Technology can be an effective communication tool but, as with traditional communication tools, they can disrupt the message when used incorrectly. The table below lists tips for and cautions when using various types of technology during an emergency.

Tips and Cautions for Communications Technology		
Technology	**Tips for Use**	**Cautions in Use**
Telephone	- Always identify yourself first. - State immediately if the call is an emergency. - If non-urgent in nature, ask if you are calling at a convenient time. - Ensure that you have appropriate privacy when you make your call. - Have pen and paper at hand to take notes. - Assess the listener's understanding by repeating key points or asking that they be repeated back to you. - Use proper telephone manners.	- Do not assume that cellular telephone calls are private. - The communication (unless taped) will not be documented for future reference. - If your conversation is on speaker phone, you may have other listeners, in addition to the person you phoned. - The recipient relies on only the spoken word to understand the message. (This may be less efficient than using multiple stimuli.)
Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD)	- Be sure to promote the TDD access number each time another phone line is promoted. - Be sure to promote TDD numbers in print.	- Test the TDD system from an equipped phone to ensure that it is working properly. - Be sure that your TDD system can accommodate all users.
Radio	- Avoid jargon and codes. - Be brief, communicating essential information only. - Adhere to established protocols for identification, communication, and signoff.	- Be aware that other people may overhear your message, in addition to the intended audience. - Limit to essential communication to avoid "clogging" or "overtalking."

Technology as a Tool (Continued)

Technology	Tips for Use	Cautions in Use
Fax	- Follow rules for good writing. - Include a cover sheet to ensure receipt. Include the number of pages on the cover sheet. - Request confirmation of receipt.	Speed of transmission does not negate the need for good writing and/or good manners.
E-mail	- Follow rules for good writing. - Request notification of receipt.	- As with faxes, speedy delivery does not negate the need for complete sentences and proper spelling and grammar. - E-mail can be revised or tampered with without your permission. - You do not know how frequently recipients check e-mail. - E-mail can be forwarded beyond its intended audience.
Microphone and Overhead Projection Equipment	- Be familiar with the operation of all equipment. - Ensure that projected materials are clear and professional.	- Using this method in a small group may appear impersonal. - Many projectors lack the capability of projecting fine detail.
Public Address System	- Enunciate clearly. - Keep messages simple. - Repeat key information often enough to account for changes in audience.	- It is difficult to convey different messages to segments of the population. - It is challenging to assess the demographics or special communication needs of a mobile group.
EAS	Ensure that technology used adds meaning rather than confusion (e.g., do not use satellite images or complex terminology without explanation.).	Test EAS technology regularly to ensure that it is operable when needed.

Are all tools available and functional?

Emergency conditions can result in power outages or other conditions that may limit your choice of technologies. Be prepared to choose lower-tech methods to support your communication.

Combining High-Tech and Low-Tech Tools

In most cases, you can use a mix of high-tech and low-tech tools to support your message. In choosing your methods, consider your:

- Message   (What?)

- Purpose   (Why?)

- Recipient   (Who?)

The table below examines some of the nuances of each of these three elements.

Message	Purpose	Recipient
- What do you want to convey? - What tone is appropriate for your information? - Is there more than one message?	- Why are you distributing this information? - How and when do you want people to respond? - How soon do people need this information?	- Who is the audience? - What are the primary languages spoken by your target audience? - What are the special communication needs among your audience (including needs dictated by culture)? - Where do they typically learn new information?

Review the case studies that follow and consider how technology can be used to support the message and audience needs.

Case Study

Case Studies in Choosing and Combining Communication Technologies

Below and on the following pages are several real-world situations that you are likely to encounter on the job. After you answer the question following each case study, review the suggested response that follows. Finally, review the learning points associated with the case study.

Case Study 5.1: Planning a Hurricane Preparedness Assembly

On February 1, you decide to host a May 1st meeting on hurricane preparedness. It will be open to all local, State, and voluntary organization representatives who work in emergency management.

You consult government phone books to obtain the fax numbers of all related agencies and send the information out mid-February. You want as many attendees as possible, so you send the information in the form of a flyer and hope that it will be shared among all office personnel.

You also post the flyer on government Web sites and on City Hall bulletin boards.

On the day of the assembly, you are surprised to find a very small turnout.

How could you have used technology to increase the impact of the meeting announcement and the number of attendees?
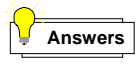
_____

_____

_____

_____

Answers

Case Studies in Choosing and Combining Communication Technologies (Continued)

Answers to Case Study 5.1

<u>How could you have used technology tools to increase the impact of the meeting announcement and the number of attendees</u>?

Your answer is correct if it contains these elements:

- Substitute or add tools that deliver individual invitations.
- Include a mechanism for tracking attendance.
- Use a broader variety of tools to reach the same audience more frequently.

Learning Points
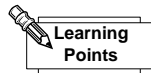
- Because the faxed or posted flyer was not specifically addressed, some people may have assumed it was intended for others.
- Unless you confirmed the fax numbers, you cannot be sure that the published information was current.
- You may send the flyer as an enclosure with a personal letter that requests a response. It is likely to merit closer attention. If it is not practical to contact all potential attendees individually, identify department heads and others who can distribute your message to a broader audience.
- You may make a phone call or send a letter to key personnel in which you could specify the benefits of attendance.
- You could place a notice of the meeting in appropriate newsletters.
- It is advisable to anticipate attendance. When numbers make a difference, be sure to request a response and specify the desired response technology (e-mail, phone number, etc.).
- Follow the original faxed information with subsequent inquiries (e.g., e-mail a note that reads "Planning to attend?").
- Make use of low-tech tools:

  - Each time you find yourself among colleagues, promote the meeting in your conversation.
  - Have a badge made that reads "Ask me about my hurricane preparedness meeting" and wear it.
  - Be creative: Include a piece of string in each invitation, stating that it is to be tied around a finger as a reminder to attend.

Case Study Case Studies in Choosing and Combining Communication Technologies (Continued)

Case Study 5.2: Flash-Flood Warning

You have just learned that the National Weather Service has issued a flash-flood warning for the portion of the Mellis River that runs through your county. The vulnerable area is primarily residential but also includes a recreational picnic area alongside the river and one public elementary school.

At this time, there is no flooding. However, the school day is almost over and you decide to evacuate the one-floor school. You must also disseminate the flood warning message to the community.

What technologies could you use to distribute the evacuation order and warning?
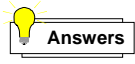
_____

_____

_____

_____

Answers

Case Studies in Choosing and Combining Communication Technologies (Continued)

Answers to Case Study 5.2

What technologies could you use to distribute the evacuation order and warning?

Your answer is correct if it contains these elements:

- Emergency Alert System activation.
- Immediate, personal technology (e.g., telephone) to contact the school principal.
- Public address system warnings to campers/boaters, motorists, and residents.
- A combination of tools (e.g., a school assembly briefing, or a print copy of a flash flood warning, radio and/or television announcements, etc.).

Learning Points

- Within this specific situation, you have a variety of messages to communicate to different audiences:

  - School occupants must evacuate.
  - Area residents should heed the warning and evacuate.
  - Motorists should avoid the area.
  - Park patrons should evacuate.
  - Parents must be told that their children have been evacuated.

- Consider the time of day (before the school day has ended), and note that some residents of the warning area will be at home and others will be at work or at other locations. Radio may be especially effective in reaching commuters.
- If access roads to the area are limited, consider nailing low-tech signs at key intersections or closing roads that are likely to be affected by flooding.

Case Study

Case Studies in Choosing and Combining Communication Technologies (Continued)

Case Study 5.3: Using Technology to Add Meaning

During a hurricane watch, a local television broadcast features a dramatic satellite image from a hurricane that hit the area 2 years ago. The broadcaster announces that the footage is 2 years old and explains that he is using it to underscore the importance of taking protective action.

Residents of a nursing and rehabilitation home view the broadcast. Some of the residents do not hear the announcer's explanation and assume that the footage is current. This creates stress and misunderstanding among the residents.

If you were in control of the broadcast, how could you have used technology differently to avoid this misunderstanding?

_____

_____

_____

_____
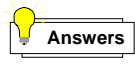
Answers

Case Studies in Choosing and Combining Communication Technologies (Continued)

Answers to Case Study 5.3

<u>If you were in control of the broadcast, how could you have used technology differently to avoid this misunderstanding</u>?

Your answer is correct if it contains any of these elements:

- Label the satellite image with the event date.
- Add a crawl line that identifies the satellite image.
- Follow the satellite image with contrasting current imagery.

Learning Points

- Anticipate how various audiences may interpret or misinterpret the message.
- In cases where technology is potentially confusing, use more than one to ensure understanding.
- Consider whether the additional technology really adds meaning to your message and whether the potential confusion is worth the risk.

Summary and Transition

In this unit, you gained perspective on how technology serves to enhance communication. You also explored several scenarios and considered the best mix of low- and high-tech media. In the next unit, you will study oral communication.

Before you proceed to the next unit, take a few minutes to complete the Knowledge Check on the next page.

Knowledge Check

Carefully read each question and all of the possible answers before selecting the most appropriate response for each test item. Circle the letter corresponding to the answer that you have chosen. Complete all of the questions without looking at the course material.

