



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

SEP - 5 1984

TO TRAINING PARTICIPANTS

This Communications training program is an initiative of the Agency Administrator. It was designed by the Office of Public Affairs to provide EPA field personnel with tools necessary to communicate with the public in difficult community situations.

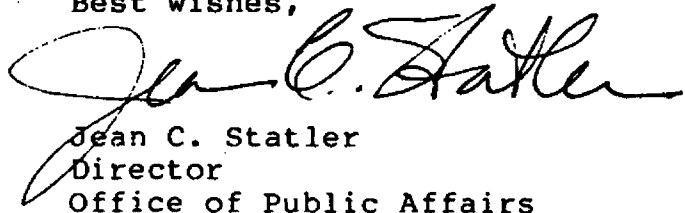
The training is also EPA's first attempt to give its field personnel practical assistance in communicating about risk to a public concerned about issues such as the quality of their drinking water or what the long-term impacts are of short-term exposure to various toxicants.

The training program also attempts to give field personnel some hands-on experience in dealing with tough questions from the media and citizens as well as some innovative techniques for holding better meetings.

This Communications Handbook is intended as a reference. It includes the presentations made during this training as well as additional materials which may be useful to you in implementing community involvement in your daily work.

EPA's management clearly recognizes that you are its first line of contact for most of the public. Citizens see you as "EPA." How you come across to them, in large measure, will determine the Agency's success. It's not an easy task; this training has been designed to help you.

Best wishes,


Jean C. Statler
Director
Office of Public Affairs

COMMUNICATIONS TRAINING

Instructors: Merle Lefkoff and Frank Corrado

8:30 a.m.	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF TRAINING AND INSTRUCTORS	Jo Cooper
8:40 a.m.	"WHY COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IS CRITICAL" --Videotape--	William D. Ruckelshaus
8:50 a.m.	INTRODUCTION	
	--"Root of the Problem"--Videotape of confrontations with citizens	Frank Corrado
	--Decisions--technical or political?	Merle Lefkoff
9:50 a.m.	Coffee break	
10:05 a.m.	COMMUNICATING WITH THE PUBLIC	Merle Lefkoff
	--Active Listening	
	--Congruent Sending	
11:35 a.m.	Brown bag working lunch	
12:00 p.m.	THE REALITIES OF COMMUNICATING HEALTH EFFECTS	Frank Corrado
	--Developing Credibility	
	--Responding to Difficult Questions	
2:15 p.m.	MAKING MEETINGS MORE EFFECTIVE	Merle Lefkoff
	--Small Group Meetings	
	--Large Group Meetings	
	--Effective Meeting Techniques	
3:45 p.m.	THE SEBASTIAN CASE STUDY	Merle Lefkoff
	--The Prince Analysis System	Frank Corrado
5:15 p.m.	EVALUATION	

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHIES

FRANK CORRADO-- Currently is a consultant to the Office of External Affairs on community involvement. Earlier he served as a consultant to the Administrator on internal communications within the Agency. From 1969 to 1979 Corrado was Director of Public Affairs in Region 5 for EPA and a predecessor agency. From 1979 until mid-1982 he was on the faculty of the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University where he taught communications and telecommunications. He continues there as an adjunct associate professor. In mid-1982 he joined the consulting firm of Hay Associates and the following year opened his own firm, Communications for Managers. Specializing in internal communications, organizational culture and training, Corrado has Hartmarx Corp., Serale Consumer Products and Borg-Warner among his clients. He is the author of a book, "Media for Managers," published last year.

MERLE S. LEFKOFF--Is a principal in a consulting firm of Lefkoff, Slaughter and Cardwell, which advises government agencies and business organizations on community planning in a participatory context. She has had extensive experience in training government employees to conduct public participation activities and to enable them to learn various techniques and skills for better communication, interaction and cooperation with their respective constituency. She has designed and conducted training courses for the U.S. Department of Energy, the the Army Corps of Engineers, and the South Carolina and Mississippi, the most recent clients.

Dr. Lefkoff works out of Cambridge, Massachusetts, where she is President of the Board of the National Center for Collaborative Planning and Community Services. She is currently assisting: the State of Massachusetts on siting criteria for a possible low-level radioactive waste repository by designing and facilitating a series of state-wide meetings with environmentalists, waste generators, academic researchers and public officials; the State of Mississippi in the design of a conflict management plan in anticipation of nomination as a federal high-level nuclear waste repository site; and is consulting with the Army Corps and the States of New York and New Jersey on the design and delivery of public access computerized data systems. Dr. Lefkoff is a consultant to the EPA administrator in Washington.

"WHY COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IS CRITICAL"

--William D. Ruckelshaus

WHY COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IS CRITICAL

--William D. Ruckelshaus

Good morning. You are about to take part in a training session which will be extended to over 500 program people in all ten regions during the next few months. We are making this commitment of resources because of my conviction that EPA cannot effectively administer the environmental laws of this nation without a larger degree of understanding and participation by the public.

We have made substantial efforts in this direction before, but it's my view that we can and must do more, not only to explain our policies better to people, but to listen to them as well.

This is not a one-shot operation or a public relations campaign. I want you to get in the habit of working routinely with citizens and involving them in environmental decisionmaking. From now on that has got to be a basic part of your job description.

Let people know that our objective is not to impose prefabricated solutions but to share our knowledge. Hide nothing. Use plain English. Explain our view of the health risks they may face and any potential damage to property or the environment. Tell them what we have done to control or remedy the problem without losing patience.

Acknowledge that their concerns are real, but convince them that you want to hear from them and you know their perceptions and concerns are legitimate.

Get into these communities and get comments and opinions--no matter how extreme or emotional. You'll find that some people will be able to provide technical expertise and can comment dispassionately, constructively and even authoritatively on a host of matters.

Next, solicit citizen comments on all follow-up activity. Crank those comments into your final decisions whenever possible. If you can't, say why.

Prove to the people that their views count and that they can have an influence in the decisions that affect them. Stress that every clean-up program must be acceptable to the community as a whole.

Remember that you are handing people the psychological equivalent of a shovel which they can use to dig themselves out of what they see as a serious threat to their well-being. It's a fact that when people participate in solving problems, they don't feel victimized. They are more likely to accept the tradeoffs and compromises that have to be made to get a job done. They'll be willing to work with you instead of against you.

So democratization of the regulatory process ultimately

makes your job easier, not harder--and that will speed the general improvement of the environment.

I look forward to hearing about the success of the communications training program. You have my best wishes in this vital undertaking.

**BUILDING COMMUNITY CONTACTS
AND EVALUATING COMMUNITY ATTITUDES**

**--Robert L. Burke
EPA Public Affairs**

BUILDING COMMUNITY CONTACTS AND EVALUATING COMMUNITY ATTITUDES

By: Robert L. Burke

Past EPA outreach programs have focused primarily on implementation of very specific agency program objectives and requirements.

EPA's "Community Involvement" program has evolved from a recognition gained over a 13-year period that several of our programs have profound impacts on communities and residents.

There are certain national and regional examples that point up these various community impacts.

A. PROGRAM AREAS WITH COMMUNITY IMPACTS

- (1) Transportation control plans in the early 1970's which aroused intense feelings about the effects of curtailed driving on the economy of downtown areas.
- (2) Groundwater contamination which has been an emotional issue in areas where subsurface supplies are the sole drinking water supply. This problem is compounded when there is no readily available solution.
- (3) The highly visible community concerns about the health and economic impacts of illicit and illegal hazardous waste dumps.
- (4) Decisions involving the siting and permitting of new hazardous waste treatment, disposal and storage facilities.
- (5) The often conflicting impacts on community growth and water quality of projects under the construction grants program.

- (6) The discovery of toxic chemicals in the environment of several communities or the effects of transporting chemical wastes through communities and large urban areas.
- (7) The conflicting impacts of local jobs, consumer costs, and public health from air pollution controls on industry or utilities.
- (8) Specific Regional Examples. (APPENDIX A)

B. REGIONAL CHALLENGES

I've discovered one thing as a result of many years at headquarters, a four-year assignment with a state government, and details to the regional offices in Boston and Philadelphia.

When the several issues I just discussed are considered,

You in the regional offices have the most difficult load to carry.

1. Regions Don't Set Policy: National decisions from Washington often serve to leave individual regions dealing with an unpopular local backlash. Acid rain in the northeast, a pesticide decision affecting certain sunbelt states, a decision to curtail new waste treatment construction in rapidly growing areas. The list can go on indefinitely.

These national decisions do influence local perceptions about EPA generally and often in radically different ways. We are perceived to be OVERBEARING or DODGING an issue. These feelings affect the credibility of totally unrelated EPA programs.

Many state officials perceive one central point about their own program responsibilities and those of federal agencies including EPA. How local governments and citizens relate to the federal and state professionals they work with directly influences their perceptions of the programs.

C. REGIONAL STRENGTHS AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

I've observed that EPA regional offices have several inherent strengths that they can bring to bear on an issue. It sometimes seems that regions either can't see these strengths or don't entirely trust them.

Let me give you some examples. In the state I worked in, there were several occasions when joint action between EPA and the state government (or differences) evolved. Here is what state officials perceived to be the strengths of the regional office on each of these situations.

1. Regions As Environmental Protector: Despite problems in recent years, there has always been a perception by state officials that regional EPA officials have strong and personal commitments towards environmental protection. In any problem involving communities, this point is a strong asset. Working for EPA commands respect from most of the public.

2. Regional Enforcement Powers: State and local governments have been made aware of EPA's enforcement powers on many occasions and they are always concerned that it can be used again. This is often the only thing that goads them into action.

3. Immediate Impacts On Media And Officials: A strong EPA action has an immediate and usually positive effect on most states and communities. It is amazing how strong and broadly based public support is for an EPA action that implies greater environmental protection.

4. Prospective Role as Outside Mediator: Because EPA representatives are perceived somewhat as outsiders, they often can help to adjust institutional or turf problems between state governments and communities. Being an outsider fosters the perception of impartiality on some issues.

D. BUILDING A COMMUNITY TEAM CONCEPT AROUND REGIONAL
OFFICE RESOURCES AND EXPERIENCES

One upshot of this is that much of what you need to communicate with and involve the public already exists within your own regional office. There are several areas you can go for assistance in this regard.

1. Regional OPA Office: (1) press relations and working knowledge of media representatives; (2) information materials, outreach activities; (3) a focal point for community involvement techniques from work with the Superfund Program; (4) Knowledge of constituencies.

2. Intergovernmental Relations/External Affairs: knowledge of and feedback from; (1) congressional inquiries; (2) local officials; (3) state legislators. (4) state and local agencies.

3. Professionals in your own Program: There are probably others in your own program area who have dealt with communities you must work in.

4. Other Program Offices: They may have dealt with some of the groups you must meet with. Look particularly for certain air and water programs that have been working with states and communities almost since the agency was formed in 1971.

I was impressed with the system I found in Region III for Superfund where there were informal meetings involving OPA, Intergovernmental Relations, the elements and enforcement office prior to any EPA presence in an affected community. The collective knowledge from the various offices allowed for a quick and accurate profile on each area. No one office had the entire picture.

A TEAM EFFORT INVOLVING SEVERAL DIFFERENT SOURCES WITHIN THE REGIONAL OFFICE CAN PROVIDE THE INFORMATION NEEDED TO OPERATE IN AND UNDERSTAND COMMUNITY CONDITIONS AND THINKING.

E. STATE STRENGTHS AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

In the last section, I described how strong EPA decisions are generally received positively at the community level. This, however, may diminish with time. The state government I worked with had several long-term advantages over the regional office if differences evolved on a given issue that involved a community or communities.

1. Contacts: State officials by and large had well established contacts with community groupings and interest groups affected by a particular decision. In a given community, the state agencies I worked with probably had 10 contacts for every one that EPA had. This is natural. But it is a strong factor in the long run if a state has an alternative position and is seeking to influence or accommodate local groupings.

2. Understanding The Political Terrain: State agencies are increasingly adept at understanding local attitudes because their strength and capacity to survive often depend on it.

3. Evaluating Local Sources: I will touch a bit more on this later except that it is one thing to have sources for information within a community and it is quite another thing to know how reliable, credible, and influential they are. By and large, state officials who have worked on various programs have learned how reliable and credible local sources and groups are.

4. Relations With Local Governments: By nature, a state government's relations with local government can be virtually on a day-to-day basis. They often learn to understand what local priorities are, the political and technical limitations local governments labor under, and how to reach accommodation on issues and programs.

State counterparts understand both your programs and affected communities. They may be your best single source for external information and support.

F. OTHER GOVERNMENT SOURCES OF INFORMATIONAL SUPPORT

I have dwelt on state strengths in terms of community involvement for two reasons. The first is to demonstrate that many of them are already applying several of the community involvement techniques we will be discussing in this training session. Some do it to strengthen their position and credibility within the state and with local communities. Others are doing it simply to survive.

But there are other sources that can be turned to for information if for some reason it isn't practical to go to state counterparts.

I think most of these other sources will be willing to help if you ask for that help. You don't have to reinvent the wheel to develop an effective community relations program. The work has probably already been done by someone else.

1. Federal Offices In The State: In Rhode Island, for example, The Federal Highway Administration runs what can only be termed a comprehensive community relations program. They have been working in the state's 39 cities and towns for at least two decades. They don't call what they do community involvement, but in terms of what this training session will discuss, that is essentially what it is. Some feel in EPA that old-line federal agencies are aloof from the public or from communities. This simply is not true.

2. State Advisory Groups: These groupings are formed either by the governor or by various executive agencies. They meet and advise on several issues and programs including environmental ones. They are often an important state link with cities and towns. They include representatives from local areas with good contacts and high credibility.

