

# Faculty Disclosure

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Ms. Zagurski has listed no financial interest/arrangement that would be considered a conflict of interest.

# Message Mapping

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Living in the information age, means being expected to not only save lives, but be able to tell people while it's happening that you are saving lives.

- CDC

# Objectives

- Define crisis communication guidelines
- Demonstrate message mapping

# Crisis Communication

- Sometimes called “Risk Communication”
- Factual communication to the public



# In a Serious Crisis

- Affected people:
  - Take in information differently
  - Process information differently
  - Act on information differently

# Mental Noise Theory

- People who are upset have difficulty:
  - Hearing
  - Understanding
  - Remembering information
- Mental noise can reduce a person's ability to process information by over 80 percent
  - <http://publichealth.yale.edu/ycphp/messagemapping.pdf>

# Challenge to Communicators

- Overcome the barriers that mental noise creates
- Produce accurate messages for diverse audiences
- Get the most bang for your buck given mental noise

– <http://publichealth.yale.edu/ycphp/messagemapping.pdf>

# Risk Communication in an Emergency

## **More readily accepted**

- Voluntary
- Internal locus of control
- Familiar
- Natural
- Reversible
- Statistical
- Fairly distributed
- Adults

## **Difficult to accept**

- Involuntary
- External locus of control
- Exotic
- Man-made
- Permanent
- Anecdotal
- Unfairly distributed
- Children

# Communication in a Crisis

Must be different:

- Be empathetic
- Be first
- Be right
- Be credible

# Role of Spokesperson

- Move organization from “It” to “We”
- Build trust and credibility
- Remove psychological barriers
- Gain support

# Crisis Communication Goals

1. Ease public concern
2. Give guidance on how to respond
3. Deliver accurate and timely information

# Journalists

- 77 Questions

- [http://njlmn.rutgers.edu/cdr//docs/supp-handout06\\_77questions-asked-by-reporters.pdf](http://njlmn.rutgers.edu/cdr//docs/supp-handout06_77questions-asked-by-reporters.pdf)

- There is no such thing as “off the record”

“You are going to follow these rules.... Don’t make me look like an asshole.”

Chief Charles Moose, DC Sniper case



# Emergency Crisis Communication Principles

- Don't over-reassure
  - Reassurance comes from accurate information
- Validate feelings
- Give people things to do

# Crisis Communication Guidelines

- Use everyday language
- Treat the person like an equal
- Attack the problem, not the person
- Offer facts only, don't give an opinion or speculate

# 5 Key Elements to Build Trust

1. Express empathy
2. Competence
3. Honesty
4. Commitment
5. Accountability

Watch your body language and paraverbals

# Honesty

- Any information is empowering
- People are prepared to go to multiple sources for information
- Uncertainty is more difficult to deal with than knowing bad news

“When we get the final number, it will be more than we can bear.”

-

Giuliani, 2001



# Reality Check

- Acknowledge the fear and validate
  - “I understand that anything related to radiation can seem frightening. Let me tell you what I know. . . .”
- Give people one good fact to “chew” on and then tell them where to get more information

# Communication Failures

1. Failure to make an empathetic statement
2. Mixed messages from multiple experts
  - Health Departments
  - Hospitals/Medical Centers
  - State Officials
  - Supervisors
3. Information released late
4. Talking down to people
5. Not countering rumors and myths immediately
6. Public power struggles and confusion

# What is a Message Map?

- An organized statement addressing likely questions and concerns
- Contains 3+ unique messages addressing a specific issue
- Each issue may be addressed by several layered message maps
- Based on research associated with a specific scenario

# Message Mapping

Allows you to:

- Speak in sound bites
- Stay on message

# Benefits of Message Mapping

- Handy reference for spokespersons who must respond to questions requiring timeliness and accuracy
- Multiple spokespersons can work from the same message map
- Rapid dissemination of consistent and core messages across multiple communication outlets

# Benefits of Message Mapping

- Minimizes saying something inappropriate or leaving something out



- Can check off talking points as they are covered

- Minimizes controversy

» <http://www.epa.gov/nhsrc/news/news040207.html>  
2009

# Solutions to Mental Noise

- Develop a limited number of key messages
- 3 key messages or one key message with three parts for each underlying concern

Keeping individual key messages  
brief

*3/9/27* rule

# Solutions to Mental Noise

- Messages should be at a 6th to 8th grade reading level
  - Use Plain Language, just like NIMS says!

# Give Action Steps in Positive Language

$$1N = 3P$$

Rephrase the following:

- Quit touching your brother!
- Stop shouting!