1. The Emergency Alert System is an appropriate tool for disseminating hazard mitigation materials.

   a. True   b. False

2. Technology can support communication but is not a solution in itself.

   a. True   b. False

3. Which of the following technologies is the best choice to convey urgent and highly sensitive information?

   a. Telephone
   b. Fax
   c. Letter
   d. E-mail
   e. Dispatch radio

4. Message, purpose, and _____ are the three primary factors that should guide your technology selection.

   a. Location
   b. Audience
   c. Time of day
   d. Language
   e. Type of emergency

5. In most emergency situations, you will use _____ to communicate.

   a. A mixture of low- and high-technology tools
   b. The most sophisticated technology tools
   c. The most basic technology tools
   d. Only technology that does not depend on electricity
   e. Primarily television broadcasts

Answers
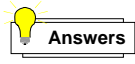
Knowledge Check (Continued)

1. False
2. True
3. a
4. b
5. a
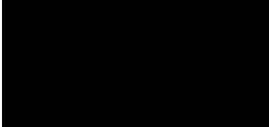
Unit 6: Effective Oral Communication

Introduction

In the previous unit, you explored some of the ways that technology can enhance successful communication. You also began to examine ways that messages, audiences, and purposes can differ. In this unit, you will continue that examination in the context of spoken messages.

One of your most important requirements for emergency management is oral communication. During daily conversation, you make automatic adjustments to your message and delivery to ensure that you make your point. But have you ever stopped to wonder how you knew to repeat your point? Or why you chose to share a personal example from your own experience to convince your listener?

Unit 6 Objectives

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

- Determine the appropriate type of oral communication for the message and audience.

- Analyze your nonverbal cues to determine if and how they may interfere with your message.

- Use nonverbal cues displayed by an audience to improve the effectiveness of your communication.

- Recognize appropriate and inappropriate uses of humor in oral communication.

This unit also will help you to identify and adjust your oral skills in the variety of situations that you are likely to face.

Matching Communication to Message and Audience

In your role as emergency manager, planner, or responder, you may be asked to communicate critical information in:

- One-on-one conversations.

- Small group discussions.

- Public presentations.

- Media interviews.

What types of situations call for oral communication?

- Sometimes, you know the audience and the situation (e.g., an unruly crowd developing during a protest rally) and need to develop a message (e.g., dispersal, safety, public nuisance).

- Other times you start with a message for many audiences (e.g., buy flood insurance coverage) and must decide the venues (public service announcements, mass mailing, etc.).

- At other times, you have a very specific message and audience (e.g., firing a subordinate) but must create an appropriate situation for delivery.

- Still other times, you may be required to provide a media interview about a developing emergency and must keep your message clear and your voice calm to avoid confusing or panicking your audience.

Each circumstance offers unique challenges and opportunities to match your verbal and nonverbal communication to your message and audience.

Activity

Activity: Matching the Message

The purpose of this activity is to match the message type to its purpose and audience.

For every situation in Column A, choose two matches from Column B.

Matching Message and Type of Oral Communication

1. One-on-one conversation
    ____   ____

2. Small-group discussion
    ____   ____

3. Public presentation
    ____   ____

4. Media interview
    ____   ____

    a. Review internal budgets
    b. Publicize Fire Prevention Week
    c. Evaluate staff performance
    d. Educate city-wide animal shelter staff
    e. Offer condolences to a coworker
    f.   Announce agency policy changes
    g. Conduct a Hazard Awareness Fair
    h. Explore increased interagency cooperation

Answers

Activity: Matching the Message (Continued)

The correct answers are:

1. c, e
2. a, h
3. d, g
4. b, f

Review the correct answers and compare them to yours.

Learning Points

- You probably found most of the correct matches to be obvious. That's because our experience in society gives us a sense of appropriateness that allows us to communicate fairly automatically. But can you identify the steps you take in forming communications and implementing them?
- Which of these questions did you consciously consider when you chose your matches?

  - How many people are in the audience?
  - How many times will I have to deliver the message?
  - Does this method use my time efficiently?
  - Is my message going to the correct audience?
  - Is the message going to others in addition to the correct audience?
  - Will there be a negative impact if this message is delivered to some people who do not need it?
  - What image do I want to convey with my message (e.g., authoritative, competent, informed, or sympathetic)?
  - Am I respecting the emotional sensitivity of the message?
  - Will I be able to track the success of my communication effort?

- Matching messages to their purpose and audiences will help ensure communication success.

Oral Communication with Mass Media

The news media can be a strong ally in alerting and informing the public. It is important to establish credible and productive working relationships with representatives of the media. In most instances, the media will be cooperative in publishing important planning, response, and recovery information. You are in a position to assist them in understanding the important public service role they play.

There are two likely forums in which you will use your oral communication skills: interviews and press conferences. In both circumstances, your primary audience is the public, with the media serving as a conduit for your information. Be sure that the informational messages that you provide to the media are spoken as though you are directly addressing your audience.

Always be aware that when you provide information for the media to promote, the media industry itself is a sensitive secondary audience. In the worst case, the media may:

- Report your message erroneously.

- Report accurate information in an incorrect context.

- Focus public attention on you or your operation instead of on your message.

To minimize misunderstandings, build strong relationships with media representatives.

- Work actively to keep the media informed.

- Keep up-to-date contact lists for media representatives.

- Be aware of media deadlines.

- Respond to media inquiries promptly.

- Be respectful and tactful, even if you are asked questions that make you uncomfortable.

- Be honest about what you know.

- Acknowledge what you do not know and offer to seek answers.

Building relationships with the media will help them help you—and the public—in an emergency.

Success Tips for Media Interviews

Tips

Many people view media interviews with a mixture of dread and helplessness. But, a media interview is a communication opportunity. No matter what topic the interviewer has in mind, you have the opportunity to make your own key points. Job Aid 6.1 on the following page provides a number of tips to help you stay in control of the interview process.

Job Aid 6.1
Tips for Media Interviews

Before the Interview:

- Track all media inquiries and note the reporter's name, organization, date, and purpose.
- If possible, review the scope of the interview with the reporter before the interview so that you can anticipate what might be asked.
- Provide background information that helps the reporter understand the issues.
- Identify the points that you want to communicate during the interview and make sure these facts come to mind easily.
- Identify a message that you can incorporate into your first and last remark. For example, if the reporter opens the interview by saying, "Thanks for talking with us today," you may respond, "I'm proud to speak on behalf of the community's unified response effort," or "Thank you for this opportunity to promote flood insurance."
- Dress appropriately.

During the Interview:

- Listen to the entire question before answering.
- Avoid speculation.
- Beware of false assumptions and erroneous conclusions.
- Avoid hypothetical questions.
- Be alert to multiple questions and address them individually.
- Be confident and concentrate on delivering your message.
- Keep your answers simple and direct.
- Speak in "sound bites" (i.e., concise, memorable, short statements).
- Never repeat inaccurate or damaging information spoken within a reporter's question. Instead, restate the information in a positive manner in your answer.
- Do not refer to the reporter by name, as the reporter may not be included when the interview is aired.
- Treat all questions seriously.
- NEVER speak "off the record."
- While answering questions, be attuned to opportunities to promote *your* message.
- If you are being recorded or taped and botch an answer, simply begin the answer again. If taped, the exchange will most likely be edited.
- Be aware of your appearance:

  - Avoid nervous gestures; do not overuse hand gestures.
  - Display good posture.
  - Maintain eye contact.
  - Ensure that your glasses (if you wear them) are not slipping downward.
  - Remove dark glasses.
  - Avoid wearing stripes, "busy" patterns, and red.
  - If seated, ensure that your jacket does not ride up behind your neck by sitting on the coattails.

- Leave all equipment concerns to the reporter or sound technician.

After the Interview:

- Obtain and provide any information you promised to supply.
- Provide written background information, and be available to the reporter for follow-up questions.
- If the story is publicized with inaccuracies, call the reporter and politely point out the errors.

Nonverbal Cues

More than half of face-to-face communication is exchanged through nonverbal cues. Because up to 65 percent of the meaning your message is unspoken, it is imperative to learn to "read" nonverbal communication.

After you learn to "speak" this second language, you can use it to amplify your message. You also want to master reading nonverbal language. By reading your listener, you can gather real-time feedback that tells you whether or not you are communicating successfully. If your message is not getting through, maybe you need to adjust *your* nonverbal broadcast.

What do nonverbal cues communicate?

Eyes, tone of voice, expression, volume, and gestures reflect attitudes, emotions, state of mind, and related messages. While you probably are aware of this, you may not realize just how important those messages are to your listener.

Nonverbal cues can reveal three basic emotions:

- Like or dislike.

- Submission or dominance.

- The degree to which others can arouse reactions.

Nonverbal Clusters

Nonverbal clusters are several related nonverbal signals that work in concert. Generally, the presence of a nonverbal cluster is more significant than a single signal and reflects changes in attitude and state of mind.

Below is an example that shows how we use nonverbal cluster signals to judge the success of our communication:

You are talking to a peer. Your listener yawns. What might be the significance of the yawn? Is your listener:

- Unreceptive to your message?

- Sleep deprived?

- In need of additional oxygen?

Nonverbal Clusters (Continued)

Now, you are having the same conversation. This time your listener yawns while frequently glancing around the room with a bored look and tapping a pencil on the desk. From this cluster of nonverbal behavior, you can assume that your listener is not receptive to your message.

Case Study

Case Study 6.1: Mixed Signals

Read the following case study and answer the question below. Then turn the page to compare your answer with the suggested response.