6. Metropolitan Planning Organizations: Don't overlook these organizations for support despite their often placid and plodding appearance. They are directly responsible to local governments. Most have had extensive experience with EPA, state government, and the communities they serve. Since their programs and projects are usually extended over time, their working relationship and evaluation of sources and problems can be extremely valuable, sound and somewhat reflective.

G. PRIVATE SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

1. Public Interest/Environmental Groupings: Many have worked either for or against EPA on past programs. Several have networks already established in communities. Other program and OPA personnel in the regional offices probably have a good idea about their credibility, stability, and knowlege. But state counterparts probably know them even better.

Examples are: *League of Women Voters
 *Conservation Commissions

2. Special Interest and Economic Interests: An additional source of information, particularly on issues where local or state economies may be affected by an EPA program ---or where pocketbook issues are involved. Some of them may seem to play "hardball" on the outside with highly critical assessments of EPA or environmental programs. But on a one to one basis, they can be helpful and accomodating.

Examples are: *Chambers of Commerce (State and local)
 *American Automobile Association
 *Groups representing specific industries or interests.

You don't have to reinvent the wheel. Someone probably has the information you need to work effectively in communities.

People like being asked for help or non-binding advice on an issue.

H. MYTHS ABOUT COMMUNITY ATTITUDES

There are some strongly held myths about community attitudes or the way local areas will react to a given situation based on faulty stereotypes or assumptions about who outsiders will have to deal with on various public issues. These misconceptions are common. I have fallen into some of these traps. They include:

1. Ethnic/Economic Differences: Some officials cling to the notion that ethnic or economic characteristics of a community or the political structure will give clear insights into how a community or neighborhood will react to a given environmental problem. A health threat or neighborhood impact elicits similar responses whenever it is perceived as threatening.

2. The Myth of The Establishment: The belief that established power centers will influence or moderate the feelings of an affected community or area is highly questionable. In fact, the reverse seems more often true. Emotions generated about health risks at the neighborhood level will probably cause the so-called power centers to ultimately react with support.

3. The Myth of Regional Differences: Every region of the country likes to think it is different but a perceived health threat generates the same emotions and concerns in Pennsylvania as it does in Oregon.

4. General Versus Specific Community Issues: Caution is advised about basing local strategies on general polling or survey research data concerning a particular community or state. What people say about things in general may not be the same as what they ultimately think when an issue hits their community. Examples include: (1) sacrificing economic benefits for environmental protection; (2) supporting strong state or federal programs for handling municipal and hazardous wastes; (3) giving state and local governments the primary responsibility for environmental programs over the federal government.

I. LOCAL CONTACTS

I can't stress strongly enough my suggestion that the best way to get a handle on communities you must deal with is initially through the variety of federal, state and metropolitan sources I have already noted. As an EPA representative, I would no more bypass the state than a state official would bypass local officials when working in a particular city, town or county.

There come times, however, when federal officials must deal with communities directly either in terms of communications or to expedite a public involvement program.

There are simply countless sources you can contact or must deal with. But without touching base with the sources I have discussed previously, you could be playing a game of Russian Roulette. The following four groupings are common.

1. Affected Citizens And Neighborhoods: citizens who have been affected by a presumed health effect or whose neighborhood will be affected by some action are the most important contacts. And whether state officials will be there for support can depend on the nature of the problem and how they want to handle it. Citizens affected by a serious environmental or health problem (or who think they are) need timely and accurate information. They are often a major source of information on the problem itself. Their attitudes often dictate how the issue and EPA's action are perceived by the media, officials, and the community as a whole.

2. Local Officials: The importance of touching base with local officials (elected and agency officials) is paramount. It helps to have a clear reading of who the key officials are, what their problems and responsibilities will be on the matter, and what their interests and constituencies are. You will never get all this down perfectly but stepping into a situation with no information will lead to almost certain mistakes.

3. State Legislators: Many affected residents and interest groups will contact or work with their state legislators before they go to local elected officials. There are a number of reasons for this including the fact that legislators may have support from different or differently oriented constituencies within the community, the relevance of state action to the issue, or the perceived interest of the legislator in environmental issues.

One thing is clear. If you get the same reading on what communities are thinking from both local officials and the state legislators, you can usually consider it reliable. Both have a vested interest in being on top of what the voters are thinking.

4. Local Media: The newspaper reporters and radio stations in the area often know detailed information about communities and individuals. I found I was able to share quite a bit with them off the record although caution is still in order.

5. Any Affected Economic Interests: While legal constraints and regulatory strategies dictate caution when speaking to any source facing a possible EPA legal action, it is imperative that you have some idea of where specific economic interests are coming from and the message and strategies they are employing.

I am not going to dwell heavily on these except that effective coordination and communications within the regional office is a good first principle.

J. EVALUATING LOCAL SOURCES

We all know that we have to deal with all people who have a direct interest in a problem or a concern about it. I will be frank about it. There were some people in Rhode Island I didn't like to deal with but I knew I had to simply to keep my agency's credibility and integrity in tact. And there were times when even the most "off the wall" person would come up with something that was positive and on the mark.

But, I think if you are going to base decisions or actions on what people say and think, you should keep a few things in mind. These include

1. Sustained Credibility: You should be able to ascertain from your state and EPA sources whether an individual you must deal with is credible. I wouldn't necessarily base this solely on how often they tend to support EPA on various issues.

2. Climbers: I'm wary of people who tend to use an issue to further themselves personally. They may be right in what they are trying to do but they can also try and co-opt a federal or state agency.

3. People With Grudges: I was also wary of putting much confidence in people who had nothing good to say about a state agency, EPA, or any other institution. Their lack of objectivity is suspect.

4. Single Issue Groups: These can be the bane of any official's existence. They can relate every problem or issue to their special interest no matter how remote it is from an official's task.

5. Community Spokespersons: Some people claim to represent or speak for the community. They may or may not, but don't assume they do simply because they say they do.

K. SUMMARY

1. EPA program responsibilities have had strong impacts on communities in the past and will continue to have them in the future. The success of these programs and the agency's credibility are largely dependent on how communities perceive and respond to our initiatives, policies and thinking.
2. Basic community involvement skills and insights improve program manageability and agency credibility.
3. EPA has certain strengths and assets for operating effectively in community situations. The major one is a simple perception that EPA representatives are environmental protectors.
4. Other involved parties, particularly state counterparts, also have certain strengths and assets. These should be kept in mind when seeking information and support for working in communities.
5. Information and support for community involvement can be tapped from
 - regional colleagues
 - state counterparts
 - other government and private sources
5. When working at the local level
 - identify and work with front-line constituencies
 - avoid prejudging community attitudes
 - combine healthy skepticism with empathy

6. Adoption Papers: There will come a time ---it comes to every official dealing with communities --- when some group or individual wants to adopt you as their spokesperson. You accept this offer with great peril.

Almost all of these are good and decent people. Without them, a lot of good that does get done in communities would never see the light of day. The problem is that their interests and what you must do to protect EPA's credibility may, at times, differ. Most of them know you can't address or be a representative for all their objectives.----But some will try anyway.

K. SOME CONCLUDING IDEAS

(1) Avoid other community issues or controversies. They spell trouble.

(2) Avoid the temptation to promise that something specific can always be done. This is very tempting and often overwhelming.

(3) Seek to establish communications and involvement with people rather than alliances.

(4) Willingly talk with all kinds of people. This is not always easy or immediately rewarding. But it usually pays dividends in the long-run.

**HANDBOOK FOR EPA
COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING**

HANDBOOK FOR EPA COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

Prepared By
Office of External Affairs
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
November 1983

I. INTRODUCTION

Everything EPA does is a subject of interest to elected officials, environmentalists, the press, affected communities, business and the public in general.

In the act of communicating what it is doing, EPA has the opportunity to re-affirm and sustain trust in the agency. The Communications Plan will be the cornerstone to develop an agreed upon strategy for the issue at hand while providing a vehicle to spell out EPA's encompassing objectives, responsibilities and positions and enhance the flow of information about these important environmental decisions to the public at large.

II. COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING -WHAT IS IT?

Communications Planning should be an integral part of any EPA action. A planning form (see attachment) should be added to proposed agency activities that impacts one or more of the agency's constituencies. There is always a need- whether for release of a report from R&D or publication of a list of hazardous waste dumps or a new source performance standard. The anticipated impact of the action will dictate the amount of planning needed.

The Communications Planning Process simply consists of asking and answering a few questions:

- (1) Who's going to be affected by this action?
 - (2) Who has to be notified?
 - (3) What are we going to say?
 - (4) How are we going to notify them?
 - (5) When are we going to do this?
 - (6) Who's responsible for telling whom?
-

Sorting out these questions is the essence of communications planning.

(1) WHO'S GOING TO BE AFFECTED BY THIS ACTION?

There are a number of constituencies that the agency regularly interacts with on most of its major actions:

(a) affected industry - If we are issuing standards for reductions of emissions from heavy duty trucks as required by the Clean Air Act, then we need to decide which companies will be directly impacted. Manufacturers, both domestic and foreign, of heavy duty trucks would be listed here. Also listed, however, might be major trade groups, in this case, the Motor Vehicles Manufacturing Association or the Auto Importers of America.

(b) interest groups - because of the needs and concerns of their members and/or because of their involvement during the development stages of a proposed action, interest groups should be contacted, informed and even on occasion briefed.

(c) Governmental - Specific House and Senate Committees and subcommittees that handle environmental issues and appropriations will want to be notified. So will Congressmen, especially those from districts where impacted industries are located. Senators and representatives might also be identified by State or have previously expressed interest (the "coal caucus" for example or the "Great Lakes caucus").

At the State level, governors in affected states should be told what is going to happen, as should mayors in communities involved. State environmental protection agencies are also included here.

Certain key executive branch offices such as the White House may need to be informed, as well as representatives from other Federal agencies that may be impacted by the decision or which were involved in the development of the action.

(d) News media - Announcement of a very technical regulation affecting measurement of certain water discharges may need to only be published in the Federal register and communicated to the technical press. Other actions may need a full-scale news conference and follow-up. There is no simple formula, but you might say that size of impact|size of groups affected will give you an idea as to the volume at which the communication needs to be delivered to the news media.

(e) affected communities - In some instances special attention must be given to geographic areas that will be directly impacted by the agency's action. Love Canal, Brownsville, Tacoma, Times Beach - all would be examples of locations directly impacted by EPA actions where special community relations activities must be initiated and should be coordinated through the regional offices. In both headquarters and the regions there exist community relations staff to identify and develop site-specific activities.

(2) WHO HAS TO BE NOTIFIED?

The simple answer here is that if someone is affected they should be notified. In some cases, depending on the issue involved, you may need to go well beyond those directly affected. You may need to go to others who for one reason or another should be notified even though they are not directly affected.

If you're dealing with a major agency decision, all members of Congress may have to be notified. If we're dealing with a very local issue, perhaps that a local Congressman's office may have to be notified. This would be considered a minor decision. Press announcements also can be categorized into major and minor events.

(3) WHAT ARE WE GOING TO SAY?

In dealing with announcements of any kind, we need to first of all decide what we are going to say, that is, decide what our message is, then we need to decide how we are going

to say it. If we are announcing a new clean up strategy, we will talk to union leaders in terms of their interests - jobs and wages, and to fishermen in terms of their interests - the fishery, or to businesses in terms of their interests-costs.

Because they know their programs best, EPA program officials are generally responsible for deciding the what. They must not only decide what information is to be given but also what significance should be attached to the information. External affairs staffers are generally responsible for how the message is delivered: the style, the tone, the format, the medium.

(4) HOW ARE WE GOING TO NOTIFY THEM?

The way we notify people has a lot to do with who those people are and how many of them must be notified. We may need only to make a call to a congressional staffer's office or to the White House; or, we may need to schedule a public meeting in a community that is directly impacted. We may need to give an in depth interview to a major news reporter, or we may also just hand a news release to a wire service reporter.

The needs of our constituent groups for information must be attached in as well. Explaining a new policy to a press conference might call for someone who can handle sensitive political issues, while explaining the same policy strategy for a group of scientists would call for a person with a clear understanding of the specific science.

(5) WHEN ARE WE GOING TO DO THIS?

Because of established policy and long-standing tradition, some people are normally notified, as a courtesy in advance of the general release: Congressmen, Governors before news media, affected parties before non-affected parties. Any communications plan must clearly delineate when actions are going to be taken. For example, what we should do and who we should consult with prior to the decision is part of the communications planning process. Then who should be pre-notified, that is notified before the information is released must also be decided upon.

(6) WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR TELLING WHOM?

The question of coordination and responsibility is vital when it comes to communications planning. From the very start of the planning process, this should be clearly defined.

What are the responsibilities of the Office of External Affairs in notification and pre-notification? The Regions? What are the responsibilities of the program officials? How is all that coordinated. There is no pat answer. Depending on the program, depending on the issue, you will designate responsibilities to fit the history of the issue and the capability of the program involved. For example, banning a pesticide may call for pre-notification of certain regional and local interest groups that only the EPA region or program

office might know. Their input into the plan is crucial. They may be also aware of certain technical or local media that have been involved and which should be notified when the decision comes.

III. DOING COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

It is important that there be very clear procedures for doing a communications plan, because there are a number of key actors involved in the process and their efforts must contribute in a coordinated way.

First of all, responsibility must be fixed. In most normal cases, the Office of External Affairs in Washington is responsible for putting together the Communications Plan. In the Regions, the Regional Public Affairs Office would be lead. In many cases, however, the program involved will provide the guidance and suggestions that will form the basis for the plan. For major issues, the Office of the Administrator will want to have a direct say as well in how the communications plan is developed.