# Primacy/Recency Rule

- They'll remember this one
- Not so much this one
- They'll really remember this one

## Message Map

Agent:

Stakeholder:

Question:

KEY MESSAGE 1 →	KEY MESSAGE 2 →	KEY MESSAGE 3
↓	↓	↓
Support Point 1.1	Support Point 2.1	Support Point 3.1
Support Point 1.2	Support Point 2.2	Support Point 3.2
Support Point 1.3	Support Point 2.3	Support Point 3.3

## Message Map – Active Shooter

**Agent:**

**Stakeholder: Community**

**Question: What is happening?**

<b>KEY MESSAGE 1</b> —————>	<b>KEY MESSAGE 2</b> —————>	<b>KEY MESSAGE 3</b>							
We are responding to... a possible shooting at X.	We will give regular updates every ____.	We are putting our safety plan into action.							
↓	↓	↓							
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"><b>Support Point 1.1</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Law enforcement is on the scene.</td> </tr> </table>	<b>Support Point 1.1</b>	Law enforcement is on the scene.	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"><b>Support Point 2.1</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">We will give information to local media when available.</td> </tr> </table>	<b>Support Point 2.1</b>	We will give information to local media when available.	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"><b>Support Point 3.1</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">All areas are being secured or evacuated as appropriate.</td> </tr> </table>	<b>Support Point 3.1</b>	All areas are being secured or evacuated as appropriate.	
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Keep phone lines open for emergency personnel.									
<b>Support Point 3.3</b>									

# Nebraska Risk Communication Cadre

- Department of Health and Human Services
  - Blaine Shaffer, M.D., Chief Clinical Officer
  - Jim Harvey, Federal Resources Officer
  - Shannon Black, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist
  - Dianna Seiffert - PIO
  - Jeanne Atkinson – PIO
- Nebraska Emergency Management Agency
  - Dan Hiller, Lead Planner

- University Public Policy Center
  - Denise Bulling, Ph.D., Senior Research Director
  - Kate Speck, Ph.D., Senior Research Manager
- Nebraska Department of Corrections
  - Steve King – PIO
  - Cameron White, Ph.D., Behavioral Health Administrator
- Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality
  - Jim Bunstock - PIO

- Nebraska State Patrol
  - Deb Collins – PIO
- University of Nebraska-Lincoln
  - Mario Scalora, Ph.D., Assoc. Prof., Law/Psych
  - Fred Gardy, Asst. Chief, UNL Police Dept.
  - Kelly Bartling – Public Relations/News Manager
- University of Nebraska Medical Center
  - Robin Zagurski, LCSW, LIMHP

# Resources

- [http://www.riskcommunication.samhsa.gov/  
RiskComm.pdf](http://www.riskcommunication.samhsa.gov/RiskComm.pdf)

- <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/erc/>

- Nebraska Risk Communication Cadre

Contact:

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# MESSAGE MAPPING ACTIVITY

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University of Nebraska Medical Center

# Steps to Message Mapping

1. Identify stakeholders for a selected issue of high concern, such as a bio-terrorist attack
  - ▣ If there were an outbreak of smallpox, who are the stakeholders you need to address?
    - <http://dmh.mo.gov/ada/provider/sti/04/MessageMapping%20in%20High%20Risk%20Situations2.20.04.pdf>, Vince Covello, 2002

# Steps to Message Mapping

## 2. Identify a complete list of stakeholder questions and concerns

### ▣ Anticipate 95% of questions

- **Overarching questions** (for example: What is the most important thing that the public should know about this issue?)
- **Informational questions** (for example: “What is the budget allocated for your response?”)
- **Challenging questions or statements** (for example: “Why should we trust what you are telling us?; “How many more people have to die before you take appropriate action?”)
  - <http://dmh.mo.gov/ada/provider/sti/04/MessageMapping%20in%20High%20Risk%20Situations2.20.04.pdf>, Vince Covello, 2002

# Steps to Message Mapping

3. Analyze questions to identify common concerns
  - ▣ Look at the handout and identify questions to map today
    - <http://dmh.mo.gov/ada/provider/sti/04/MessageMapping%20in%20High%20Risk%20Situations2.20.04.pdf>, Vince Covello, 2002

# Steps to Message Mapping (Cont.)

4. Develop key messages from the generated list of underlying stakeholder concerns and specific stakeholder questions.
- Message Mapping Team:
  - Subject matter expert
  - Communication specialist
  - Policy expert
  - Facilitator
- Brainstorm
- Produce a message narrative
  - Reduce to a message map
    - <http://dmh.mo.gov/ada/provider/sti/04/MessageMapping%20in%20High%20Risk%20Situations2.20.04.pdf>, Vince Covello, 2002

# Steps to Message Mapping (Cont.)

5. Develop supporting facts and proofs for each key message

□ Use the same principles that guide key message construction

□ 3/9/27

□ 1N=3P

- <http://dmh.mo.gov/ada/provider/sti/04/MessageMapping%20in%20High%20Risk%20Situations2.20.04.pdf>, Vince Covello, 2002