Imagine yourself seated across from your supervisor's desk telling her about a conflict with a coworker. As you relay the details of the incident, she begins to page through a color catalog of protective clothing that is open on the desk. When you ask her opinion, she continues to look downward, but responds, "Personnel issues are my highest priority. I will look into it."

What are some of the feelings you might experience after this conversation?

_____

_____

_____

_____
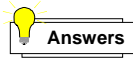
Answers

Case Study 6.1: Mixed Signals (Continued)

Answer to Case Study

<u>What are some of the feelings you might have after this communication</u>? Examine your answer to see if it includes any of these elements:

- Confusion
- Mistrust
- Distance
- Disrespect

No answer is incorrect.

Learning Points

- It is especially troubling when people send mixed messages.
- Listeners instinctively react with mistrust and caution.
- When words and actions are not in sync, the nonverbal cues contradict or supersede verbal messages.
- Conflicting words and nonverbal messages can indicate that the speaker:

  - Is experiencing conflict.
  - Is not sincere.
  - Is not committed to the message.

Nonverbal cues can have an impact equal to or stronger than the words that are spoken. When the speaker's body language is in sync with the verbal message, the message is reinforced. Listeners are more likely to respond to this extra persuasion with increased respect, harmony, or trust.

But mismatched body language can actually block communication and breed resentment and distrust. In fact, when there is a conflict between verbal and nonverbal messages, people are more likely to believe the nonverbal message.

Activity: Nonverbal Behaviors

Review the nonverbal behaviors listed below and jot down how the behaviors might be evident in each of the situations described.

	Emergency Planner Makes Presentation to Civic Association	Fire Chief Gives TV Interview at Site of Explosion	American Red Cross Manager Thanks Office Staff (2) for Efforts
Vocal intonation -*Volume* -*Speed* -*Clarity* -*Inflection*			
Style of dress			
Personal effects -*Hairstyle* -*Clothing* -*Jewelry*			
Silence			
Body language -*Posture* -*Eye movement* -*Body position* -*Fidgeting* -*Expression*			
Gestures			

Answers
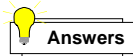
Activity: Nonverbal Behaviors (Continued)

Compare your ideas about how nonverbal behavior would be expressed to the sample responses below.

	Emergency Planner Makes Presentation to Civic Association	Fire Chief Gives TV Interview at Site of Explosion	American Red Cross Coordinator Thanks Office Staff (2) for Efforts
Vocal intonation	Clear, energetic voice, dynamic	Moderate volume, slower speed, authoritative	Fast speed, somewhat high volume, irregular inflection, warmth
Style of dress	Business attire	Uniform	Agency T-shirt and slacks
Personal effects *-Hairstyle* *-Clothing* *-Jewelry*	Hair should be neat. Clothes should be good quality. Avoid extreme clothing or too much jewelry.	Appropriate to the serious nature of the emergency.	Hair should be neat. Clothes should be good quality. Avoid extreme clothing or too much jewelry.
Silence	Use brief silences in asking a sequence of questions aloud.	Use silence between interview questions. Do not talk to fill lulls.	Turn off the office radio to spotlight the importance of the message.
Body language *-Posture* *-Eye movement* *-Body position* *-Fidgeting* *-Expression*	Standing straight, but relaxed, making contact with people in various parts of the room, leaning slightly forward with expressive face.	Chief should stand still, keep head high, and face the interviewer.	Coordinator should lean toward staff, maintain good eye contact, have animated facial expressions, modulate voice, smile, and hold arms and hands relaxed away from body.
Gestures	Use natural hand gestures.	Minimize gestures and fidgeting on camera.	Touch staff on arm or hand.

Tips

Read the nonverbal cues that your audience sends while you make a presentation. Use them as immediate, personal feedback for reflecting on your success or lack of communication. Then, adjust your delivery in response to the audience's level of understanding and interest.

Cross-Cultural Meanings of Nonverbals

Caution

Nonverbal language can have meaning that is culture-specific. An example of a nonverbal behavior that has different meanings among different cultures is eye contact. In the United States, maintaining strong eye contact indicates that the listener is attentive and interested in the message. In some Asian cultures, looking directly into a speaker's eyes indicates disrespect, while lowering the eyes indicates polite manners. In the animal world, direct eye contact is a challenge or form of aggression, while averted eyes mean submission or harmlessness.

Touching someone while speaking is known as "haptics." When, where, and how often we touch each other has cultural significance. Americans tend to touch each other less than members of many other cultures.

We need to be especially sensitive to cultural differences regarding haptics. For example, a disaster relief worker in Louisiana successfully calms an elderly, female hurricane victim by patting her on the shoulder as they talk. The same worker uses the identical tactic on a male Hawaiian disaster victim and is told she will be "very sorry if you put your hands on me again."

"Chronemics" is the timing of verbal exchanges—the pause between the conclusion of one person speaking and the other replying. For some, a long wait before a reply indicates lack of attention. However, in some cultures, a pause before replying indicates a polite and considered response.

Personal space is another aspect of nonverbal communication that is culturally specific. Within each culture, there are expected personal distances for different types of relationships. Nonverbal communication can be confusing when these comfort zones are violated.

Studies indicate that Americans prefer these proximities:

- Personal distance – 1.5 to 4 feet. This is the distance typically found between friends and intimates.

- Social distance – 4 to 12 feet. This is the usual distance for social and business transactions.

- Public distance – 12 feet or more. This distance is generally preferred among strangers in public.

Cross-Cultural Meanings of Nonverbals (Continued)

Below are examples of some typical nonverbal clusters and their meanings in the United States:

- Boredom

  - slouching in seat
  - yawning
  - staring out window
  - no eye contact
  - neutral expression
  - fidgeting
  - closed posture
  - drifting attention
  - slow to respond
  - neutral or "slurred" speech

- Frustration

  - rubbing forehead with hand
  - tense, worried expression
  - throwing hands up in the air

- Agreement or Enthusiasm

  - leaning towards speaker
  - making eye contact
  - touching speaker's arm or hand
  - nodding head
  - relaxed, open posture
  - smiling or laughing
  - faster speech
  - higher pitch

- Disagreement or Confusion

  - Frowning
  - shaking head
  - leaning back or away
  - pursing lips
  - tightened jaw and closed posture
  - staring elsewhere
  - shallow, rapid breathing
  - limited facial expression and hand gestures
  - slower speech
  - lower pitch

Cross-Cultural Meanings of Nonverbals (Continued)

▪ Evaluation

- chewing on eyeglass frames
- wearing a thoughtful, intense expression

Nonverbal cues are summarized in Job Aid 6.2 on the following page. This job aid is also included in Appendix A.

Job Aid 6.2
Nonverbal Cues

SPEAKER'S NONVERBAL CUES

Your nonverbal language reflects your attitudes, emotions, state of mind, and related messages. Nonverbal cues include:

- Vocal intonation:
    - Pitch, tone, inflection, volume
    - Rhythm, timing
- Silence
- Personal space
- Styles of dress:
    - Uniform (conveys authority, power)
    - Casual vs. dressy

- Body language:
    - Posture, body position
    - Head movements
    - Eye movement, eye contact
    - Facial expressions
    - Fidgeting, yawning
    - Touching

LISTENER'S NONVERBAL CUES

Indicators of . . .

Boredom	▪ Slouching in one's seat ▪ Yawning ▪ Staring out the window ▪ Lack of eye contact ▪ Neutral expression ▪ Fidgeting ▪ Closed posture ▪ Drifting attention ▪ Slowness to respond ▪ Neutral or "slurred" speech
Frustration	▪ Rubbing forehead with hand ▪ Tense, worried expression ▪ Throwing hands up in the air
Agreement, Enthusiasm	▪ Leaning toward the speaker ▪ Making eye contact ▪ Touching the speaker's arm or hand ▪ Nodding head ▪ Relaxed, open posture ▪ Smiling or laughing ▪ Faster speech ▪ Higher pitch
Disagreement, Confusion	▪ Frowning ▪ Shaking head ▪ Leaning back or away ▪ Pursing lips ▪ Tightened jaw and closed posture ▪ Staring elsewhere ▪ Shallow, rapid breathing ▪ Limited facial expression and hand gestures ▪ Slower speech ▪ Lower pitch
Evaluation	▪ Chewing on eyeglass frames ▪ Wearing a thoughtful, intense expression

Humor

Using humor in speeches is a long-standing tradition. You can probably remember many times when you heard a speaker open a presentation with a joke. Most likely, you smiled at the jokes, settled in to listen to the messages and cannot remember any of the jokes that were told. However, if you can, it is probable that the joke offended you in some way. Why?

When you hear humor successfully integrated into a presentation, it can enhance your reception to the speaker and message. You are relaxed by amusement and open to listening. Hence, the successful use of humor lies in eliciting a smile from the audience with a joke that is unlikely to offend.

Humor used wisely may:

- Establish commonality.

- Increase trust.

- Reduce anxiety.

- Provide relief.

- Pace the delivery of complicated information.

Effects of Failed Humor

Caution

When humor misses its mark, it can forge a terribly memorable link between you, your message, and personal offense.

Consider the childhood joke below, told by a young boy, and heard very differently by three adults: Jane, Charlie, and Natasha.

Knock, knock.
Who's there?
Ivan.
Ivan who?
Ivant to suck your blood (delivered with vampire body language).