Coordinating between the program, the Office of External Affairs and the Office of the Administrator will be the job of the person in External Affairs charged with managing the plan and the person in the program who has the corresponding responsibility. Those officials must be designated by the office and program directors.

One person, however, must have overall authority as well as responsibility regarding the communications plan. That person normally is the Office of External Affairs contact. Implementation is a divided responsibility with major reliance on program and Regional people.

Second, milestones must be established. There needs to be clear understanding as to what triggers what in the process.

If there is a court-imposed date for publication in the Federal Register of a certain regulation, then everybody should "back time" their actions regarding communications from that date.

Questions will then arise such as:

- "When must a draft press release go to the program for review"
- "When must a draft letter to a key congressman be written?
(and who must approve it?)
- "And when must the Administrator approve both of the above?"

These milestones should be established in an initial planning meeting that is held between the Office of External Affairs and the program involved.

Third, everybody involved must get a look at the plan. It is the responsibility of the Office of External Affairs contact to coordinate this clearance promptly.

Fourth, the effort should be evaluated. It is important that there be a debriefing, especially in major actions, to determine what worked and what didn't and how the effort can be improved in the future. Both program personnel and OEA representatives should be involved in this effort on a scheduled basis.

Fifth, a checklist to assist in the mechanics of Communications Planning is attached for your use. You may make copies as required.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR DEVELOPING A
COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Provide information on the following:

1. Nature of the action being taken and its potential impact on 1) industry 2) general public.
2. Proposed announcement date.
3. Other EPA offices involved.
4. Does this action respond to legislative requirement, court action, new technical data, other? Explain.
5. Identify constituent groups directly or indirectly affected.
6. Identify groups that should have special briefings:

<input type="checkbox"/> White House	<input type="checkbox"/> State agencies
<input type="checkbox"/> Congress/staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Other federal agencies
<input type="checkbox"/> Governors	<input type="checkbox"/> Others - explain
<input type="checkbox"/> Mayors	
7. Describe background information available on this action.
8. Identify Agency experts on this subject.
9. Comments.

**HOW TO COMMUNICATE
WELL IN A PUBLIC FORUM**

--Frank Corrado

HOW TO COMMUNICATE WELL IN A PUBLIC FORUM

Problems:

1. High public expectations
2. Public more sophisticated--Sputnik era parents who are technically aware. They think they are as technically competent as you.
3. People are more sophisticated about using the political process--not afraid to go over your head.
4. Difficult to talk with people about risk, without jargon.
5. Property values--usually low to moderate income housing near problem area.
6. Demand for speedy resolution to problems.
7. "Lightning rod effect"--people will use your presence to introduce other agendas (sewer and water hookups, for example).

Problems of "Avoidance":

- ° "Pay me now, pay me later"
- ° Technical people enjoy doing technical things, not people stuff

Why Meet With Local Officials?

- Establishes you as a source of information
- Puts you on the offensive
- Establishes your credibility
- Local officials don't like surprises or being backed into corners

Successful Presentations:

- Clear information
 - Convincing
 - Insightful
 - Professionally confident
 - Personable
- Go out and shake hands before the meeting.

Preparing Your Presentations:

- Identify main points
- Talk in English
- Use examples people can relate to

Questions and Answers

- You can make up for a bad presentation with good Q&A
- Don't be surprised by questions (Devil's advocate before meeting)

- ° If you don't know answer, admit it
- ° If you're attacked, focus attack on the issue at hand
- ° Be specific, cite examples
- ° To cut off speakers: (1) Turn eyes away (2) Recess if out of hand
- ° Don't say: "Are there any questions?", say "What kind of questions do you have?"

VALUES IN COMMUNICATION SKILLS

--Synergy
(c) 1976

UNDERSTANDING VALUES

During this course we call attention to three levels of communication. While learning the skills of Active Listening and Congruent Sending, we will stress two of these levels:

- (1) The CONTENT level - the facts, the information, the subject matter which is being communicated.
- (2) The FEELING level - how the person feels about the information that is being communicated.

People feel more completely understood if the listener indicates an understanding of what the person thinks, and what the person feels.

But there is a third level of communication - the VALUES level - which we need to understand if we want to know why people feel the way they do about the things they are communicating.

Values are the internal standards by which we judge events or behavior to be good/bad, right/wrong, moral/immoral, fair/unfair, just/unjust. We derive our values from training, experience and introspection, and we often feel guilty or unsuccessful when we do not live up to our values.

Values are the internal standards by which we judge events or behavior rather than explicitly stated. While they are a strong force in shaping our lives, when they are stated explicitly they sound vaguely like "motherhood" and "apple pie" and are difficult to defend except as an act of faith. The writers of the Declaration of Independence fell back on the phrase "we hold these truths to be self-evident" to justify values as fundamental as Life, Liberty, and Pursuit of Happiness.

Examples of values are: Order, Comfort, Control, Equality, Security, and Freedom.

Some values are much more fundamental and other values derive from them. For example, both Freedom of Speech and Due Process of Law are values because they are seen as necessary to provide Individual Freedom, which is the more fundamental concept.

Other values proceed from very basic premises about Man's Relationship to Man, Man's Relationship to Nature, Man's Relationship to Time. In the field of land use and natural resources, for example, there is an underlying conception of man's relationship to nature in which, at one end of the scale, man is seen as subordinate to nature; and at the other end of the scale, man is here to utilize or exploit nature. Many people want to avoid either extreme and so declare that their position is that of Man Living in Harmony with Nature; yet rarely do any two individuals find the balance point at exactly the same place.

VALUES AND INDIVIDUAL REALITIES

It is the nature of values that they are highly personal. Each of us possesses an "individual reality", a perception of reality based on our own unique set of personal rules governing our feelings, which - while having some degrees of internal consistency - means that we never have entirely the same perception of reality as another person.

Values are a critical element in creating these "individual realities" because they give meaning to behavior or events. Based on values we see events or behavior as good or bad, fair or unfair, and this provides us with the personal meaning of the event - then based on this meaning we feel happy, sad, angry, pleased, annoyed, or whatever. Our feelings are unique to us precisely because our training, experience,

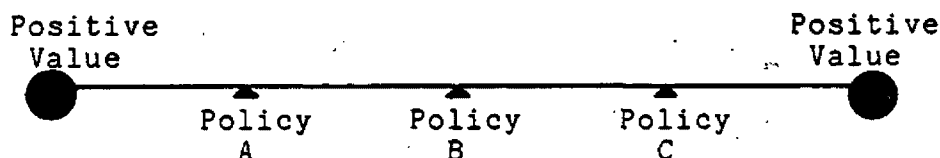
and introspection have led us to develop a set of values unique to us.

Not only do we possess a "personal" set of values, but typically we are confronted in life with situations where we must find a balance point between conflicting values, all of which we consider to be important. In relationship to other people we may find ourselves torn between values of Honesty and Expediency or even Compassion. The real task is not just one of identifying our values, but rather that of "valuing" - making choices between values as to their relative importance in a particular situation.

POLICIES AND UNDERLYING VALUES

It is this act of "valuing" which is at the heart of making policy decisions of any kind. Underlying all fundamental policy decisions are competing values - all of which are considered positive "goods" - which must be resolved by a decision as to which value is of greater importance in this particular situation. For example, if a policy were under consideration to control distribution of pornographic literature, there are competing values of Individual Freedom and Freedom of the Press on the one hand, and a concern for Public Welfare on the other. No one is against any of these values. The issue is which value should prevail in this instance.

A policy is a balance point selected between competing positive values at a given point in time. Competing policies are really competing judgments as to the relative importance of particular values in a particular situation. This is illustrated below:



Each policy is a balance point between two competing positive values, or "goods". Each policy reflects a different valuing of the relative merits or importance of these values.

At the Values Level everyone is "for" something - even though the "positive good" that one person is for is in opposition to the "positive good" another individual supports. It is only at a policy level that people are "aginers", and they are "aginers" because they would select a different balance point between the opposing values. Since values are rarely explicitly stated, people frequently find themselves in policy arguments. This can be a sign that there are fundamental values differences and whenever people have substantial values differences they will usually appear over-emotional and illogical to each other. As a result, we tend to dismiss their ideas.

MOST DATA FROM PUBLIC IN FORM OF VALUES

This has an important impact on how public comment is received by agencies. People often wait until their values are threatened before they act, and the bulk of the comments they make will be necessarily general and emotional. These comments will be an important source of information about values people want applied in the situation, but they may lack specificity. Organized interest groups, on the other hand, have the commitment and resources to translate their values into specific concrete proposals. As a result there is a tendency on the part of agencies to view the data from interest groups as "valuable" while regarding the data from the general public as "over-emotional and illogical".

AGENCIES HAVE OWN VALUE SYSTEM

One reason that much information from the public is viewed

as over-emotional and illogical is that it conflicts with unconscious values implicit in the agency's policy. If you carefully examine the fundamental policies of your agency you will undoubtedly find that there are definite values which underlie these policies. For example, if you are on the staff of a natural resources agency with a "multiple use" policy, your agency will have an underlying value that honors actions that result in the greatest good for the greatest number. This policy may cause you to be suspicious of special interests and predispose you not to think of alternatives which fully develop just a single use. Since people argue from different value systems they tend to appear over-emotional and illogical to each other. You may tend to see some segments of the public as over-emotional and illogical and you may appear the same way to them.

IDENTIFYING VALUES IN DISCUSSIONS

Here is an analysis of the three different levels of communication in a specific example:

PUBLIC COMMENT: "YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO CLOSE THIS ROAD TO OFF-ROAD VEHICLES. WE'RE TAXPAYERS JUST LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE. WITHOUT US YOU WOULDN'T HAVE A JOB AND YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO PUSH PEOPLE AROUND LIKE THIS."

CONTENT LEVEL: Opposition to closing road to off-road vehicles. Perceives road closure as violating his rights as a citizen.

FEELING LEVEL: Anger, Outrage, Upset.

VALUES LEVEL: Individual Freedom, Equal Rights of All Citizens, Consent of the Governed.

Because values are implied, not explicitly stated, this kind of analysis requires that you examine the methods by

which people "imply" their values. Three frequent methods for identifying values are:

- (1) Use of value-laden language: Using terms such as "locking-up the land", "criminal abuse", "power-hungry bureaucrats".
- (2) Referring to a venerable source: People may quote the Bible, the Constitution, a famous person, or an Agency Manual to justify their beliefs.
- (3) Predicting a dire consequence: People will predict that an action will "wipe out the small businessman", or if another action isn't taken "we won't be able to walk the streets of our own city after dark".

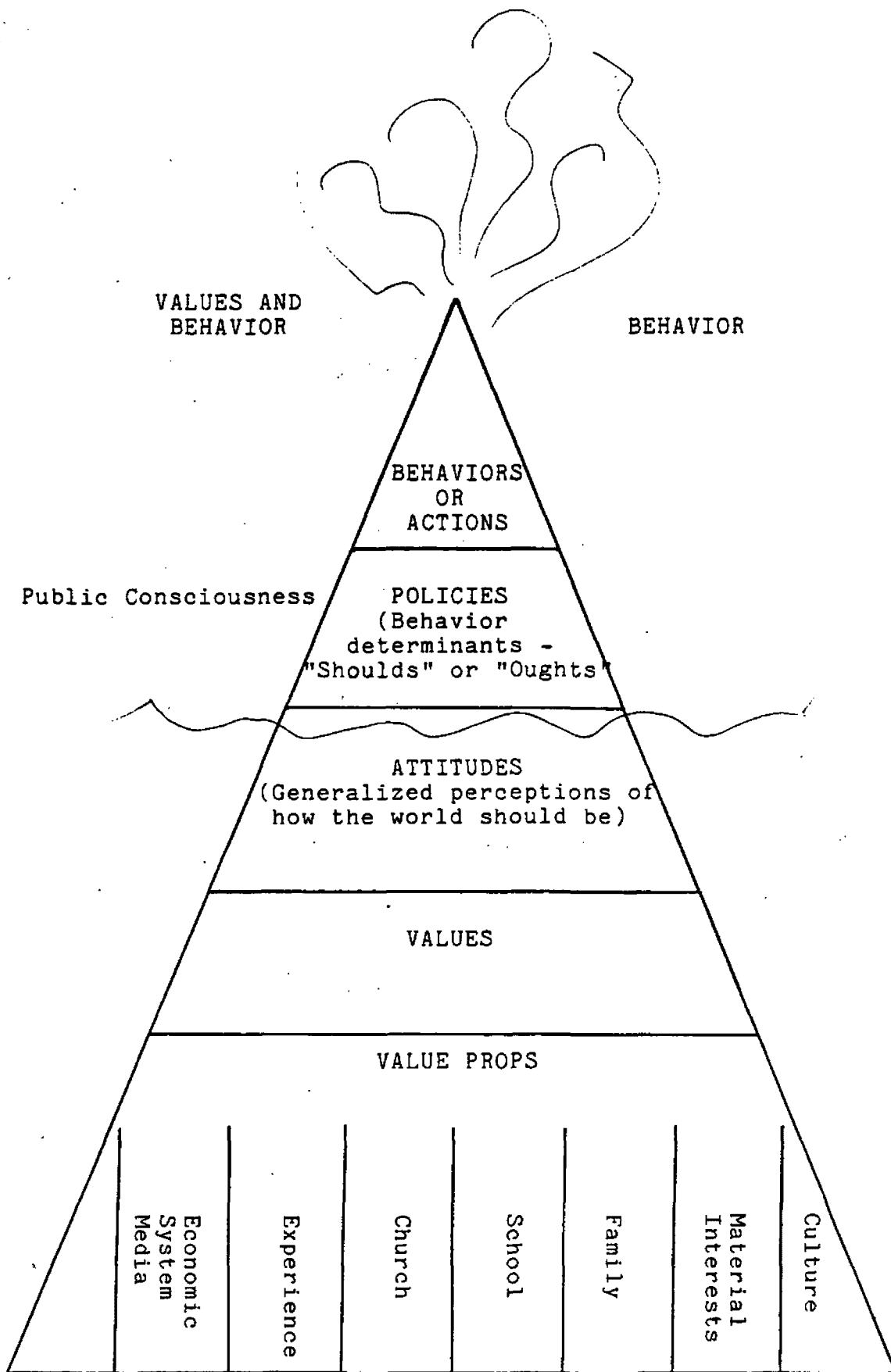
THE IMPORTANCE OF VALUES

Most political scientists agree that a decision is "political" if it bestows benefits and costs on different interests - even if the decision is made through administrative channels rather than through "the political process".