# Guidelines

- Use one or all of the three key messages on the message map as a media sound bite
- Present the sound bite in less than 9 seconds for television and less than 27 words for the print media
- When responding to specific questions from a reporter or stakeholder regarding a key message, present the supporting information from the message map in less than 9 seconds or 27 words.
  - <http://dmh.mo.gov/ada/provider/sti/04/MessageMapping%20in%20High%20Risk%20Situations2.20.04.pdf>, Vince Covello, 2002

# Guidelines

- If time allows, present the key messages and supporting information contained in a messages map using the “Triple T Model”:
  - (1) Tell people what you are going to tell them, i.e., key messages
  - (2) Tell them more, i.e., supporting information
  - (3) Tell people again what you told them, i.e., repeat key messages
    - <http://dmh.mo.gov/ada/provider/sti/04/MessageMapping%20in%20High%20Risk%20Situations2.20.04.pdf>, Vince Covello, 2002

# Guidelines

- Study and practice the use of message maps
- Stay on the prepared messages in the message map; avoid “winging it.”
- Take advantage of opportunities to reemphasize or bridge to key messages
- Keep messages short and focused
- Be honest: tell the truth.
  - <http://dmh.mo.gov/ada/provider/sti/04/MessageMapping%20in%20High%20Risk%20Situations2.20.04.pdf>, Vince Covello, 2002

## Possible Questions

- How contagious is smallpox?
- Can everyone be vaccinated?
- What are the signs and symptoms of smallpox?
- Who's in charge?
- Why is smallpox a good weapon?
- What makes you think the strategies of the 60s and 70s will work today?
- What's being done to prepare?
- What kind of medical care will be available? Is there enough?
- What resources will be used to identify and respond to an outbreak?
- Could terrorists make a strain that you couldn't protect against?
- Are enough resources available to care for smallpox patients?
- Are laboratories able to quickly diagnose smallpox?
- How do you know the new vaccine will work?
- Isn't it true that smallpox has been known to be airborne in the past?
- Can I get smallpox from water, mosquitoes, pets, or farm animals?
- What are state and local health departments doing to prepare?
- Is it true that the vaccine comes from aborted fetuses?
- How are bioterrorism funds being spent?
- What do I do if I think I have smallpox?
- Should people get vaccinated?
- Is the vaccine licensed and approved? What does IND mean?
- What is the government doing to make the vaccine safer?
- Who will tell me when I need to get vaccinated?
- Is there an adequate supply of medicines available to treat vaccine complications?
- What are the alternatives to vaccination?
- What should happen after I get vaccinated?
- Why a plan now?
- What does the plan say?
- Why does the plan say what it says?
- How do you know the risk is low? Are we already at risk?
- How prepared are you in the event of a smallpox outbreak?
- How do you know whether a smallpox threat is a hoax or not?
- If I get sick from the vaccination, who will take care of my family, my pets?
- Does the CDC recommend that I get smallpox vaccinations?
- Can pets be vaccinated?
- Are the smallpox vaccines licensed and approved? What does Investigational New Drug (IND) mean?
- What are the differences between the different types of smallpox vaccine?
  - <http://dmh.mo.gov/ada/provider/sti/04/MessageMapping%20in%20High%20Risk%20Situations2.20.04.pdf>,  
Vince Covello, 2002

- What is the CDC doing to make smallpox vaccine safer?
- How long does it take for smallpox vaccination to protect against smallpox?
- Are there people who cannot be protected by smallpox vaccination?
- How do I keep the vaccination virus from spreading from my vaccination to other people?
- Can the elderly and young people take the smallpox vaccination?
- Who will tell me when I need to be vaccinated?
- Can people with HIV/AIDS, kidney transplants, cancer, and other causes of weakened immune systems be vaccinated against smallpox?
- What is isolation?
- What is quarantine?
- Can I be forced to be in quarantine or isolation?
- Who need to be in quarantine or isolation?
- Who is in charge?

- <http://dmh.mo.gov/ada/provider/sti/04/MessageMapping%20in%20High%20Risk%20Situations2.20.04.pdf>,  
Vince Covello, 2002

**Draft Message Map Stakeholder: General Public**

**Question: Can everyone be vaccinated?**

**Key Message 1**

**Only people possibly exposed to smallpox should be vaccinated**

**Supporting Fact 1-1**

Focused vaccination is the strategy

**Supporting Fact 1-2**

Anyone possibly exposed regardless of health status should be vaccinated

**Supporting Fact 1-3**

In those potentially exposed the benefits of vaccination outweigh the risks.

**Key Message 2**

**Vaccination is safe for most people**

**Supporting Fact 2-1**

The majority of people of all ages and races experience the expected reactions

**Supporting Fact 2-2**

Normal reactions to the vaccine include fever, soreness, itching, and tiredness.

**Supporting Fact 2-3**

These reactions are a good sign that the vaccine is working

**Key Message 3**

**Some people are more likely to experience side effects than others**

**Supporting Fact 3-1**

Weakened immune systems

**Supporting Fact 3-2**

Skin conditions such as eczema

**Supporting Fact 3-3**

Not recommended for pregnant women