Jane has two 6-year-old sons. This joke makes her groan with fond recognition. She tousles the child's hair.

Charlie smiles at the child, but as a vegetarian he finds the joke a little uncomfortable and he finds a reason to move away from the child.

Natasha, a recent immigrant from the Ukraine, feels hurt by what she perceives to be a joke at her expense. She patiently explains to the child that it is rude to make fun of her accented English.

Using humor is risky because what we may and may not find humorous is extremely personal. Our sense of what is funny reflects our culture, values, life experience, fears, and imagination. Remember that when you tell a joke, no two people hear it exactly the same way.

If humor is so risky, why use it? Because when you can make someone smile or laugh, you make a powerful connection.

Activity: Body Language

Analyze your body language and identify the messages that you typically communicate to others when you are speaking. What do you project as a listener?

Activity: Public Speaking

Analyze how you feel when speaking publicly and how your feelings may show. Refer to earlier sections in this unit to help you evaluate your nonverbal language.

Summary and Transition

Upon completion of this unit, you should feel confident about your verbal communication ability in a wide variety of situations. In the next unit, you will apply that ability to the development of a presentation. But, before you continue to the next unit, take a few minutes to assess your understanding of Unit Six by taking the Knowledge Check on the next page.

For More Information

Communication tips:
www.csus.edu/indiv/k/kiddv/coptalk/pages/comtips/comtips.htm

Check ✓

Knowledge Check

Carefully read each question and all of the possible answers before selecting the most appropriate response for each test item. Circle the letter corresponding to the answer that you have chosen. Complete all of the questions without looking at the course material.

1. Which statement is true?

   a. Verbal and nonverbal communications always match.
   b. When verbal and nonverbal messages conflict, words are more persuasive than nonverbal cues.
   c. Nonverbal cues are automatic echoes of spoken messages.
   d. Nonverbal cues transmit 65% of the meaning of our communication.

2. Which of the following measurements is the preferred distance for personal conversation in the United States?

   a. 1 to 2 feet
   b. 1.5 to 4 feet
   c. 4 to 12 feet
   d. 12 feet or more

3. Frowning, staring elsewhere, tightened posture, and leaning away from the speaker constitute a nonverbal cluster that indicates what emotion in the United States?

   a. Disagreement
   b. Boredom
   c. Evaluation
   d. Understanding

4. If you use humor successfully in a presentation, you may _____.

   a. Increase your audience's trust.
   b. Pace your presentation to maximize comprehension.
   c. Establish commonality between you and the audience.
   d. All of the above.

5. If a reporter asks you, "When did your team stop floundering and get control of this emergency response?" which of the following is your best response?

   a. "My team stopped floundering and got control of this response from the beginning."
   b. "My team initiated a unified, professional response from the start."
   c. "Correction: My team never floundered in this response."
   d. "I'm not going to honor your provocative question with a response."

Answers
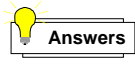
Knowledge Check (Continued)

1. d
2. b
3. a
4. d
5. b

Unit 7: Preparing Oral Presentations

Introduction

In the previous unit, you examined verbal and nonverbal aspects of communicating information in person. In this unit, you will build on that knowledge and improve your skills in preparing a successful oral presentation. You will learn about:

- Types of presentations.

- Planning and developing presentations.

- The importance of practice.

Unit 7 Objectives

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

- Identify your own anxiety about public speaking and take steps to reduce your anxiety.

- Analyze the needs of the target audiences.

- Determine an appropriate message for your audience.

- Prepare an oral presentation to deliver your message.

- Give an oral presentation in a manner that effectively delivers the message and meets the needs of the target audiences.

Speech Anxiety

Speech anxiety is the single most common social anxiety in the United States. The anxiety can range from simple nervousness to a degree that makes the speaker physically ill. However, for most people pre-speech anxiety consists of tightness in their chest, dry mouth, and clammy palms.

Consider how you feel when you learn that you must present a speech, and determine your level of pre-speech anxiety. Is your comfort related to your familiarity with the topic, the size of the audience, or the existence of camera equipment? Is it related to your body image or a tendency toward occasional mispronunciations?

To analyze how you typically feel when you learn that you must present a speech, take a few minutes to complete the Speech Anxiety Inventory on the following page.

Speech Anxiety Inventory

Instructions: Use the following self-inventory to analyze how you typically feel when you learn you must present a speech.

Symptoms

Before I have to give a speech, I experience:

☐ No symptoms of anxiety   ☐ Stomach pain or nausea
☐ Tightness in my chest   ☐ Shortness of breath
☐ Dry mouth   ☐ Other _____
☐ Clammy palms

Level of Anxiety

Rate your level of anxiety on the following scale:

0	1	2	3	4	5
No anxiety	Simple nervousness	Recurring worry	Constant anxiety	Overwhelming fear	Physical Illness

Anxiety Triggers

My level of anxiety increases with:

☐ Lack of familiarity with the topic.
☐ Size of the audience.
☐ Use of microphones.
☐ Existence of camera equipment.
☐ Negative attitude of the audience.
☐ Power or seniority of the audience.
☐ Expectation that I will have to answer questions "off the cuff."

Other Sources of Anxiety

My anxiety relates to:

☐ Body image
☐ Tendency toward occasional mispronunciations
☐ General lack of self-confidence
☐ Other _____

Speech Anxiety (Continued)

Whatever the source of your speech anxiety, there are many steps that you can take to reduce nervousness and gain control of your presentation. The steps fall into three categories:

- Preparation

  - Know the audience.
  - Preview the venue, if possible.
  - Do the research and know the facts.
  - Consider the emotional issues of the message.
  - Anticipate the questions that may be asked and prepare answers.

- Practice

  - Present the speech aloud until it is completely familiar.
  - Read the speech in front of a mirror and ensure that body language aids the message.
  - Seize all opportunities to speak aloud to become more comfortable in front of groups (e.g., ask questions in meetings, join Toastmasters or another public-speaking group, speak to small friendly groups, present slides to family or friends, or teach a course).

- Acceptance

  - Accept nervousness as normal.
  - Accept that you may misspeak during the presentation and plan to correct yourself immediately and smoothly.
  - Use relaxation techniques, such as:
    - Stretching
    - Muscle tensing and relaxing
    - Deep breathing
    - Body alignment
    - Consciously choosing to let go of tension
    - Visualizing an effective presentation

Review Job Aid 7.1, Tips to Reduce Fear of Public Speaking, on the following page.

Job Aid 7.1
Tips to Reduce Fear of Public Speaking

Preparation

- Know your audience.

- Preview the venue, if possible.

- Do your research and know your facts.

- Consider the emotional issues of your message.

- Anticipate the questions you may be asked and prepare answers.

Practice

- Present the speech aloud, to yourself, until it is completely familiar.

- Read the speech in front of a mirror and ensure that your body language aids your message.

- Seize all opportunities to speak aloud so that you become more comfortable (e.g., ask questions in meetings, join Toastmasters or another public-speaking group, speak to small friendly groups, present slides to your family, or teach a course).

Acceptance and Relaxation

- Accept your nervousness as normal.

- Accept that you may misspeak during your presentation and plan to correct yourself immediately and smoothly.

- Use relaxation techniques, such as:

  - Stretching.
  - Muscle tensing and relaxing.
  - Deep breathing.
  - Body alignment.
  - Consciously choosing to let go of tension.
  - Visualizing an effective presentation.

What Makes a Good Oral Presentation?

Consider a speech that you heard that impressed you and think about what made it strong and effective. Most likely, it exemplified these qualities:

- It matched the message to the audience.

- It matched the content and delivery to the purpose.

- It was delivered in a clear and engaging manner.

Matching the message to the audience begins with analyzing the needs of the audience. After you determine the "who, what, when, where, and why" aspects of a presentation, it is easy to determine the right message and the most effective delivery. If necessary, take a few minutes to review Unit Six to refresh your memory on characteristics of an audience.

Types of Presentations

It is likely that you will make one of two types of presentations—either informational or motivational. The quickest way to determine which type is appropriate is to ask yourself this question: Are you relaying facts or shaping opinions?

Informational presentations:

- Transmit specific knowledge.

- Present information directly or through explanation.

- Feature statistics or supporting research.

- Present ideas in logical sequence.

Traditionally, informational messages are delivered in this order:

1. Introduce the topic.
2. Provide explanation, directions, or descriptions.
3. Restate or conclude the topic.

For example, if asked to provide fire evacuation guidance to the occupants of a residential complex, you would make an informational presentation. The following is an example of how that presentation would be organized using the three steps listed above.

Types of Presentations (Continued)

1. *Introduce* the importance of fire safety awareness.

2. *Discuss*:

   - Exit signs and locations
   - The importance of knowing where the closest exit is
   - Heeding fire alarms
   - The location of fire boxes or use of 911 to notify the fire department
   - Quick, calm, and orderly evacuation
   - Smoke inhalation and safety techniques
   - Caution in opening hot or closed doors
   - Caution against elevator use

3. *Restate* the importance of pre-identifying exits and being prepared to vacate quickly.

Motivational presentations:

- Create awareness, change attitudes, or garner support.

- Use concrete language to communicate abstract points.

- Use vivid and interesting language.

Motivational presentations are delivered in a different manner than informational presentations. Motivational presentations are constructed to:

1. Open with an attention-getting introduction.
2. Create tension or a need for the message in the audience.
3. Demonstrate that your message can satisfy the need you identified.
4. Use visualization to magnify the appeal.
5. Provide the action step that you want the audience to take.