These "interests" may be composed of people who have a direct economic or user benefit, or they may also be composed of people whose sense of the way things ought to be managed is affected by the decision you make. Policies you make bestow benefits or costs based on people's values, as well as their bank accounts. The act of selecting between opposing values to determine a policy that affects a number of people is essentially a political act. This is why there is a demand by the public to participate in these decisions.

To communicate with people effectively, it is necessary to understand the positive values they support, rather than merely identify the policies they oppose. These communications must accept emotional data from the general public as a valuable source of information about values or it will build a bias into the public involvement for the kind of

specific, documented contribution which can only come from the organized interests.



SAMPLE LIST OF VALUES

Comfort	Helpfulness	Efficiency
Equality	Honesty	Success
Excitement	Imagination	Economy
Family security	Independence	Safety
Freedom	Intelligence	Wisdom
Happiness	Consistency	Tradition
Inner harmony	Rationality	Property
Love	Obedience	Law
National security	Politeness	Free speech
Pleasure	Self-control	Initiative
Salvation	Respectfulness	Health
Self-respect	Restraint	Humor
Accomplishment	Responsibility	Cooperation
Recognition	Affection	Competition
Friendship	Self-reliance	Integrity
Wisdom	Creativity	Toughness
Peace	Sensitivity	Compassion
Beauty	Truthfulness	Justice
Ambition	Openness	Productivity
Broadmindedness	Sincerity	Nonviolence
Competency	Brotherhood	Learning
Cheerfulness	Neatness	Growth
Cleanliness	Loyalty	Choice
Courage	Hard work	Moderation
Forgiveness	Contentment	Winning

INTRODUCTION TO ACTIVE LISTENING

--Synergy

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INTRODUCTION TO ACTIVE LISTENING

There are several important principles about how feelings function that underlie the listening and sending skills you are being taught to use in this course.

CONTENT/RELATIONSHIP DISTINCTION

Communication takes place at two levels: The Content Level - the subject matter we are discussing; the Relationship Level - what we communicate to the other person about how much we value them or accept them. Think about the last time someone ordered you to do something: You may not have found much that you could disagree with at a Content Level, but you could still feel resentful or "put down" at the manner in which the order was given. The Relationship Level operates primarily on feelings: "I feel valued, accepted, comfortable." If you also think about times when you've disagreed strongly with someone - such as a political argument - and enjoyed it, I think you will find it is with someone you respect and who you know respected you. You could argue because you were certain the argument would not fundamentally alter the mutual respect.

In other words, if there is mutual respect and trust at a Relationship Level it is possible to agree or disagree with equal comfort.

But if the mutual respect and trust does not exist, then every Content Level issue also becomes a test of the relationship.

ACCEPTANCE OF FEELINGS

One way we communicate acceptance at a Relationship Level is by communicating acceptance of feelings as well as facts. If we only accept facts from people we are accept-

ing them conditionally: "I will accept only certain parts of you; I will accept you as long as you aren't expressing feelings." This is a bit like telling people that you accept all of them except their arms and legs - most bodies come fully equipped. People come fully equipped with feelings and that is a great part of what makes them uniquely them.

The result is that when people express feelings and they are not accepted, they tend to push harder as if to prove that their feelings are justified, or to prove to themselves that it is really all right to feel the way they do.

On the other hand when feelings are accepted, the feelings now come out less pressured, less accusatory and less defensive. Once expressed, other feelings can flow in behind.

ACCEPTANCE vs. AGREEMENT

We have been talking about accepting feelings, but let's take a minute to distinguish acceptance from agreement. You express acceptance when you say: "I understand that you feel such-and-such a way about this topic." You express agreement when you say: "You couldn't be more right, I feel that way too." In the first place you accept that the other person feels the way he does, but in agreement you ally yourself with the other person. What we really want to communicate is, in effect: "It's OK with me for you to be just exactly who you are and feel the way you do."

INDIVIDUAL REALITIES

One way we run into problems with feelings is to assume that if someone has a different feeling than ours, one of us must be right and one of us must be wrong. But another way of looking at it is to consider that when two people react differently to the same situation they are reacting

within the rules of their own upbringing, training, experiences and values. Because upbringing, training, experiences and values are absolutely unique to each person, then the rules which govern feelings are also absolutely unique to each person. While we all have enough common background that we can usually agree on what would be a "normal" reaction, the fact remains that each one of us has areas in which our reactions are completely unique.

This changes things rather fundamentally: "If there is all one universe then I can say that if there is a Natural Law that says all things fall down, then I can exclude the possibility that some things fall up. But since the rules are different for each individual I cannot assume that just because I was horrified by an event doesn't mean that someone else may not be delighted - and be perfectly consistent within his/her individual reality."

Yet we have a tendency to try to obliterate the other person's feelings and try to prove that ours are correct. This proves nothing: It is a fact that he feels the way he feels. The only appropriate behavior is to accept that he feels the way he feels and begin to report the way you feel. We may not have the same reactions to the same experiences, but we can begin to share enough of what is going on in us to begin to understand each other. Incidentally, in the process of this kind of sharing, people learn, and the rules of their reality may alter enough so that next time they have a reaction that has more in common with your own.

PRESENTING PROBLEMS

Other communications problems arise from the manner in which we try to express our feelings. Our culture has erected considerable barriers to the expression of feeling; the individual who expresses strong feelings is considered to

be "over-emotional", "overly sensitive", "irrational", "out of control". But our feelings remain, so we learn to express feelings indirectly through our content messages. Typically, unless the individual trusts us and considers us a friend, feelings are known only by implication.

One characteristic of this "communication by implication" is that people send Presenting Problems. Presenting Problems are like trial balloons - they are small, relatively innocuous problems which, if they are not rejected, lead to sharing of more basic and deeply experienced problems.

For example:

One of the fellows in the office might be making little complaints about a co-worker. For several days you tend to ignore this Presenting Problems, but finally you sit down and listen and this story spills:

"The co-worker is always doing pesky things - it's not just him, it seems like lots of people have been doing it lately - maybe it's just that I'm irritable because of the way things are going at home - things have gotten so bad that this week I've been sleeping on the couch in the living room - I'm really desperate. I don't know what to do. Things are all falling apart."

This pattern of descending levels of communication, proceeding from the Presenting Problem to deeper feelings, is typical of communication when there is an effective listener, but many of our conventional communication skills would not encourage this openness. In fact, unless the sender had such strong feelings that he could override our responses, we might never know about his problems.

INEFFECTIVE LISTENING

The basis of much ineffective listening is two-fold: 1.) Failure to distinguish those times (like the example above)

when the sender is not expecting you to do anything except understand; and 2.) Failure to listen long enough or with sufficient understanding of the sender's feelings to really clearly understand the definition of the problem.

Example:

Sender: "I'm really desperate, I don't know what to do."

Listener: "Don't feel that way, we can work things out."

Now, the Sender is not only desperate, but also angry with the Listener for evaluating his feeling after he has made himself vulnerable. From the Listener's point of view, there wasn't anything else he could do; yet many typical ways of responding run some risk of communicating non-acceptance.

Here are twelve typical ways that most people respond in a listening situation:

1. Ordering, Demanding: "You must ...," "You have to ..."
2. Warning, Threatening: "You had better...," "If you don't, then..."
3. Admonishing, Moralizing: "You should...," "It is your responsibility..."
4. Persuading, Arguing, Lecturing: "Do you realize...?" "The facts are..."
5. Advising, Giving Answers: "Why don't you...?" "Let me suggest..."
6. Criticizing, Disagreeing: "You are not thinking about this properly..."
7. Praising, Agreeing: "But you've done such a good job ...," "I approve of..."
8. Reassuring, Sympathizing: "Don't worry...," "You'll feel better..."
9. Interpreting, Diagnosing: "What you need is...," "Your problem is..."

10. Probing, Questioning: "Why...?" "Who...?" "What...?" "When...?"
11. Diverting, Avoiding: "We can discuss it later..."
12. Kidding, Using Sarcasm: "When did you read a newspaper last...?"

These messages run some risk of communicating to the sender that it is not acceptable for him to have his feeling. The risk is that the sender may hear the following emotional messages from you, the listener:

- 1) Don't have that feeling.
- 2) You'd better not have that feeling.
- 3) You're bad if you have that feeling.
- 4) Here are some facts so you won't have that feeling.
- 5) Here's a solution so you won't have that feeling.
- 6) You're wrong if you have that feeling.
- 7) Your feeling is subject to my approval.
- 8) You needn't have that feeling.
- 9) Here's the reason you have that feeling.
- 10) Are you really justified in having that feeling?
- 11) Your feeling isn't worthy of discussion.
- 12) You're silly if you persist in having that feeling.

When the sender perceives that he is getting one of these messages there is a risk that he will become defensive and either justify the feeling further, or close off entirely, never allowing the listener to hear anything deeper than the Presenting Problem.

Listener: "Sounds like you're feeling pretty frustrated with that project."

THE EFFECTS OF ACTIVE LISTENING

The benefit of Active Listening is that you have communicated acceptance of the Sender's feeling. In addition, it allows you to "check out" your understanding and also he can correct you if you misunderstood him. Frequently, you will find that when you employ Active Listening, people feel more comfortable in bringing problems to you and in sharing deeper problems. You may also find that when you use Active Listening, people are able to talk through their feelings and solve their own problem.

QUESTIONS AS STATEMENTS OF FEELINGS

When your Associate asks you: "Do I have to fill out this form?", is he asking you for information or telling you his feeling?

He might be saying:

"Is this the right form?"

or

"Is this the proper procedure to follow?"

or

"I resent spending my time filling out this form."

or

"I hate forms."

or

"I sure wish you would say I don't have to do it."

Because it is difficult to know for sure whether a question is a request for information or a statement of feeling it is frequently important to give an Active Listening response when the question is first asked to see which it really is.

This can be done either of two ways:

1. Response to Most Probable Message: If, because of the context (past history, etc.), you are relatively sure of the emotional message then you might feed back your understanding of his message. Remember though to listen carefully to any corrections he may make to your response.

Example:

Associate: Do I have to fill out this form?

Supervisor: You're hoping it really isn't that important."

Associate might reply:

"No, that's not it. I just want to know if this is the right one."

Associate might reply:

"Yeah, it's such a waste of time filling out forms."

2. Indicate Your Uncertainty: Another approach which reduces the risks of making the man resentful if you have misinterpreted him is to simply tell him you are not sure whether he is asking for information or expressing feelings and let him choose between them.

Example:

Associate: "Do I really have to fill out this form?"

Supervisor: "I'm not quite sure whether you're asking me whether that's the right form or telling me that you hope you don't have to fill it out."

Associate might reply:

"I just wanted to make sure it was the right one."

Associate might reply:

"Yeah, it's sure a waste of time filling out forms."

Associate might reply:

"This particular form really seems stupid."

Two Pointers for Recognizing Feelings in Questions

- 1) Watch for intensity of voice tone or words that appear to be greater than would be justified by a re-

quest for information. The example used above - "Do I have to fill out this form?" - could only be picked up by voice tone. You would easily identify a feeling if instead it was: "Do I really have to fill out this form?"

- 2) Watch for requests for information when you are relatively sure the Associate already knows the information.

SAMPLE LIST OF FEELINGS

Concerned	Enthusiastic	Uncomfortable
Desperate	Puzzled	Anxious
Confused	Threatened	Disturbed
Angry	Stymied	Rejected
Frustrated	Hurt	In a Bind
Discouraged	Astonished	Delighted
Annoyed	Overwhelmed	Infuriated
Belittled	Surprised	Ripped-off
Patronized	Scared	Betrayed
Put-down	Terrified	Cornered
Understood	Upset	Joyful
Turned off	Uncertain	Disappointed
Pleased	Important	Hopeful
Uncomfortable	Guilty	Turned-on
Resentful	Blamed	Great
Misunderstood	Content	Irritated
On the Spot	Shamed	Isolated
Unimportant	Defensive	Left-out
Hopeless	Discounted	Relieved
Encouraged	Embarrassed	Cared For
Confident	Attached	Proud
Envious	Considered	Up-tight
Dissatisfied	Intruded Upon	Wanted
Worried	Unfaired Against	Intimidated
Affectionate	Ignored	Hateful

INTRODUCTION TO CONGRUENT SENDING

--Synergy

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INTRODUCTION TO CONGRUENT SENDING

Typical Ways of Sending

The three most typical ways of sending feelings (sending a solution, evaluating and indirect messages) run some risks of creating defensiveness or resistance.

