



Stakeholder/ Partner Communication

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Module Summary

- Why stakeholders and partners are important in a crisis
- Understanding stakeholders and partners
- Tips for working successfully with stakeholders and partners

Stakeholder/Partner Communication

- **Stakeholders** have a special connection to you and your involvement in the emergency.
- They are interested in how the incident will impact them.
- **Partners** have a working relationship to you and collaborate in an official capacity on the emergency issue or other issues.
- They are interested in fulfilling their role in the incident and staying informed.



Stakeholder/Partner Communication

- Name stakeholders
- Name partners

5 Mistakes With Stakeholders

- Inadequate access
- Lack of clarity
- No energy for response
- Too little, too late
- Perception of arrogance



Why Expend Energy on Stakeholders During an Emergency?

- They may know what you need to know
- Points of view outside your organization
- Communicates your message



Stakeholders Come in Three Shades

- Advocate—maintain loyalty
- Adversary—discourage negative action
- Ambivalent—keep neutral or move to advocate



Minimize the Negative by

- Emphasizing factors that inspire trust
- Paying attention to the response process and engaging partners
- Explaining organizational procedures
- Promising only what you can deliver
- Being forthcoming

Stakeholder Preplanning

- Do an assessment
- Identify stakeholders
- Query stakeholders
- Prioritize by relationship to incident
- Determine level of “touch”



Stakeholder Reaction Assessment Worksheet

Stakeholder Reaction Assessment Worksheet

Stakeholder group _____ Importance to the success of public health communication (1–5) _____

Severity of likely reaction (1–5) _____ Advocate _____ Adversary _____ Ambivalent _____

Importance of this stakeholder group? _____

Likely initial reaction? _____

Turning point? _____

What would cause them to change their position? _____

Key messages: _____

Key contacts: _____

Opportunities for feedback? _____

Strategies to inform/involve stakeholders? _____

Strategies to help keep them from getting involved (satisfy needs early)? _____

Products to provide: _____

Contact updates: _____

Date, with whom, and how: _____



Responding to Stakeholders

- Standby statement
- Reaction action plan
- Web page for partners
- Conference call
- Meet face-to-face
- Commit to a schedule of updates

Community Relations

- Community acceptance through community involvement
- Research shows the value of community partnerships
- Resource multiplier for “door to door” communication
- Involving stakeholders is a way to advance acceptance

Convening a Citizen's Forum

- Acknowledge concerns
- Encourage fact-finding
- Share power
- Act trustworthy
- Offer contingent commitments

Empower Group Decisionmaking

- Identify alternatives
- Analyze alternatives
- Present all scientific information
- Choose “want” versus “must” criteria
- Reach a clear, justifiable decision

Quality Listening

- Good listeners are perceived as more intelligent
- Reduces mistakes
- Listen for intent (feeling)
- Listen for content (facts)
- Listen for who is speaking

Dealing With Angry People

Anger arises when

- People have been hurt
- People feel threatened by risks out of their control
- Fundamental beliefs are challenged

Don't Lecture

- Easy but not effective
- Doesn't change thoughts/behaviors
- Instead, ask questions
- Key: don't give a solution, rather help audience discover solution

Questions To Help People Persuade Themselves

- Start with broad open-ended historical questions
- Ask questions about wants and needs
- Ask about specifics being faced now
- Ask in a way to encourage a statement of benefits

Steps of Escalating Conflict

- Begins when threatened (you survive or I do)
- Distortion of “other” side
- Rigid explanation about their actions and others’
- Rely on stereotypes
- Becomes part of their identity

De-escalating Conflict

- Agree when you can
- Seek common principles
- Consider that you may be wrong
- Strive for fairness
- Get input from all stakeholders
- Ensure that the community is better off when you leave
- Provide access to open and complete scientific information

Gaining Acceptance

- Accumulate “yeses”
- Don’t say “but”—say “yes, and”