Types of Presentations (Continued)

Tips

These steps require as much creativity as factual information. Here are tips that will help you plan a motivational presentation.

- Use the introduction to establish your credibility by demonstrating your familiarity with the topic.

- Use a vivid illustration to highlight the importance of the need or problem to the listeners.

- Create a need for your solution or idea and by highlighting one or two benefits, rather than providing a laundry list.

- Show how your specific ideas will resolve the problem or meet the need you've identified.

- Tell the audience how, when, what, and why it can do to carry out your proposal.

Case Study

Case Study 7.1: Emergency Messages: Informational or Motivational?

Identify as many messages as you can in the following case study and decide whether they are best presented as informational messages or motivational messages.

The main water line that runs through the downtown portion of your city ruptured and flooded two blocks of small businesses. Electricity was turned off for 6 hours during the ordeal, and many area streets were closed to traffic while repairs were made to the water line. Numerous structures will require extensive cleanup. You have been asked to make an oral presentation on the status of the cleanup effort.
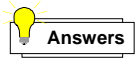
Answers

Case Study 7.1: Emergency Messages: Informational or Motivational? (Continued)

Answers to Case Study

Identify as many messages as you can and decide whether they are best presented as informational messages or motivational messages.

There are many potential messages in this situation, including safety, traffic, local economy, and insurance.

Your answers are correct if you accurately made a distinction between factual and persuasive messages.

Examples of messages best presented as informational include:

- Telling the public which businesses are in operation and which are closed.
- Telling the public about new traffic patterns during reconstruction.
- Informing the public of curfew policies.
- Reviewing flood mitigation techniques.

Examples of messages best presented as motivational include:

- Urging residents to support downtown merchants during recovery.
- Congratulating emergency responders for their work.
- Encouraging residents to learn about flood mitigation measures.
- Persuading community officials that mitigation is cost-effective.

Learning Points

- Most emergencies will require that you communicate both informational and motivational messages.
- Notice the verbs that begin the sample messages above. Information is factual, but motivational messages are emotional.
- While the differences in informational and motivational presentations are many, both are based in well-researched, logical arguments that lead the listener to the desired conclusion.

Think about a presentation that you will make in the future. Refer to Job Aids 7.2, Preparing an Oral Presentation, and 7.3, Delivering an Oral Presentation on the following pages.

Job Aid 7.2
Preparing an Oral Presentation

Plan the Presentation

- Determine the occasion and the goal of the presentation.

- Learn about the audience so that you can tailor your message accordingly:

  - Age range
  - Gender ratio
  - Size of the group
  - Common interests
  - Hot issues

- Investigate the logistics:

  - Room size
  - Available equipment
  - Number of other speakers

- Be succinct. Plan to speak briefly and clearly.

Develop the Presentation

- Decide the type of speech that is appropriate:

  - Informational
  - Motivational
  - A combination of both types

- Determine the audience's special needs:

  - Cultural
  - Language
  - Physical characteristics

- Outline the presentation:

  - Introduce the topic.
  - Clarify your opinion.
  - Identify key messages.
  - Establish a logical sequence.

- Identify the information or research required to support key points from:

  - Colleagues
  - Libraries
  - Files

Job Aid 7.2
Preparing an Oral Presentation (Continued)

Write the Presentation

Introduction

The beginning of the speech establishes your relationship with the audience and lets them know what to expect. This is the time and place in which you would:

- Introduce yourself and establish credibility.

- Express a single, topic sentence that captures the essence of your message.

- Get your audience's attention through:

  - Relevant humor.
  - Provocative statements.
  - Startling facts.
  - Rhetorical questions.

- Make your personal stance clear.

Discussion

This section should illustrate or prove your viewpoint. Here you should:

- Present your main points.

  - Use statistics.
  - Provide details.
  - Draw analogies.

- Stir emotion in the audience.

  - Personalize your message through anecdotes or examples.
  - Let your enthusiasm and sincerity show.
  - Use vivid language.

Conclusion

The end of a speech should be as carefully orchestrated as the other sections. Do not end a speech abruptly. Follow these steps:

- Tell the audience that you are about to bring your remarks to a close.

- Summarize your main points briefly.

- Make a parting statement that is memorable.

Job Aid 7.3
Delivering an Oral Presentation

Develop a Delivery Strategy

- How do you wish to appear?

- What tone is appropriate for the subject matter and audience?

- How can you use body language effectively?

- Should you anticipate speech anxiety?

- How long should you speak?

Practice

- Practice repeatedly until you are completely familiar with the content. Rehearse the opening of your speech until you have it memorized. (This strategy will help you to relax.)

- Become comfortable with the pronunciation and enunciation of your material.

- Present your speech in front of a mirror with a watch to check your pacing and ensure that your message fits the allotted time.

- Ask an observer to provide feedback to refine your posture, eye contact, and gestures.

  - Stand upright and relaxed.
  - Make eye contact with people in various parts of the room.
  - Try to gesture an average of twice in each sentence.
  - Turn your torso to face various parts of the audience.
  - Use volume, pitch, and emphasis to maximize your message.

- If possible, videotape your practice session. Otherwise, tape record yourself.

- Use pauses for impact before you begin and during speech transitions.

Case Study

Case Study 7.2: Protecting Animals During Natural Disasters

Based on the scenario described below:

- *Choose the type of speech that is appropriate for the scenario.*
- *Determine any special needs of the audience.*
- *Identify key points to be covered by the speech.*
- *Identify the information you will need to substantiate key points.*
- *Develop a delivery strategy that addresses how to overcome speech anxiety.*

You are the local emergency manager in a rural, coastal New England town of 9,000. Seasonal residents and tourists increase the town population to 23,000 during the summer months. Year-round residents have experienced serious hurricane damage in the past and are strongly aware of their vulnerable peninsula location. There is only one four-lane road that leads west off the peninsula.

There is no component in the community's emergency response plan that addresses livestock or companion animals. Since the last serious hurricane hit this community, there has been a significant increase in the number of horse farms, and 72 percent of the households now have at least one pet.

You realize that it is imperative to incorporate animals into local evacuation and disaster response planning. Your community has a local hazard mitigation plan and participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. There is a local pet protection society.

Answers

Case Study 7.2: Protecting Animals During Natural Disasters (Continued)

Answers to Case Study

There are many valid messages based on the previous scenario. If you used the checklists provided in this unit, it is likely that you developed an effective presentation.

Plan to use that presentation either to inform or motivate some segment of your community to get involved in disaster planning, generally, and planning for animals specifically. The absence of animal safety planning contributes risk to human life.

Summary and Transition

Now that you have developed an oral presentation with the checklists provided in this unit, you may notice that each successive presentation becomes easier. That is because strong public speaking skills build on success. Before you proceed to the summary unit for this course, take a few minutes to review your understanding of oral presentations by completing the Knowledge Check on the next page.

Reference Library

For More Information

COMFILE! Your Link to Communication Sources on the Internet: http://commfaculty.fullerton.edu/jreinard/internet.htm#TOPBAN

✓ Check   **Knowledge Check**

Carefully read each question and all of the possible answers before selecting the most appropriate response for each test item. Circle the letter corresponding to the answer that you have chosen. Complete all of the questions without looking at the course material.

1. Which statement is true about informational presentation?

    a. They do not need to rely on logical presentation.
    b. They are based on emotional appeal.
    c. They depend on vivid imagery.
    d. They present ideas in logical sequence.
    e. They never use personal anecdotes.

2. Which of the following messages is best suited to an informational presentation?

    a. Promote National Fire Safety Week.
    b. Persuade homeowners to have a personal evacuation plan.
    c. Convince residents to become involved in volunteer agencies.
    d. Lead staff in a review of the Incident Command System.
    e. Celebrate interagency cooperation in a recent emergency.

3. Both informational and motivational presentations are based on well-researched, logical arguments.

    a. True
    b. False
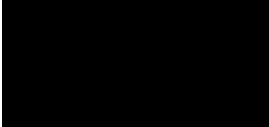
4. Practicing a presentation <u>cannot</u> help you become:

    a. Familiar with the material.
    b. Adept at pacing your speech.
    c. Assured of reaching every listener.
    d. Comfortable with pronunciation.
    e. Less likely to experience speech anxiety.

5. In an oral presentation, where is it best to feature humor, rhetorical questions, or provocative statements?

    a. Appropriate everywhere
    b. Introduction
    c. Discussion
    d. Conclusion
    e. Never appropriate

Answers
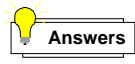
Knowledge Check (Continued)

1. d
2. a
3. True
4. c
5. a

Unit 8: Course Summary

Introduction

This unit will briefly summarize the learning from the Effective Communication Course. When you finish with this unit, be sure to take the Final Exam that is available from the Emergency Management Institute's Independent Study Web site: http://training.fema.gov and click on FEMA Independent Study

Communication Models

The value of a model is that it simplifies a complex process. Because communication is a complex process, you will find it helpful to use one or more models to help ensure that your communications are effective. Regardless of the model you choose, a good model facilitates an efficient, two-way flow of communication and elicits the desired response.

Listening is a critical component of communication. When you listen empathically, you don't just hear words. You hear thoughts, beliefs and feelings. Empathic listening is highly active and requires hard work. You should practice your listening skills whenever you have the opportunity so that you feel comfortable with your ability to listen to and hear what people tell you.