- 1) Sending a Solution: Rather than telling the other person what you are feeling, you tell them what you want done about it. This could be an order, suggestion, advice, etc.

Example:

Instead of saying: "I really get annoyed when you borrow my manual and don't return it."

you say: "Don't ever borrow my manual again."

or: "Why don't you get your own manual."

The risks are as follows:

- a) Sending a solution implies a power differential - someone is higher, someone is lower - and people resist the use of power even when they agree with the solution.
 - b) Sending a solution defines the problem poorly. Once you give a solution, enforcing the solution becomes the problem, whether or not the solution solves the initial problem.
 - c) Sending a solution communicates a lack of trust. Implicit in sending the solution is the communication that you don't expect the other person to be able to figure out the solution.
-
- 2) Evaluating: Another frequent method of sending is to evaluate, blame or judge the other person.

Example:

Instead of saying: "I really get annoyed when you borrow my manual and don't return it."

you say: "You're rude and thoughtless about borrowing things."

or: "You're certainly inconsiderate."

The risks are as follows:

- a) People become defensive when you judge or evaluate them.
 - b) The Judge or Evaluator is in a power position - people may resent your "one up" position.
 - c) People resent being interpreted and judged by your standards.
- 3) Indirect Messages: Indirect messages are messages which contain no direct expression of the Sender's feelings, although frequently the feelings are implied by voice tone, emphasis, or sarcasm. They include "cuts", questions, "cloaked" messages, or denials.

Example:

Instead of saying: "I really get annoyed when you borrow my manual and don't return it."

you say: "Got any spare manuals?"

or: "If people in this office would be more thoughtful, it sure would make it a nicer place to work."

The risks are as follows:

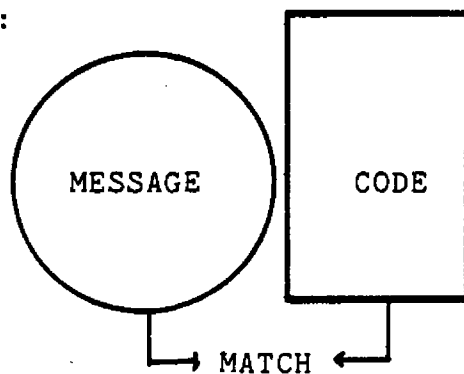
- a) The message may never get through. You may be so indirect that the other person doesn't understand you have a problem.
- b) What does get through tends to be unclear and

undefined negative feelings. One result of this is that it is difficult to solve the problems. It is too ambiguous.

- c) Ambiguous negative feelings tends to be understood as a generalized rejection rather than a specific reaction. "If I know you are upset, but I'm not quite sure why, I will tend to believe 'he doesn't like me', rather than 'he's upset because I didn't return his manual.'" Sometimes this may result in the Listener totally isolating the sender or even launching a massive counter-attack to the imagined rejection.

AN ALTERNATIVE: CONGRUENT SENDING

The alternative to these methods can be called Congruent Sending. The term "Congruent" comes from the fact that in a Congruent Message the message and the code coincide, fit, are congruent:



This congruence consists of three parts:

1. Sending feelings, instead of evaluations or solutions.
2. Ownership of feelings.
3. Describing, rather than evaluating behavior.

1. Sending Feelings Instead of Evaluations or Solutions:

In Active Listening we attempted to state for the sender the feelings we understood to be implied in his statement. When we are sending, rather than rely on the other person to understand all the implications, we indicate our feel-

ings directly. We tell the other person what is really going on in us. A congruent message typically contains a feeling word. When we are hurt, annoyed, pleased, frustrated, happy, we say that we are hurt, annoyed, pleased, frustrated, happy. Recently there has been much talk about communicating honestly - "Tell it like it is." Frequently honesty is mistaken for telling everyone your evaluations about them, rather than your feelings. The basis of the congruent message is that feelings precede evaluations. When we feel hurt by something we then (as a second response) evaluate the person who hurt us. So the equations are different:

Underlying Attitude

Typical Equation:

Honesty = Sending Evaluations. "I'm going to tell you when you are good or bad based on your behavior towards me."

Congruent Equation:

Honesty = Sending Feelings "I'll tell you very directly what I am feeling in response to your behavior, but I won't judge your behavior."

2. Ownership of Feelings:

A major reason for this underlying attitude is the second part of congruence - the sender must "own" his feelings. By "ownership" we mean that the sender does not blame or accuse other people for his feelings but takes responsibility for his own feelings.

First attempts to communicate feelings usually come out, "You hurt me when you said that." This is a "you" message, a feeling message made blaming and accusing by virtue of the pronoun "you" which indicates that the other person is responsible for your feeling.

The Congruent Message is usually an "I" Message, such as,
"I felt hurt when you said that."

3. Describing Rather than Evaluating Behavior

The Behavioral Description is the statement which indicates the behavior about which you have a feeling. It is very easy to confuse a Behavioral Description with an evaluation.

Example:

"I really get annoyed when you borrow my manual and don't return it.

The underlined portion described a behavior.

"I really get annoyed when you're so inconsiderate."

The underlined portion is an evaluation with all the risks involved in sending evaluations.

The Behavioral Description specifies the other person's behavior without judging it. It also indicates the specific behavior about which you have feelings so that the listener understands which behaviors to modify if he wants you to feel differently.

A Formula for Congruent Sending:

A simple formula for Congruent Sending is:

"I'm + feeling word + behavioral description

CONCEPT:

OWNERSHIP + SENDING FEELINGS + DESCRIBING, NOT
JUDGING.

**COMMUNICATING WITH THE PUBLIC
ON HEALTH EFFECTS**

--Frank Corrado

"Communicating With the Public on Health Effects"

The purpose of this training session is to help you as you attempt to deal with questions from the public regarding what effects toxic pollutants may have on their health.

EPA field people are commonly asked questions such as:

"Will I get cancer if I drink the water?"

"Would you live in this community?"

"What effect will one part per billion of dioxin have on my children's health?"

The frequency and volume with which these questions continue to be asked of EPA strongly indicate the enormous public concern about the effects of chemical contaminants, a concern that in the past few years has turned to panic in communities such as Love Canal, Times Beach, Battle Creek, and Wolburn -- all are names synonymous with public anguish and fear directed at the potential impacts of hazardous waste disposal and its effects on human health.

Public opinion research conducted by the Roper Organization for EPA shows that 6 out of 10 Americans place pollution--from chemical waste leakage into the ground (felt to be "very serious") and air pollution from factories and auto exhausts among the top 10 problems facing our Nation.

When you go into a community to conduct your business you may find that this public concern about health effects is so overriding that it makes your job extremely difficult.

When we do not communicate clearly about health effects in the communities that we must work in, we find that it's harder for us to do our jobs...it's harder to talk with people...it's harder to run public meetings...it's harder to get permits issued...it's harder to deal with on-scene emergencies.

This also means that:

- ...meetings become contentious
- ...administrative appeals increase
- ...confusion wastes technical resources and time.

Frankly, EPA has caused part of this problem...but a good part is caused by things that we have little or no control over.

Over the past few years, people have come to distrust EPA... they feel it often moves too slowly, and that it stumbles when it tries to deal with toxic chemicals.

Also, in the past few years, there was public concern that:

- ...the management of the Agency was not reporting the facts about risk to the public.
- ...policy considerations were making risks seem less than they were.
- ...there might even have been tampering for crass political gain.

Whether this was true or not, lots of people believed it, and this has hurt us...it is as if someone had caught their family doctor in a lie.

But public fears over environmental risks have also been

caused by factors over which we in EPA have no control:...general public fears over cancer...exaggerated media coverage...scientific arguments about the effects of exposure to small amounts of carcinogens...lack of public understanding of risk.

In the midst of all this, all of us in EPA are today trying to carry out our primary mission: that of protecting public health by reducing risk.

No matter what program you are in...no matter what your specific job is, you are part of an Agency that is responsible for protecting the public health of the people in this country. If we take this as our Agency credo and build this concept into our daily thinking, many of our problems in health affects communication will vanish.

When you're in a community, people do not look at you as an "on-scene coordinator" or a "hearing officer" or a "monitoring expert," they see you as "The EPA"--all "EPAs"--state, local, federal. And whether you're "responsible" for communicating health effects information or not in your job description, the Administrator feels it is important that for the success of your own efforts, and as a matter of Agency policy, that you be able to communicate credibly with the public on health effects and their relation to EPA responsibilities.

What we hope to accomplish in the period of time we have now is to help you understand the importance of credibility in communicating health effects information to the public...to help you understand how the public thinks about risk...and finally, give you some practi-

cal suggestions to keep in mind when you respond to questions.

As we said earlier, we hope this will help make your job easier as you work in communities throughout this region.

First...let's talk about CREDIBILITY...the credibility of EPA...and your own personal credibility as you deal with the public. Credibility consists of two things--EXPERTISE and TRUSTWORTHINESS. Expertise simply put, is what we know about a subject. Trustworthiness is whether what we say can be trusted.

When it comes to health effects information, EPA is responsible for providing expertise as to what levels of pollution are safe in order to protect public health. As you are well aware, being expert in setting safe levels of exposure to contaminants is extremely difficult...and EPA, along with FDA, the Centers for Disease Control, and scientific researchers for industry, universities, and environmental groups are at work continually on assessing levels of risk from various contaminants.

This assessment process is quite inexact. Most assessments are based on extrapolations from studies of laboratory animals. What the effects to humans are of exposure to one part per billion of EDB in cake mix, for example, has elicited scientific assessments all the way from predicting that EDB is definitely cancer causing, to the conclusion that the risk is lower than that of eating charcoal broiled steak or peanut butter. These estimates of effects on humans may vary by a factor of 100, 1000, or more. Scientists realize that, in fact, there only about 20 chemicals have been proven definitely to be human carcinogens, like benzene for example.

These "best-guess" estimates that are made by looking at how potent the hazard is, and how much exposure people are getting are very inexact, but are the legal basis on which EPA must make its judgments. The Agency makes worst case judgments--that means it makes estimates that insure risks are not underestimated.

EPA's expertise in health effects also extends to how it manages the risks once they are assessed. It is up to EPA to look at those risks and manage them in light of economic and social values: risk vs. benefit, what the law allows EPA to do vs. what really has to be done, and then the cost of doing it all as the cost of protection rises dramatically.

EPA must often act on the basis of scientific judgments made rapidly in light of the best available information. And it is not uncommon for scientists to go to the media to challenge our numbers.

Although there is much uncertainty in risk assessment, the conservative process enables us to have confidence that the true level of risk is below estimated levels. In other words, even though the risks are uncertain doesn't mean that we can't know with good confidence what the upper limit is.

We should also do a better job of communicating the superb and highly respected evaluation and review procedures of EPA's Carcinogen Assessment Group (CAG) which provides EPA with a central capability for evaluating information on the health effects of toxic pollutants and ensures the consistency and technical compliance in the Agency's risk assessment work. The CAG not only keeps

abreast of current scientific techniques, but identifies and promotes development of new techniques to support health risk assessment. They may not have all the answers to the tough questions but what they have are the best available.

The situation is very much like that of shopping in different stores. For example, when you shop at K-Mart, the credibility of the sales force is not high, and you don't expect it to be. You go there to buy brand name products--Black and Decker, K-Mart brand, and Kodak among others. The product has the credibility. But when you go to the local hardware store you often have to rely on the credibility of the salesperson, because you need help in choosing the right product or approach for solving your problem. At EPA, our expertise due to the problems mentioned, is sometimes lacking. Our trustworthiness cannot be.

Consequently, when you go into a community, and people ask you questions about health effects, we're relying on you to be as expert as you can, and more importantly, to be trustworthy.

Your credibility in any situation is based to a great extent on how people size you up as a person:

- Do you talk "straight" to them, versus mumbling bureaucratic jargon? For example, Harold Denton, the former head of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, showed how this can win the day when he brought his down-home, straight forward style into the limelight in the Three Mile Island crisis. His straight forward honesty had a lot to do with restoring public trust.

- Do you look people in the eye?
- Do you listen to what they're saying and acknowledge that you understand?
- When you don't know the answer, do you admit it? Are you willing to get the answer and get back to them quickly?
- When EPA has screwed up are you candid in admitting it?
- Can you put yourself in other people's shoes? Do you try to understand where they're coming from? What their interests really are? The welfare of their kids, their property values, their reputation in the community, their peace of mind?

Credibility can be our ace in the hole...it's our bedside manner...half of medicine, they say, is how the doctor treats the patient. If we treat public concerns about health effects seriously and empathetically, it will take us a long way.

Now, let's look at some practical ways of dealing with risk questions...typical risk questions...that are likely to come up with the public. I will show you a brief video simulation of an EPA employee answering a question. Then we will discuss as a group what might be the most appropriate answer. Finally, I will lay out some general principles.

#1 - Be Understandable

Question: "What effect will drinking this water have on our health?"

Video: "Exposure to .7 micrograms per litre of benzene in drinking water will result in an excess lifetime cancer risk of one case per million."

The first rule of communicating health effects information to

the public is that what we say must be understandable. This means that it is important for us to explain health effects to people in language they can understand. In our example, the speaker needs to make the point that concentration (ppm) is not all that counts. Hazard is a function of toxicity and exposure as well. He might have explained parts per billion in any one of the following analogies:--one ppb is one inch in 16,000 miles; --one ppb is one second in 33 years; or one minute in the time elapsed since the year one. It is also important that people understand that the ppb or ppt numbers are only one factor used in determining if and what actions must be taken, and this is done on a case-by-case basis.