There are numerous variables involved in the communication process, including:

- Differences between the sender and receiver.

- Differences in communication styles.

- Differences in previous experiences.

- Cultural differences.

Communicating in an Emergency

In an emergency, people depend on information for physical and emotional comfort. To be effective, emergency communications must be timely, accurate, and clearly stated.

There are considerable differences between day-to-day communications and emergency communications. Some of these differences include:

- Emergency information is important.

- Timeliness is essential.

- Warnings require response.

- Barriers to communication are common in emergencies.

- Messages must be consistent to elicit the desired response.

When communicating in an emergency, you should <u>always</u>:

- Present the information in sequence; present the reason for the message, the supporting information, and the conclusion.

- Avoid jargon, codes, and acronyms.

- Use common names for all personnel and facilities.

- Omit unnecessary details.

- Speak in sync with other related authorities.

- Keep messages consistent across various media.

- Word the message precisely, making every word count.

Communicating in an Emergency (Continued)

Communication media range in complexity from handwritten notices to international satellite broadcasts. Selecting the appropriate media for both the message and the audience is essential to effective communication.

Community-Specific Communications Issues

Whether we realize it or not—and we often don't—traditions shape the way we interact with other people. Cultural differences reflect internal beliefs and thought patterns that cause people to react differently to the same situation. Differences in age and sex, the presence of a disabling condition—and even the part of the country you live in—can affect how you communicate.

It's not realistic to become an expert on every culture that you may encounter. However, it *is* reasonable for you to learn about the populations who make up major parts of your community. Take the time to learn about:

- What groups are represented in your community.

- Where they are located.

- What their needs are.

Making yourself aware of key cultural and other differences—both verbal and body language differences—that you will need to address during an emergency will help you learn what to expect of the groups and whether your message is being communicated.

Community-Specific Communications Issues (Continued)

Take into account cultural differences when addressing communications across cultures or those with special needs. Some things that you can do as a first step are:

- Don't assume sameness.

- Don't assume that you understand what the other person means.

- Don't inadvertently cause the behavior.

Using Technology as a Communication Tool

Technology can assist you in meeting your communication goals. Selecting the best technology to support your message maximizes its impact. But choosing the wrong technology can interfere with your message, and there is no correlation between the complexity of the technology and the effectiveness of the communication.

With every potential technology come limitations and cautions. Always try to match the technology with the message's purpose—and the audience.

Emergency conditions can result in power outages or other conditions that may limit your choice of technologies. Be prepared to choose lower-tech methods to support your communication.

You can use a mix of high-tech and low-tech tools to support your message. In choosing your methods, consider your:

- Message   (What?)

- Purpose   (Why?)

- Recipient   (Who?)

Effective Oral Presentations

One of your most important emergency management skills is oral communication. In your role as emergency manager, planner, or responder, you may be asked to communicate critical information in a variety of ways. Each circumstance offers unique challenges and opportunities to match your verbal and nonverbal communication to your message and audience.

Ensuring that your presentation matches your audience is critical to gaining the desired response. Matching messages and audiences will help to ensure communication success.

The news media can be a strong ally in alerting and informing the public. It is important to establish credible and productive working relationships with representatives of the media. To minimize misunderstandings, build strong relationships with media representatives.

More than half of face-to-face communication is exchanged through nonverbal cues. Because up to 65 percent of the meaning of your message is unspoken, it is imperative to learn to read nonverbal communication. Eyes, tone of voice, expression, volume, and gestures reflect attitudes, emotions, states of mind, and related messages.

Nonverbal cues can have an impact equal to or stronger than the words that are spoken. When the speaker's body language is in sync with the verbal message, the message is reinforced. Listeners are likely to respond to this extra persuasion with increased respect, harmony, or trust.

Speech anxiety is the single most common social anxiety in the United States. Whatever the source of your speech anxiety, taking these steps can help you reduce nervousness and gain control of your presentation.

- Preparation

- Practice

- Acceptance

Preparing Oral Presentations

Three common elements to successful oral presentations are:

- The message matches the audience.

- The content and delivery match the purpose.

- The delivery is clear and engaging.

Matching the message to the audience begins with analyzing the needs of the audience. After you determine the "who, what, when, where, and why" aspects, it is easy to determine the right message and the most effective delivery.

It is likely that you will make one of two types of presentations—either informational or motivational. To determine which type is appropriate, ask: Am I relying on facts or shaping opinions?

Informational presentations:

- Transmit specific knowledge.

- Present information directly or through explanation.

- Feature statistics or supporting research.

- Present ideas in logical sequence.

Motivational presentations:

- Create awareness, change attitudes, or garner support.

- Use concrete language to communicate abstract points.

- Use vivid and interesting language.

Next Steps

You have now completed IS 242 and should be ready to take the Final Exam.

To submit the final exam online, go to http://training.fema.gov, and click on FEMA Independent Study, Click on the courses link. and select Take Final Exam.
After you have selected the final exam link and the online answer sheet is open, transfer your answers, and complete the personal identification data requested.

To submit the final exam by mail using the opscan answer sheet, go to http://training.fema.gov, click on FEMA Independent Study and go to Opscan Request. Follow the instructions printed on the form.
Good luck!

Appendix A: Job Aids

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications

Sample business letter:

July 3, 2001

Mr. John Burgess
The Salvation Army
Bismarck, ND 58501

Dear Mr. Burgess:

The tireless efforts and valuable resources your organization contributed to our community after the recent flood were remarkable. The speed with which you fed and provided shelter for the 75 people left homeless demonstrated the experience and preparation that marks all Salvation Army operations.

There is no way to thank you enough for your support of Bismarck residents. However, I hope you will share my gratitude with your staff and volunteers. We appreciate every one of them.

Again, thank you for your active partnership in Bismarck's emergency management efforts.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Siebert
Emergency Manager

MS:gn

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

Sample EAS Message:

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN CENTRAL CITY HAS ISSUED A TORNADO WARNING FOR LIBERTY COUNTY UNTIL 300 PM EDT.

AT 150 PM . . . DOPPLER RADAR INDICATED A POSSIBLE TORNADO IN WESTERN LIBERTY COUNTY JUST SOUTH OF APPLE VALLEY. AT 205 PM . . . A TORNADO TOUCHED DOWN NEAR LEWISBURG IN STRAMFORD COUNTY CAUSING CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE.

THE STORM WAS MOVING NORTHEAST AROUND 30 MPH AND WILL REACH CENTRAL CITY AT ABOUT 215 PM.

THE SAFEST PLACE TO BE WHEN A TORNADO HITS IS IN A BASEMENT UNDER A STURDY PIECE OF FURNITURE SUCH AS A WORK BENCH. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A BASEMENT . . . GO TO AN INTERIOR ROOM OF YOUR HOME SUCH AS A BATHROOM OR CLOSET.

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

Sample Public Service Announcement:

BEWARE OF FRAUD

Every disaster has its share of con artists trying to take advantage of disaster victims, so be careful who you let into your home. If your house was damaged in the (disaster) and someone appears at your door claiming to be a (type of disaster) official, ask for identification.

Depending on your needs, inspectors from one or more agencies may visit your home after you have registered for disaster assistance. These inspectors will be able to show you official ID to prove their identity. Never let anyone inspect your home without first asking for identification.

If you want to verify someone's identity, call the Disaster Information Helpline at 1-800-525-0321 (TDD: 1-800-660-8005 for hearing and speech impaired), (hours of operation), (days of operation).

Some people may show up at your door and insist that you make expensive or unnecessary repairs. Others may offer to process your disaster application for a fee. Remember, disaster inspectors do not recommend repairs and NEVER charge a fee for any inspection of your home.

####

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

Sample News Release:

<div align="center">

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

</div>

INFORMATION FROM:
(Emergency Management Office)
(Street Address)
(City, State, Zip)

(Date)

MEDIA CONTACTS: (PAO name)   (phone)

<div align="center">

**RESIDENTS WARNED TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS WHEN
RETURNING TO FLOOD DAMAGED HOMES**

</div>

        (CITY, STATE)—Federal and State disaster officials are urging people returning to flood-damaged homes, apartments, or businesses to take extra precautions before and during their clean-up efforts.

        "The dangers are not over after the water goes down," (SCO NAME) said. "Flood hazards such as a weakened foundation, exposed wires or contaminated floodwater are not always obvious and can be potentially life-threatening if precautions are not taken."

        "If, at any time, you are unsure of or feel uncomfortable with a situation, do not hesitate to ask for help or seek advice from an expert," (FCO NAME), serving as Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) for the disaster recovery, cautioned. "Play it safe."

Disaster officials are urging people to keep these safety tips in mind:

BEFORE ENTERING A BUILDING:

Check the outside of the building: Call the utility company immediately if you find downed power lines or detect gas leaks. (Gas leaks will emit an odor of rotten eggs.)

Look for external damage: Examine the foundation for cracks or other damage. Also examine porch roofs and overhangs to be sure they still have all their supports. Look for gaps between the steps and the house.

<div align="center">

-more-

</div>

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

page 2

If any supports or portions of the foundation walls are missing or the ground has washed away, the floor is not safe.

If you see obvious damage, have a building inspector check the house before you go in.

Enter the building carefully: If the door sticks at the top it could mean the ceiling is ready to fall. If you force the door open, stand outside the doorway away from falling debris.