We might even avoid talking about concentrations...parts per million...altogether and simply might say: "the amount of benzene in your drinking water is very small, so small that we feel that your chance of getting cancer from exposure to it compares to the chance of the earth being wiped out by a supernova." The obvious problem here is that we need similar examples for a wide range of risk descriptions.

We also need to make sure people understand that there is a range of estimates--sometimes over three or more magnitudes...and that EPA always uses the most conservative estimates. Often we are dealing with trace levels of pollutants for which no standard exists. Usually at these levels we don't see a problem, that it's sort of a "best guess" judgment now. If levels were high, we would allow for a substitute source.

#2 Present Options

Question? "What are the choices if there is some contamination found in our drinking water?"

Video: "I'm sorry, but there is nothing we can do about the water supply, but close it down."

Many times, unless we're dealing with a cut and dry case of danger to the public health we need to bring the public into the formulation of solutions. When we do so, we are empowering--giving them some control over the risks to which they are exposed.

Although public health protection is our primary job, any particular action to control a pollutant may have an effect on values, such as community stability, employment, natural resources, or the integrity of the ecosystem. We have got to get away from the idea that our quantitative analyses provide a hard and fast decision.

People need to be given options: they need to buy into health decisions. If we enlist their input in developing options, we are more likely to get their cooperation...and their agreement on an acceptable course of action.

We might want to phrase our question in terms of "Is the risk of one cancer death...and I emphasize the term risk...per 70,000 over a ten-year period worth keeping a plant open and a hundred people employed?"

But we have also got to get across the message that if the water is unsafe, our job is to close down the source.

Also it's important that we in EPA communicate to people clearly just how we make risk decisions. Some of the points we need to make are:

- just what kind of risk is acceptable--what people may go along with--that requires a choice between alternatives.
- the most acceptable alternative then is the most acceptable risk.
- we don't accept risks, then, we accept the best alternative...which probably has some level of risk.
- the best alternative may not have the least risk, but has the best balance of risk and benefit.
- just what decision is made is specific to each situation... though there are enough similar situations that we do have standards which can occasionally be employed, depending on alternatives, consequences, values and facts involved.
- The problem usually comes down to a situation where we do not have an imminent health problem, a problem that will trigger EPA action? In this situation you can present alternatives: you can buy drinking water and cooking water.
- At all times, we have to say "We don't know" when that is the case. We can't say with assurance at any time whether such levels are safe, unsafe. If levels are extremely high we can make a determination that there is a limited health threat, but it's at the lower levels where we don't have enough data to give a

scientifically rigorous answer. Low-level organic contaminant problems must be addressed on a chemical by chemical, situation by situation basis, even where we have a water supply that is okay, but next to a dump site, for example. But we must continue to monitor.

Another tip here: ask the audience even before you start what they believe the problem is. This will narrow the issues...and may even help get rid of any totally erroneous perceptions that people may have upfront.

#3 Be Careful How You Present Risks

Question: "What happens if our children are exposed to dioxin?"

Video: "The risk of children contracting cancer from long term exposure to dioxin is double that of adults."

The thing to remember here is that double a very small number is still a very small number. The way risks and options are presented influences perceptions. You might be worried if you heard that occupation exposure at your job doubled your risk of serious disease. You might be less worried if you heard that it had increased from one in a million to two in a million. Something else to think about: probabilities can also be express in positive terms.

#4 Be Helpful

Question: "Our homes won't be worth a nickel, if you approve this site!"

Video: "We know you are worried about the impact of this new

hazardous waste facility on property values, but EPA can only be concerned as to whether the facility meets technical requirements or not."

Anticipate the kinds of questions that will be asked, and spend some time finding out the answers. You can anticipate, for example, that many questions may have nothing to do with your specific responsibilities.

Health concerns are often a surrogate for other concerns that people have. Not all the discussion and debate about risks are really motivated by health concerns. People worry about other things--there are often hidden agendas which need to be surfaced.

Take some time, maybe an hour or two, before you get to a meeting or hearing. Place yourself mentally in the shoes of the people. Try and get into their mindset. This will help you to develop empathy. They need to perceive you as a caring and concerned person...one who may not have all the answers, but one who understands the problem and who really is trying to help solve their problems. "Good faith" is the key.

#5 Be Honest

Question: "Now answer this straight--would you allow your kids to play in this water?"

Video: "Would I allow my kids to play in this water? I don't believe it would have any long term impact on them."

One EPA official recently was asked about the poisoning of a creek, refused to answer whether the creek was safe. He answered

that even though EPA discovered relative small amounts of chemicals "that doesn't mean it's safe for your kids to play here." Pressed on the subject, he added "I know I would not want my kids playing or fishing in a creek where poisons and carcinogens have been found," he said.

* * *

In talking with EPA field personnel who regularly confront the problem of how to best communicate information about risk to people in communities, some general guidelines emerge that you might want to consider:

- It's important to outline a course of action: what EPA intends to do now and if the situation changes.

- It is especially important not to shoot from the hip on health question's especially if you're going into a situation cold. As one EPA field coordinator said, "You're setting yourself up for a failure, if you do." If you know that there are concerns for health impacts, then you should bring along with you the appropriate person to answer the question.

- As a project manager, field people insist, you do wonders for your credibility by saying "I don't know, but I will try to get the person who does know in here to talk about that." And you also say "there is no right answer or wrong answer, it's a very complex issue, and I will try and get the person who can best address some of your concerns and put them in the proper perspective."

- Even though health impacts are not our specific area of expertise, we have an implicit obligation to bring in outside ex-

perts from CDC and the appropriate state health agency to answer the questions.

- Those outside persons might give a range of answers, all the way from "on the short term, it probably doesn't mean a thing" to "it's high enough that we are going to shut it off" or "we will give you potable water" or "we really don't know."

- You are trying to protect the citizen's interests and balance them against the bureaucratic maze and the questions of why can't we do something in the government.

- Just because we've found something, we can't always take action. We often must act on scientific feeling.

SUMMARY

We are still at the frontier in trying to improve our credibility in communicating health effects information to the public.

We will get better at this if we make sincere efforts to keep in mind that our main job...is to protect public health...nothing is more important...not even bureaucratic requirements.

"RISK IN A FREE SOCIETY"

--William D. Ruckelshaus

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Risk in a Free Society

A RESERVOIR OF TRUST

By WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Delivered at Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey, February 18, 1984

IT is now a commonplace of political discourse that technological advances have had a profound effect on our democratic institutions. Mass communications is the familiar example. But I would like to draw your attention to another way in which technology may impinge upon a democratic society, one that is perhaps as serious, if more subtle; one that commands a huge proportion of my own attention. I refer to the chemical products and by-products of modern technology and the potential social disruption associated with the processes we have created to control them.

When I began my current, and second, tenure as Administrator of EPA, my first goal was the restoration of public confidence in the Agency, and it was impressed upon me that straightening out the way we handled health risk was central to achieving it. Needless to say, EPA's primary mission is the reduction of risk, whether to public health or the environment. Some in America were afraid. They were afraid that toxic chemicals in the environment were affecting their health, and more important, they suspected that the facts about the risks from such chemicals were not being accurately reported to them, that policy considerations were being inappropriately used in such reports, so as to make the risks seem less than they were and excuse the Agency from taking action. Even worse, some people thought that the processes we had established to protect public health were being abused for crass political gain.

Whether this was true or not is almost beside the point; a substantial number of people believed it. Now in a society such as ours, where the people ultimately decide policy — what they

want done about a particular situation — the fair exposition of policy choices is the job of public agencies. The public agency is the repository of the facts; you can't operate a democratic society, particularly a complex technological one, unless you have such a repository. Above all, the factual guardian must be trusted; a failure of trust courts chaos. Chaos, in turn, creates its own thirst for order, which craving in its more extreme forms threatens the very foundation of democratic freedom. So in a democracy a public agency that is not trusted, especially where the protection of public health is concerned, might as well close its doors.

I described a possible solution to this problem last June in a speech to the National Academy of Sciences. The Academy had stated in a recent report that Federal agencies had often confused the assessment of risk with the management of risk. Risk assessment is the use of a base of scientific research to define the probability of some harm coming to an individual or a population as a result of exposure to a substance or situation. Risk management, in contrast, is the public process of deciding what to do where risk has been determined to exist. It includes integrating risk assessment with considerations of engineering feasibility and figuring out how to exercise our imperative to reduce risk in the light of social, economic, and political factors.

The report proposed that these two functions be formally separated within regulatory agencies. I said that this appeared to be a workable idea and that we would try to make it happen at EPA. This notion was attractive because the statutes adminis-

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WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS

tered by many Federal regulatory agencies typically force some action when scientific inquiry establishes the presence of a risk, as, for example, when a substance present in the environment, or the workplace or the food chain, is found to cause cancer in animals. The statutes may require the agency to act according to some protective formula: to establish "margins of safety" or "prevent significant risk" or "eliminate the risk."

When the action so forced has dire economic or social consequences, the person who must make the decision may be sorely tempted to ask for a "reinterpretation" of the data. We should remember that risk assessment data can be like the captured spy: if you torture it long enough, it will tell you anything you want to know. So it is good public policy to so structure an agency that such temptation is avoided.

But we have found that separating the assessment of risk from its management is rather more difficult to accomplish in practice. In the first place, values, which are supposed to be safely sequestered in risk management, also appear as important influences on the outcomes of risk assessments. For example, let us suppose that a chemical in common use is tested on laboratory animals with the object of determining whether it can cause cancer. At the end of the test a proportion of the animals that have been exposed to the substance show evidence of tumor formation.

Now the problems begin. First, in tests like these, the doses given are extremely high, often close to the level the animal can tolerate for a lifetime without dying from toxic non-cancer effects. Environmental exposures are typically much lower, so in order to determine what the risk of cancer is at such lower exposures — that is, to determine the curve that relates a certain dose to a certain response — we must extrapolate down from the high-dose laboratory data. There are a number of statistical models for doing this, all of which fit the data, and all of which are open to debate. We simply do not know what the shape of the dose-response curve is at low doses, in the sense that we know, let's say, what the orbit of a satellite will be when we shoot it off.

Next, we must deal with the uncertainty of extrapolating cancer data from animals to man, for example, determining which of the many different kinds of lesions that may appear in animals is actually indicative of a probability that the substance in question may be a human carcinogen. Cancer is cancer to the public, but not to the pathologist.

Finally, we must deal with uncertainty about exposure. We have to determine, usually on the basis of very scant data, and very elaborate mathematical models, how much of the stuff is being produced, how it is being dispersed, changed or destroyed by natural processes, and how the actual dose that people get is changed by behavioral or population characteristics.

These uncertainties inherent in risk assessment combine to produce an enormously wide range of risk estimates in most cases. For example, the National Academy of Sciences report on saccharin concluded that over the next 70 years the expected number of cases of human bladder cancer resulting from daily exposure to 120 mg of saccharin might range from 0.22 to 1,144,000. This sort of range is of limited use to the policy maker and risk assessment scientists are at some pains to make choices among possibilities so as to produce conclusions that are both scientifically supportable and usable.

Such choices are influenced by values, which may be affected by professional training, or by ideas about what constitutes

"good science," and, of course by the same complex of experience and individual traits that gives rise to personal values in all of us. An oncologist, for example, who values highly the ability to distinguish between different sorts of lesions, may discount certain test results as being irrelevant to decisions about human carcinogenicity. A public health epidemiologist may look at the same data and come to quite different conclusions.

Historically at EPA it has been thought prudent to make what have been called conservative assumptions; that is, our values lead us, in a situation of unavoidable uncertainty, to couch our conclusions in terms of a plausible upper bound. This means that when we generate a number that expresses the potency of some substance in causing disease, we can state that it is unlikely that the risk projected is any greater.

This is fine when the risks projected are vanishingly small; it's always nice to hear that some chemical is *not* a national crisis. But when the risks estimated through such assessments are substantial, so that some action may be in the offing, the stacking of conservative assumptions one on top of another, becomes a problem for the policymaker. If I am going to propose controls that may have serious economic and social effects, I need to have some idea how much confidence should be placed in the estimates of risk that prompted those controls. I need to know how likely *real* damage is to occur in the uncontrolled and partially controlled and fully controlled cases. Only then can I apply the balancing judgments that are the essence of my job. This, of course, tends to insert the policymaker back into the guts of risk assessment, which we've agreed is less than wise.

This is a real quandry. I now believe that the main road out of it lies through a marked improvement in the way we communicate the realities of risk analysis to the public. The goal is public understanding. We will only retain the administrative flexibility we need to effectively protect the public health and welfare if the public believes we are trying to act in the public interest. There is an argument, in contradiction, that the best way to protection lies in increased legislative specificity, in closely directing the Agency as to what to control and how much to control it. If we fail to command public confidence, this argument will prevail, and in my opinion it would be a bad thing if it did. You can't squeeze the complexity inherent in managing environmental risks between the pages of a statute book.

How then do we encourage confidence? Generally speaking there are two ways to do it. First, we could assign guardianship of the Agency's integrity — its risk assessment task — to a panel of disinterested experts who are above reproach in the public eye. This is the quasi-judicial, blue-ribbon approach, which has a strong tradition in our society. If we have a complex issue, we don't have to think about it very much, just give it to the experts, who deliberate and provide the answer, which most will accept because of the inherent prestige of the panel.

The discomfort associated with imagining, in 1984, a conclave of Big Brothers to watch over us only strengthens my conviction that such panels cannot serve the general purpose of restoring and maintaining confidence. It turns out that the experts don't agree, so instead of an unimpeachable and disinterested consensus you get dissenting advocacy. Once again, experts have values too.