AFTER ENTERING A BUILDING:

Look before you step: The ground and floors are covered with debris including broken bottles and nails. Floors and stairs can be very slippery.

Be alert for gas leaks: Do not strike a match or use an open flame when you enter a building unless you know the gas has been turned off and the area ventilated. Use a flashlight to inspect for damage.

Turn off the electricity: Even if the power company has turned off electricity to the area, be sure to disconnect your house's power supply. Do not use appliances or motors that have gotten wet unless they have been taken apart, cleaned and dried.

Replace exposed wires: Electrical wires that have been exposed to salt water are recyclable junk and must be replaced.

Watch for animals, especially snakes: Small animals that have been flooded out of their homes may seek shelter in yours. Use a stick to poke and turn items over and scare away small animals.

Carbon monoxide exhaust kills: Use a generator or other gasoline-powered machine outdoors. The same goes for camping stoves. Charcoal fumes are deadly; cook with charcoal outdoors.

Drain your basement carefully: Water in the ground puts pressure on your basement walls and floors. Drain the basement gradually to minimize further structural damage.

Hose the house: Most of the health hazards brought by a flood are in the mud and silt that is left after the water drains away. Shovel out as much mud as possible and hose the house down, inside and out.

Be aware of health hazards: Flood waters have picked up sewage and chemicals from roads, farms, factories, and storage buildings. Many flooded items, such as wallboard and mattresses, will hold mud and contamination forever. Spoiled food, flooded cosmetics and medicine are also health hazards. When in doubt, throw them out.

#####

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

Sample Incident Fact Sheet:

(DATE)

INCIDENT PERIOD: (DATE OF INCIDENT)

AREAS AFFECTED: (LIST COUNTIES/TOWNS AFFECTED)

OFFICE: (ADDRESS)

HOURS: (HOURS)

KEY TELEPHONE NUMBERS:
>   COMMERCIAL: xxx-xxx-xxxx
>   INFO HOTLINE: 800-xxx-xxxx
>   INFO TDD: 800-660-8005 (for hearing impaired)
>   FAX: xxx-xxx-xxxx
>   OFF-DUTY: xxx-xxx-xxxx (NAME, TITLE)
>   JIC: xxx-xxx-xxxx

KEY PERSONNEL:

Emergency Manager	(Name)	(Number)
Operations Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Planning Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Logistics Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Safety Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Public Affairs Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Police Chief	(Name)	(Number)
Fire Chief	(Name)	(Number)
Public Works Chief	(Name)	(Number)
Administration Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Other Key Personnel (List)	(Name)	(Number)

STATE KEY PERSONNEL:

Governor's Authorized Representative	(Name)	(Number)
Alternate GAR	(Name)	(Number)
State Coordinating Officer (SCO)	(Name)	(Number)
Alternate SCO	(Name)	(Number)
Public Assistance Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Public Information Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Hazard Mitigation Officer	(Name)	(Number)
Individual Assistance Officer	(Name)	(Number)

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

page 2

OTHER AGENCIES:

American Red Cross	(Name)	(Number)
Salvation Army	(Name)	(Number)
Others (List)	(Name)	(Number)

####

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

Sample Information Sheet:

TIPS TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM DEBRIS FLOWS (MUDSLIDES)

As spring approaches, the burned hillsides of (locations) look green and inviting. But the steep slopes left bare by (last month's) firestorms are still very susceptible to debris flows, popularly called mudslides or mud flows. The danger is greatest during rainstorms and the few days after each rain.

Debris flows are sudden gushes of mud, rocks, tree trunks, and other debris that break loose from steep slopes and race downhill, sometimes over long distances. After one surge or wave of a mudslide, more surges or waves may follow, at intervals of minutes to hours.

The (State emergency service) advises residents and visitors to take the following safety precautions.

▪ Keep an eye on the weather. If it looks like rain, listen to a weather report on the radio. Even if it is not raining in the foothills, it might be raining hard in the mountains.

 Listen for National Weather Service advisory messages. A flash flood **watch** for a particular area means that heavy rains with mud and debris flow potential have been predicted for that area. A flash flood **warning** means flooding and debris flow are already occurring and may continue.

▪ Cancel or postpone plans for hiking, biking, or horseback riding if it has rained recently or if rain is predicted.

▪ Plan ahead:

 ☐ Arrange a meeting place for your family or companions outside your neighborhood or outing destination.

 ☐ Plan to wear or carry appropriate clothing and footwear that is warm, wetproof, and sturdy.

 ☐ Have an adequate supply of emergency food and water.

 ☐ Have an emergency supply kit that includes a flashlight, spare batteries, a portable radio, and potable water. Store the kit in an easily accessible and safe area.

 ☐ Purchase flood insurance, if living in an area at risk for flood or mudslides.

For more information about flood and mudslide preparedness, as well as disaster assistance programs, residents are invited to visit the (center location).

The Center is located at **(address), (city).** It is open **(days),** from **(hours),** and is a joint effort of the (State emergency services) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
####

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

Sample Checklist:

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW IF YOU HAVE TO EVACUATE

In spite of tireless sandbagging efforts by friends and charitable strangers, the powerful floodwater cannot always be stopped. Some of us have already evacuated our homes. For others, evacuation is imminent. Whenever the water wins the battle, there is pain and loss. And by the time someone is forced to leave, often their energy is depleted and safety may be threatened. By preparing an evacuation plan in advance, flood victims can ensure that necessities are packed and the route is planned.

If possible, gather important family documents and place them in a waterproof, portable container. Examples of documents you may save include:

- Insurance policies, wills, contracts, deeds, stock certificates and bonds
- Passports, social security cards, immunization records
- Bank account numbers, safe deposit box information
- Credit card account numbers and companies
- Inventory of valuable household goods, important telephone numbers
- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)
- Valuable photographs

Here is a checklist of what you should have ready before you are forced to leave:

- Battery operated radio and spare batteries
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit and manual
- Three-day supply of nonperishable foods and water (one gallon per day per person)
- Essential prescription and nonprescription medicines
- Mess kit (or paper plates, cups, and plastic utensils)
- Baby supplies such as formula, bottle, diapers, powdered milk and medications
- Nonelectric can opener
- All purpose knife
- Toilet paper
- Soap, liquid detergent
- Feminine supplies
- Personal hygiene items
- Contact lenses, solution, and extra eyeglasses
- Denture supplies
- Complete change of clothing and footwear for each household member
- Sturdy shoes or work boots
- Rain gear

-more-

Job Aid 3.1
Templates for Written Communications (Continued)

page 2

- Cash or traveler's checks, change
- Whistle
- Entertainment—books, games, journal

It is important to map your evacuation route before the time comes. Identify your evacuation destination (nearest shelter, relative's home, etc.) and plan to triple the travel time to account for traffic and road conditions.

These ideas are part of a 56-page booklet named "Repairing Your Flooded Home". Published jointly by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the American Red Cross, copies are available free at all disaster application centers. Copies can also be obtained by writing to FEMA Publications, P.O. Box 70274, Washington, DC 20024.

####

Job Aid 6.1
Tips for Media Interviews

Before the Interview:

- Track all media inquiries and note the reporter's name, organization, date, and purpose.
- If possible, review the scope of the interview with the reporter before the interview so that you can anticipate what might be asked.
- Provide background information that helps the reporter understand the issues.
- Identify the points that you want to communicate during the interview and make sure these facts come to mind easily.
- Identify a message that you can incorporate into your first and last remark. For example, if the reporter opens the interview by saying, "Thanks for talking with us today," you may respond, "I'm proud to speak on behalf of the community's unified response effort," or "Thank you for this opportunity to promote flood insurance."
- Dress appropriately.

During the Interview:

- Listen to the entire question before answering.
- Avoid speculation.
- Beware of false assumptions and erroneous conclusions.
- Avoid hypothetical questions.
- Be alert to multiple questions and address them individually.
- Be confident and concentrate on delivering your message.
- Keep your answers simple and direct.
- Speak in "sound bites" (i.e., concise, memorable, short statements).
- Never repeat inaccurate or damaging information spoken within a reporter's question. Instead, restate the information in a positive manner in your answer.
- Do not refer to the reporter by name, as the reporter may not be included when the interview is aired.
- Treat all questions seriously.
- NEVER speak "off the record."
- While answering questions, be attuned to opportunities to promote *your* message.
- If you are being recorded or taped and botch an answer, simply begin the answer again. If taped, the exchange will most likely be edited.
- Be aware of your appearance:

  - Avoid nervous gestures; do not overuse hand gestures.
  - Display good posture.
  - Maintain eye contact.
  - Ensure that your glasses (if you wear them) are not slipping downward.
  - Remove dark glasses.
  - Avoid wearing stripes, "busy" patterns, and red.
  - If seated, ensure that your jacket does not ride up behind your neck by sitting on the coattails.

- Leave all equipment concerns to the reporter or sound technician.

After the Interview:

- Obtain and provide any information you promised to supply.
- Provide written background information, and be available to the reporter for follow-up questions.
- If the story is publicized with inaccuracies, call the reporter and politely point out the errors.