Alternatively, we could all become a lot smarter about risk. The Agency could put much more effort into explaining what it is doing and what it does, and does not, know. Here I do not mean "public involvement" in the usual and formal sense. This

is embodied in administrative law and has always been part of our ordinary procedure in promulgating rules. Nor do I mean a mere public relations campaign to popularize Agency decisions. Public relations smooths over; I think we need to dig up. We have to expose the assumptions that go into risk assessments. We have to admit our uncertainties and confront the public with the complex nature of decisions about risk.

Living in a technological society is like riding a bucking bronco. I don't believe we can afford to get off, and I doubt that someone will magically appear who can lead it about on a leash. The question is: how do we become better bronco busters? I think a great part of the answer is to bring about a major improvement in the quality of public debate on environmental risk.

This will not be easy. Risk assessment is a probabilistic calculation, but people don't respond to risks "as they should" if such calculations were the sole criterion of rationality. Most people are not comfortable with mathematical probability as a guide to living and the risk assessment lingo we throw at them does not increase their comfort. Tell somebody that their risk of cancer from a 70-year exposure to a carcinogen at ambient levels ranges between 10^{-5} and 10^{-7} , and they are likely to come back at you with, "Yeah, but will I get cancer if I drink the water?" Also, attitudes toward risk are subjective and highly colored by personal experience and other factors not fully captured by risk assessments.

We have some research on this, which points out that people tend to overestimate the probability of unfamiliar, catastrophic and well-publicized events and underestimate the probability of unspectacular or familiar events that claim one victim at a time. Many people are afraid to fly commercial airlines, but practically nobody is afraid of driving in cars, a victory of subjectivity over actuarial statistics.

In general, response to risks is most negative when the degree of risk is unknown and the consequences are particularly dreaded. Expert assessment does not seem to help here. People will fight like fury to keep a hazardous waste facility out of their neighborhood, despite expert assurances that it is safe, while people living under high dams located on earthquake faults pay scant attention to expert warnings.

Other hazard characteristics influence public perceptions of risk. For example, the voluntary or involuntary nature of the risk is important. People will accept far greater risks from driving an automobile than they will from breathing the emissions that come out of its tailpipe; the former is voluntary, the latter, involuntary. People also take into consideration whether the risk is distributed generally throughout the population or affects only a small identifiable group. Public response to the discovery of a toxicant that may result in 200 additional cancers nationwide is liable to be quite different from public response to the same number of cases in one county with a population of say, 3000.

The way risks and options are presented also influences perceptions. You might be worried if you heard that occupational exposure at your job doubled your risk of some serious disease; you might be less worried if you heard that it had increased from one in a million to two in a million. Surveys using physicians as subjects found that their preferences for treatment options changed markedly when the risks of these options were expressed in terms of lives saved rather than in terms of deaths occurring, even though the two forms of expression that were compared were mathematically identical. Finally, research has

shown that beliefs about risk are slow to change, and show extraordinary persistence in the face of contrary evidence.

Many people interested in environmental protection, having observed this mess, conclude that considerations of risk lead to nothing useful. After all, if the numbers are no good and the whole issue is so confusing, why not just eliminate all exposure to toxics to the extent that technology allows? The problem with such thinking is that, even setting aside what I have just said about the necessity for improving the national debate on the subject, risk estimates are the only way we have of directing the attention of risk management agencies toward significant problems.

There are thousands of substances in the environment that show toxicity in animals; we can't work on all of them at once, even with an EPA ten times its current size. More important, technology doesn't make the bad stuff "go away;" in most cases it just changes its form and location. We have to start keeping track of the flow of toxics through the environment, to what happens *after* they are "controlled." Risk management is the only way I know to do this.

In confused situations one must try to be guided by basic principles. One of my basic principles is reflected in a quotation from Thomas Jefferson: "If we think (the people) not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion." Easy for *him* to say. As we have seen, informing discretion about risk has itself a high risk of failure.

However, we do have some recent experience that supports the belief that better information inclines people to act more sensibly. In Tacoma, Washington, we have a situation where a copper smelter employing around 600 people is emitting substantial amounts of arsenic, which is a human carcinogen. We found that the best available technology did not reduce the risk of cancer to levels the public might find acceptable. In fact, it looked as if reducing to acceptable levels of risk might only be possible if the plant closed. I felt very strongly that the people in Tacoma whose lives were to be affected by my decision ought to have a deeper understanding of the case than they could get from the usual public hearing process.

Accordingly, we organized an extraordinary campaign of public education in Tacoma. Besides the required public hearing, we provided immense quantities of information to all communications media, arranged meetings between community leaders and senior EPA officials, including myself, and held three workshops at which we laid out our view of the facts. I think most people appreciated this opportunity, and we certainly raised the level of discussion about risk. So unusual was this kind of event that some inferred that I was abdicating my responsibility for this decision, or that somehow the Tacoma people were going to vote on whether they wanted jobs or health. After some initial confusion on this score we made it clear that it was entirely my decision, and that while I wanted to hear, I was not committed to heed.

Although I suppose some would have been happier continuing in their fond belief that we could provide absolute safety with absolute certainty, and were disturbed by these proceedings, in all I would call it a qualified success. Those who participated came away with a better understanding of the anatomy of environmental decisions, and local groups were able to come up with options that increased protection while allowing the plant to remain open, options that are well worth considering as we put together our final decision.

WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS

What are the lessons of Tacoma? Shortly after we began the workshops, people started sporting buttons that said, "BOTH," meaning they were for both jobs and health. I took this as a good sign, that people were attending to the balance between economic realities and environmental protection. "Both" is a good idea, and in most cases we can have it, if we're smart. Another lesson is that we must improve the way we present risk calculations to the public. There was too much tendency to translate risks of cancer into cases, with no regard to qualifying assumptions and uncertainties. Cancer threats make great headlines and the inclination to infer certainty where none exists is very powerful. We must take seriously our obligation to generate lucid and unambiguous statements about risk. Finally, Tacoma shows that we have to prepare ourselves for the other Tacomas. Environmental stress falls unevenly across the land and we have a special responsibility to people in communities that suffer more than their share. We are prepared to make the extra effort in such communities, as we did in Tacoma.

We must also improve debate on the national level. This may prove more difficult, as Washington is a most contentious place. Also, at the national level things tend to polarize perhaps more than they should, given how much we know about environmental health questions. Typically, where we obtain evidence of an environmental threat, opinion divides between those who want to eliminate the risk as quickly as possible, with little concern about cost, and those who deny the threat exists. Fights between these groups can go on for a long time, time during which the object of the battle, the pollutant, remains in the environment. Acid rain threatens to become this kind of dispute.

And so too was the case of ethylene dibromide. As you may know, we recently banned the major uses of EDB, a grain and fruit fumigant that has been identified as a carcinogen, and which enters the human diet through residues in food and via groundwater contamination. By means of that ban, which applied to grain fumigation, we insured that EDB would immediately begin to diminish in the human food supply. Since there is still EDB in the grain products already in storage or on grocers' shelves, we set maximum acceptable residue levels for different products, the levels getting lower in products closer to the point of consumption. We will act soon on the use of EDB as a citrus fruit fumigant, its only remaining use in connection with the human food chain.

Needless to say, we were criticized both for going too far and for not going far enough. But in cases such as this, my personal predilection is to avoid the extremes and act to reduce, as quickly as possible, environmental exposure to substances that appear unacceptably risky, and to do so with as little social or economic disruption as possible. This generally satisfies no one, but I am convinced it is in the long term public interest.

What was dissatisfying about the EDB case was the substantial confusion surrounding the risk issues involved. Some say that we stir up cans of worms when we expose the risk judgments we make. I think we must do better than we have done, and let the worms crawl where they may. Let me now propose some principles for more reasonable discussions about risk.

First, we must insist on risk calculations being expressed as distributions of estimates and not as magic numbers that can be manipulated without regard to what they really mean. We must try to display more realistic estimates of risk to show a range of probabilities. To help do this we need new tools for quantifying

and ordering sources of uncertainty and for putting them in perspective.

Second, we must expose to public scrutiny the assumptions that underly our analysis and management of risk. If we have made a series of conservative assumptions within the risk assessment, so that it represents an upper bound estimate of risk, we should try to communicate this and explain why we did it. Although public health protection is our primary value, any particular action to control a pollutant may have effects on other values, such as community stability, employment, natural resources, or the integrity of the ecosystem. We have to get away from the idea that we do quantitative analysis to find the "right" decision, which we will then be obliged to make if we want to call ourselves rational beings. But we are not clockwork mandarins. The point of such analysis is, in fact, the orderly exposition of the values we hold, and the reasoning that travels from some set of values and measurements to a decision.

Third, we must demonstrate that reduction of risk is our main concern and that we are not driven by narrow cost-benefit considerations. Of course cost is a factor, because we are obliged to be efficient with our resources and those of society in general. Where we decline to control some risk at present, we should do so only because there are better targets; we are really balancing risk against risk, aiming to get at the greatest first.

Finally, we should understand the limits of quantification; there are some cherished values that will resist being squeezed into a benefits column, but are no less real because of it. Walter Lippman once pointed out that in a democracy "the people" as in "We the People," refers not only to the working majority that actually makes current decisions, and not only to the whole living population, but to those who came before us, who provided our traditions and our physical patrimony as a nation, and to those who will come after us, and inherit. Many of the major decisions we make on environmental affairs touch on this broader sense of public responsibility.

I suppose that the ultimate goal of this effort is to get the American people to understand the difference between a safe world and a zero-risk world with respect to environmental pollutants. We have to define what safe means in light of our increasing ability to detect minute quantities of substances in the environment and to associate carcinogenesis with an enormous variety of substances in common use. According to Bruce Ames, the biochemist and cancer expert, the human diet is loaded with toxics of all kinds, including many carcinogens, mutagens and teratogens. Among them are such foodstuffs as black pepper, mushrooms, celery, parsnips, peanut butter, figs, parsley, potatoes, rhubarb, coffee, tea, fats, browned meat, and alfalfa sprouts. The list goes on; my point is that it would be hard to find a diet that would support life and at the same time impose no risk on the consumer.

So what is safe? Are we all safe at this instant? Most of us would agree that we are, although we are subjected to calculable risks of various sorts of catastrophes that can happen to people listening to lectures in buildings. We might be able to reduce some of them by additional effort, but in general we consider that we have (to coin a phrase) an "adequate margin of safety" sitting in a structure that is, for example, protected against lightning bolts but exposed to meteorites.

I think we can get people to start making those judgments of safety about the arcane products of modern technology. I don't think we are ever going to get agreement about values; a continuing debate about values is the essence of a democratic

VITAL SPEECHES OF THE DAY

policy. But I think we must do better in showing how different values lead rationally to different policy outcomes. And we can only do that if we are able to build up a reservoir of trust, if people believe that we have presented what facts we have fairly,

that we have exposed our values to their view, and that we have respected their values, whether or not such values can be incorporated finally in our decisions. We have, I hope, begun to build that sort of trust at EPA.

IMPROVING PUBLIC NOTICES

--Frank Corrado

I M P R O V I N G N O T I C E S

PROBLEM:

- 1- Notices get "Lost" in mail
 - Problem in format
 - Do not explain process clearly
- 2- Poor design
- 3- "Radio Spots", "Classified Ads" don't work

SOLUTIONS:

- 1- Redesign notices
- 2- Re-write notices
- 3- Use display ads
- 4- Use "Public Service Announcements"

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regular

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), Region V, is hereby giving notice of its intent to issue a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permit for Reichhold Chemicals, Incorporated, (RCI). This permit would allow RCI to store hazardous waste at Collins Road, Morris, Illinois, in accordance with Section 7004 of the RCRA and Title 40 CFR Section 124.10. RCI has been legally storing hazardous waste under "interim status", as provided for in Section 3005(e) of the RCRA. The U.S. EPA is inviting comment on the application, on the terms, and on the conditions, of the proposed draft permit. Locational issues, with the exception of seismic and floodplain considerations, are not within the scope of review under the RCRA.

Reichhold Chemicals is a manufacturer of an organic chemical (maleic Anhydride) and synthetic resins (unsaturated polyesters, PVA/Acrylic Emulsions, and Cyclized Rubber). The permit would authorize Reichhold Chemicals to store 16,720 gallons of waste polyester resin in containers and waste acid sludge in a 5200-gallon steel storage tank.

RCI's application, the U.S. EPA's draft permit, and the Statement of Basis are available for public review at the Morris Public Library, 604 Liberty Street, Morris, Illinois. Please contact Ms. Pam Wilson at (815) 942-6880, for assistance. These materials and other supporting documents are also available in the administrative record at the U.S. EPA, Region V, Waste Management Division, 13th Floor, 230 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Please contact Barbara Russell at (312) 886-6940.

A public hearing on U.S. EPA's draft permit for Reichhold Chemicals will be held on Tuesday, September 20, 1983, at the Morris Court House, 111 East Washington Street, Morris, Illinois. The hearing will start at 7:00 p.m.,

and will continue until all persons who have registered have had an opportunity to present their comments for the record. Speakers should register by 7:00 p.m., limit their oral presentations to five minutes, and submit 2 copies of their oral presentations to the U.S. EPA at the hearing in written form. The U.S. EPA reserves the right to cancel the hearing if written opposition to the draft permit and a written request for a hearing is not received by September 5, 1983. If the hearing is cancelled, notice will be published in the Morris Herald and broadcast over radio station WCSJ-AM.

Comments on the application and the draft permit, as well as notification of intent to provide oral comments at the hearing, will be accepted by the U.S. EPA during the public comment period, which commences on July 22, 1983, and ends on September 25, 1983. All comments submitted, for consideration by the U.S. EPA, must be received by September 8, 1983. Comments should be sent to Barbara Russell, U.S. EPA, Region V, 5HW-13, 230 South Dearborn Street. Chicago, Illinois 60604.