Job Aid 6.2
Nonverbal Cues

SPEAKER'S NONVERBAL CUES

Your nonverbal language reflects your attitudes, emotions, state of mind, and related messages. Nonverbal cues include:

- Vocal intonation:
  - Pitch, tone, inflection, volume
  - Rhythm, timing
- Silence
- Personal space
- Styles of dress:
  - Uniform (conveys authority, power)
  - Casual vs. dressy

- Body language:
  - Posture, body position
  - Head movements
  - Eye movement, eye contact
  - Facial expressions
  - Fidgeting, yawning
  - Touching

LISTENER'S NONVERBAL CUES

Indicators of . . .	
Boredom	- Slouching in one's seat - Yawning - Staring out the window - Lack of eye contact - Neutral expression - Fidgeting - Closed posture - Drifting attention - Slowness to respond - Neutral or "slurred" speech
Frustration	- Rubbing forehead with hand - Tense, worried expression - Throwing hands up in the air
Agreement, Enthusiasm	- Leaning toward the speaker - Making eye contact - Touching the speaker's arm or hand - Nodding head - Relaxed, open posture - Smiling or laughing - Faster speech - Higher pitch
Disagreement, Confusion	- Frowning - Shaking head - Leaning back or away - Pursing lips - Tightened jaw and closed posture - Staring elsewhere - Shallow, rapid breathing - Limited facial expression and hand gestures - Slower speech - Lower pitch
Evaluation	- Chewing on eyeglass frames - Wearing a thoughtful, intense expression

Job Aid 7.1
Tips to Reduce Fear of Public Speaking

Preparation

- Know your audience.

- Preview the venue, if possible.

- Do your research and know your facts.

- Consider the emotional issues of your message.

- Anticipate the questions you may be asked and prepare answers.

Practice

- Present the speech aloud, to yourself, until it is completely familiar.

- Read the speech in front of a mirror and ensure that your body language aids your message.

- Seize all opportunities to speak aloud so that you become more comfortable (e.g., ask questions in meetings, join Toastmasters or another public-speaking group, speak to small friendly groups, present slides to your family, or teach a course).

Acceptance and Relaxation

- Accept your nervousness as normal.

- Accept that you may misspeak during your presentation and plan to correct yourself immediately and smoothly.

- Use relaxation techniques, such as:

  - Stretching.
  - Muscle tensing and relaxing.
  - Deep breathing.
  - Body alignment.
  - Consciously choosing to let go of tension.
  - Visualizing an effective presentation.

Job Aid 7.2
Preparing an Oral Presentation

Plan the Presentation

- Determine the occasion and the goal of the presentation.

- Learn about the audience so that you can tailor your message accordingly:

  - Age range
  - Gender ratio
  - Size of the group
  - Common interests
  - Hot issues

- Investigate the logistics:

  - Room size
  - Available equipment
  - Number of other speakers

- Be succinct. Plan to speak briefly and clearly.

Develop the Presentation

- Decide the type of speech that is appropriate:

  - Informational
  - Motivational
  - A combination of both types

- Determine the audience's special needs:

  - Cultural
  - Language
  - Physical characteristics

- Outline the presentation:

  - Introduce the topic.
  - Clarify your opinion.
  - Identify key messages.
  - Establish a logical sequence.

- Identify the information or research required to support key points from:

  - Colleagues
  - Libraries
  - Files

Job Aid 7.2
Preparing an Oral Presentation (Continued)

Write the Presentation

Introduction

The beginning of the speech establishes your relationship with the audience and lets them know what to expect. This is the time and place in which you would:

- Introduce yourself and establish credibility.

- Express a single, topic sentence that captures the essence of your message.

- Get your audience's attention through:

  - Relevant humor.
  - Provocative statements.
  - Startling facts.
  - Rhetorical questions.

- Make your personal stance clear.

Discussion

This section should illustrate or prove your viewpoint. Here you should:

- Present your main points.

  - Use statistics.
  - Provide details.
  - Draw analogies.

- Stir emotion in the audience.

  - Personalize your message through anecdotes or examples.
  - Let your enthusiasm and sincerity show.
  - Use vivid language.

Conclusion

The end of a speech should be as carefully orchestrated as the other sections. Do not end a speech abruptly. Follow these steps:

- Tell the audience that you are about to bring your remarks to a close.

- Summarize your main points briefly.

- Make a parting statement that is memorable.

Job Aid 7.3
Delivering an Oral Presentation

Develop a Delivery Strategy

- How do you wish to appear?

- What tone is appropriate for the subject matter and audience?

- How can you use body language effectively?

- Should you anticipate speech anxiety?

- How long should you speak?

Practice

- Practice repeatedly until you are completely familiar with the content. Rehearse the opening of your speech until you have it memorized. (This strategy will help you to relax.)

- Become comfortable with the pronunciation and enunciation of your material.

- Present your speech in front of a mirror with a watch to check your pacing and ensure that your message fits the allotted time.

- Ask an observer to provide feedback to refine your posture, eye contact, and gestures.

  - Stand upright and relaxed.
  - Make eye contact with people in various parts of the room.
  - Try to gesture an average of twice in each sentence.
  - Turn your torso to face various parts of the audience.
  - Use volume, pitch, and emphasis to maximize your message.

- If possible, videotape your practice session. Otherwise, tape record yourself.

- Use pauses for impact before you begin and during speech transitions.

1. Differences in previous experience increase the difficulty of communicating successfully.

   a. True
   b. False

2. Active listening involves:

   a. Completing the speaker's sentence.
   b. Attending to the facts, not feelings.
   c. Making assumptions about what the speaker is saying.
   d. Paraphrasing what the speaker said.

3. Which of the following is an <u>external</u> roadblock to effective listening?

   a. Noise
   b. Defensiveness
   c. Resistance to change
   d. Stereotyping

4. Which of the following media would you <u>not</u> use to inform the public of an approaching tornado?

   a. A siren
   b. A radio announcement
   c. A newspaper article
   d. A television crawl message

5. When communicating via e-mail, you should:

   a. Use complete sentences and proper grammar.
   b. Truncate the message to save space.
   c. Use all abbreviations and acronyms used on your job.
   d. Block the receiver from forwarding or printing the message.

6. One difference between emergency and day-to-day communications is that:

   a. Day-to-day communications are more critical.
   b. Day-to-day communications are more timely.
   c. Emergency communications require no response.
   d. Emergency communications must be consistent.

7.   Print communication during an emergency:

a.   Helps to ensure proper documentation.
b.   Takes too much time to prepare.
c.   Is fluid and dynamic.
d.   Warns a community quickly of impending dangers.

8.   Our traditions shape how we interact with others.

a.   True
b.   False

9.   Cultural differences:

a.   Are forgotten in an emergency.
b.   Reflect internal beliefs and thought patterns.
c.   Are rarely the cause of misunderstandings.
d.   Reflect the media "spin" on diversity.

10.   How can you tell "in the moment" that your message isn't being received?

a.   Rely on the individual asking a question.
b.   Look for changes in body language.
c.   Ask the audience if they understand.
d.   See how the audience responds in an emergency.

11.   When planning communications, you must consider age and disabling condition together with cultural differences.

a.   True
b.   False

12.   One step that will help you account for cultural differences when communicating is to:

a.   Apologize when you inadvertently cause negative behavior.
b.   Assume that gestures are similar and use them freely.
c.   Ask the audience what their cultural issues are, then address them.
d.   Start with the assumption of differences in how people think and react.

13.   The technology chosen rarely affects the communication.

a.   True
b.   False

14. One reason to select the best technology to support your message is to:

    a. Make communication easier for you.
    b. Maximize the message's impact.
    c. Form a correlation between the technology and its effectiveness.
    d. Correct problems found in previous communications.

15. A technology tool that may be useful when the community's siren warning system is not working is:

    a. Telephone
    b. TDD
    c. Radio
    d. Mobile PA system

16. When communicating via two-way radio:

    a. It is ok to use codes because others know them.
    b. It is important to provide as much information as possible.
    c. It is possible for other people to overhear the message.
    d. It is suggested that you tape record for future documentation.

17. High-tech messages are always preferable to low-tech.

    a. True
    b. False

18. When deciding which type of oral communication to use, you should consider:

    a. Who and how many people are in the audience.
    b. What is easiest for you and your staff.
    c. How to deliver the message only once.
    d. What is the fastest way to send the message.

19. If the media asks you a question that you are not sure about, you will look bad if you acknowledge that you do not know the answer.

    a. True
    b. False

20. One way to deal more effectively with the media is to:

    a. Stress your point of view as a way of getting the reporter to understand.
    b. Prepare a handout that covers the points you're willing to discuss.
    c. Refer all media contacts to your supervisor.
    d. Provide background information to help the reporter understand the issues.

21. Nonverbal cues that are in sync with the verbal message will:

    a. Reinforce the verbal message.
    b. Breed resentment and distrust.
    c. Cause people to believe the nonverbal message.
    d. Help the audience like you better.

22. Preferences for personal distances are:

    a. The same as for social distance.
    b. Affected by culture.
    c. The same as for public distance.
    d. Not important to the type of message.

23. Frowning, leaning back or away, tightening the jaw, and staring elsewhere are all signs of which nonverbal cluster?

    a. Evaluation
    b. Boredom
    c. Frustration
    d. Disagreement

24. Emergency management is a serious topic. Therefore, humor is <u>not</u> appropriate in public addresses.

    a. True
    b. False

25. One of the best ways to reduce speech anxiety is to:

    a. Only speak to small groups.
    b. Prepare until you are confident.
    c. Speak only on tape.
    d. Mentally block out the anxiety.