After the close of the public comment period, the U.S. EPA will evaluate all comments received before issuing a final permit decision. Notification of the final permit decision will be provided to each person who presented oral testimony at the hearing, submitted written comments, or requested notice of the decision. Under Title 40 CFR Section 124.17, U.S. EPA will respond to all significant comments on the draft permit, specify which provisions of the permit were changed, and indicate whether additional documents have been included in the administrative record.

The U.S. EPA's response, regarding a decision to issue or deny a permit will include a reference to the procedure for appealing the decision, Title 40 CFR Section 124.19. The U.S. EPA's procedures for public comment and hearings are found in Title 40 CFR Sections 124.11 through 124.13.

A Public Hearing That May Be Important to You

Preferred

Subject

EPA plans to issue a permit for an existing hazardous waste site at Reichhold Chemicals, Inc. on Collins Road in Morris, Illinois.

Date

September 20, 1983

Location

111E. Washington St., Morris (Court House)

Time

7 p.m.

If you plan to speak....please register before 7 p.m.

You will have five minutes to speak...also please have 2 copies of your presentation in writing if possible.

Reichhold makes an organic chemical (maleic Anhydride) and synthetic resins (unsaturated polyesters, PVA/Acrylic Emulsions, and Cyclized Rubber). This permit would authorize the company to store 16,720 gallons of waste polyester resin in containers and waste acid sludge in a 5200-gallon chemical storage tank.

You can see the company's draft permit at the Morris Public Library, 604 Liberty St., ahead of time. Call Ms. Pam Wilson at (815) 942-6880 for more information. The permit and other supporting documents are also available in the administrative record at the U.S. EPA, Region 5, Waste Management Division, 13th Floor, 230 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Please contact Barbara Russell at (312) 886-6940.

The U.S. EPA reserves the right to cancel the hearing if written opposition to the draft permit and a written request for a hearing is not received by September 5, 1983. If the hearing is cancelled, notice will be published in the *Morris Herald* and broadcast over radio station WCSJ-AM.

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INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS

FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS

--Frank Corrado

PREPARING OPENING REMARKS

People expect bureaucrats to talk in jargon. It's a stereotype that we help perpetuate with the kinds of opening statements we make at public meetings and hearings. Most often they sound like some legal brief rather than a clear statement of what is about to take place, why we are here, what it is that we hope to accomplish. A clear, easy-to-understand opening statement can go a long way in helping establish your credibility with an audience and helping them to relate to you as an EPA representative. Below are two opening statements: one is the traditional kind that is presented, the other has been rewritten in a more easy to understand, "friendly" style. Both convey the same amount of information.

Standard

Will the hearing please come to order. Good evening ladies and gentlemen. My name is Tom Bishop, and I am the hearing officer representing the Chicago office of the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The purpose of tonight's hearing is to receive your comments on U.S. EPA's intent to issue a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act permit to General Portland, Inc. With me this evening is Tom Johnson, the primary author of U.S. EPA's draft permit.

Under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, commonly referred to as RCRA, U.S. EPA has promulgated regulations to protect human health and the environment from the improper management of hazardous waste. Section 3005 of RCRA, along with regulations found in Title 40

Modified

Will the hearing please come to order. Good evening ladies and gentlemen. My name is Tom Bishop, and I am the hearing officer representing the Chicago office of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. We're here tonight to listen to what you have to say about our plan to issue a Resource, Conservation and Recovery Act permit to General Portland, Inc. With me tonight is the author of U.S. EPA's draft permit, Tom Johnson. Mr. Johnson will you identify yourself to the audience.

Under federal law and regulations, we are responsible for managing a permitting system that governs the treatment, storage and disposal of hazardous wastes. These regulations allow us to issue or deny permits for hazardous waste facilities.

I want to make it clear that we at EPA have nothing to say about

Standard

of the Code of Federal Regulations, establish a permitting system governing the treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste. These regulations enable U.S. EPA to issue or deny permits for hazardous waste facilities.

If a state is authorized under Section 3006 of RCRA, it may issue or deny permits in place of U.S. EPA. Since the State of Ohio has not yet received the required authorization, U.S. EPA is responsible for acting on the General Portland Permit application.

If U.S. EPA grants General Portland a permit, General Portland will be able to store certain hazardous wastes at its Paulding, Ohio facility which is located on County Road 176. If General Portland is granted a permit, it must comply with all the conditions contained in the permit. These conditions in turn must satisfy the requirements found in Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Some of these requirements include: the proper design, operation, and maintenance of General Portland's storage facility; accident prevention and preparedness; closure; and financial responsibility, among others.

Modified

where such sites are located. All we are allowed to do is to ensure that the company seeking the permit has met our regulations for handling those wastes.

Under the Resource, Conservation and Recovery Act law... we call it RCRA for short... we can issue or deny a permit to operate. Since the State of Ohio has not yet assumed management of this program, we at EPA are responsible for acting on the application of General Portland.

If U.S. EPA gives General Portland a permit, General Portland will be able to store certain hazardous wastes at its Paulding, Ohio facility which is located on County Road 176. If we do grant the company a permit, the company must comply with all of the conditions contained in the permit. Some of these requirements relate to proper design, operation and maintenance of General Portland's storage facility; accident prevention and preparedness; closure and financial responsibility, among others.

Before we ask for your comments, Mr. Johnson will present the background on General Portland's permit appli-

Standard

Before accepting comments from the audience Mr. Slaus-tas will present the back-ground on General Portland's permit application and on U.S. EPA's draft permit. Following that, I will give you a summary of U.S. EPA's public participation re-quirements, and we will then accept comments from the audience.

Mr. Johnson:

Thank you Tom.

I will now briefly summarize U.S. EPA's public partici-pation procedures.

Modified

cation and on U.S. EPA's draft permit. After that, I will give you a summary of U.S. EPA's public participa-tion requirements, and we will then take your comments.

Mr. Johnson:

Thank you.

PLANNING MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

--Frank Corrado

PLANNING MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

° Strategy:

Always hold a public meeting in advance of a public hearing; meetings are informal and assist in educating people about issues.

Hearings are formal. Testimony-taking activities required by law/regulation. They are not interactive and do not mitigate conflict.

° Before a Hearing/Meeting:

- Do your homework [Know what you're walking into]
- Understand what the issues are in the community
- Know who the cast of characters are
- Brief local officials
- Decide on what support is needed: press, legal, policy, etc.

° Setting up and Running Meetings:

1. Try and bring all interests together
 - Encourage concise, visual technical presentations
 - Try to get to interests as well as positions
2. Pick the right location
 - Not gyms
 - Churches, libraries
 - Arrange facilities to aid communications

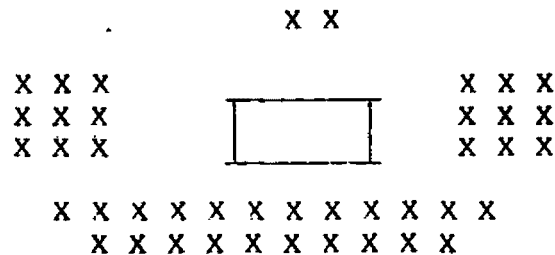
3. Have appropriate handouts -- people like to walk out with something in their hands
 - Summary
 - Graphics
 - Fact Sheets
4. Mark everything clearly
 - Lots of signs
 - Take nothing for granted
5. Set up registration/hearing clerk desk
 - Make everyone sign in
 - Go in order after public officials
6. 'Mike' podium and hearing officer
 - Use gavel
 - Have command presence
7. Call on public officials according to rank
8. Have an easy to understand opening statement
 - Use "We", "You"
 - Spell out EPA's responsibilities
 - Don't talk down

9. Treat witness equally--conveys objectivity
 - Cross examine when necessary
 - Keep "distance"
 - Make sure technical witness uses visuals to explain process and technology
 10. Let people vent anger, but do not "play psychologist"
 - Don't be "Big Nurse"
 11. Maintain control
 - Allow people to vent anger, but stay in charge
 - Emphasize rights of group
 - Acknowledge grievances
 12. Be prepared for tough questions
 13. Be responsive to news media
 - But do not allow to be disruptive
 14. Emphasize fairness
 - Show people that the process is fair
 15. Stay until it's over, talk informally with participants
- ° Stay in Touch
- Commit to a date for feedback
 - Explain the decision-making process and when outcome will be announced
 - Give names and phone numbers for followups
 - If commitments can't be met, explain why via written correspondence or through groups or via calls

PLANNING MEETING LOGISTICS

1. Consider the objectives of the meeting, the content and format of the presentations, and the desired amount of citizen participation. How the room is set up affects the tone of the meeting; in planning the setup of the meeting room it should be arranged to encourage good interchange between citizens and officials. For example:

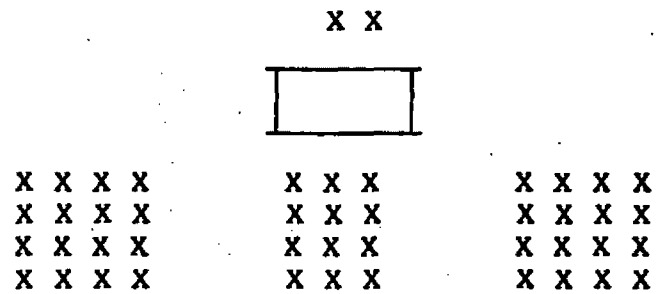
- ° If the meeting involves citizens who have a strong understanding of the issues, then a highly interactive meeting may be feasible and desirable. Seats may be arranged in a semicircle around the speaker to facilitate discussion.



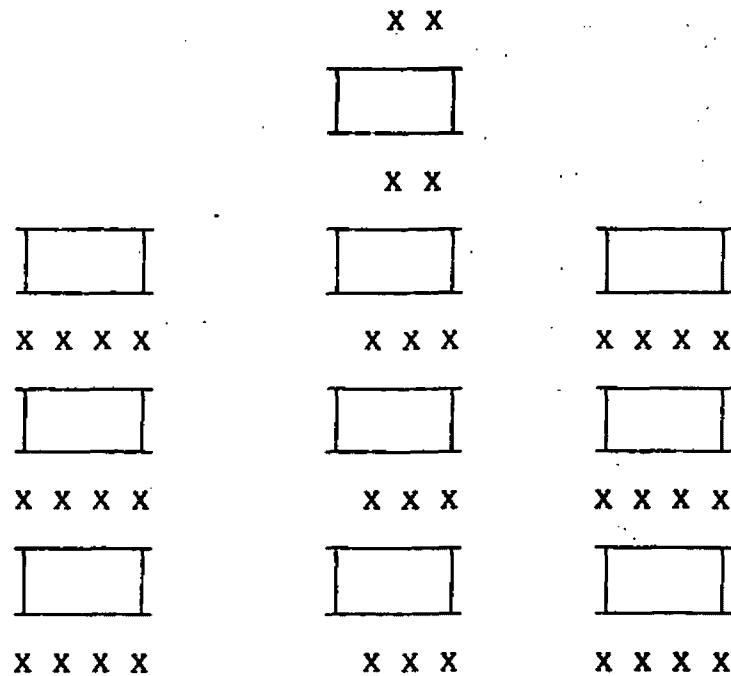
- ° If the meeting involves citizens who do not have a strong issue background and who are coming primarily for information, a more formal setup may be desirable.

-- If more than 100 people are expected, a classroom

style setup (speakers in the front, audience in rows) could be effective.



-- If there are fewer than 100 people expected, use a classroom style (audience in rows with tables for taking notes).



2. Arrive early--at least two hours--to ensure that everything is in order.

- Set up chairs in appropriate format
- Check on room temperature
- Check on lights, public address, and other needed equipment (e.g., projectors, screen)
- Check to see if the tape recorder is working, if a court recorder is present, and that a reporting stand has been set up

PUBLIC MEETINGS

--Merle S. Lefkoff

PUBLIC MEETINGS

The most common type of agency-sponsored public meeting is the public hearing. A hearing is generally held to relay information to the public after a decision has already been made and the hearing format is usually rigid and conducive to emotional posturing. Unfortunately, these are the types of meetings expected by the general public, and they don't like them. We don't like them, either, and suggest that they be used only to fulfill a legal requirement.

ALTERNATIVE LARGE GROUP MEETINGS

There are better ways to structure a large meeting (50 or more people) which will encourage both information dissemination and participant feedback. We will discuss several of these, with special emphasis on small group formats.

1. Briefing Meeting. This is a less formal alternative to a public hearing, which allows an informal presentation from agency representatives, followed by a question and answer period which gives ample time to the audience to respond to the briefing.
2. Panel Meeting. The agency may select a panel of discussants who represent a wide variety of viewpoints. Questions from the audience may then be directed toward individual panel members.
3. Large Group/Small Groups. If the agency wants to go beyond information dissemination and obtain real feedback from a large group, the larger group can be broken down into smaller groups for purposes of discussion. The groups can be broken down by random assignment, or if the agency knows who the attendees will be ahead of time, small groups may be preselected to insure a balance of interests.

The format usually involves 30 minutes or so of presentations to the large group, followed by one hour (or more) of small group discussion, concluding with a report to the large group reassembled.

Seating Arrangements. The public hearing format usually has the audience seated in an auditorium-style arrangement, with one microphone placed strategically up front. There are also podiums, flags, etc. - all the trappings, in other words, which create a formal distance between the agency and the public.

For alternative large-group meetings, there are seating arrangements which encourage interaction.

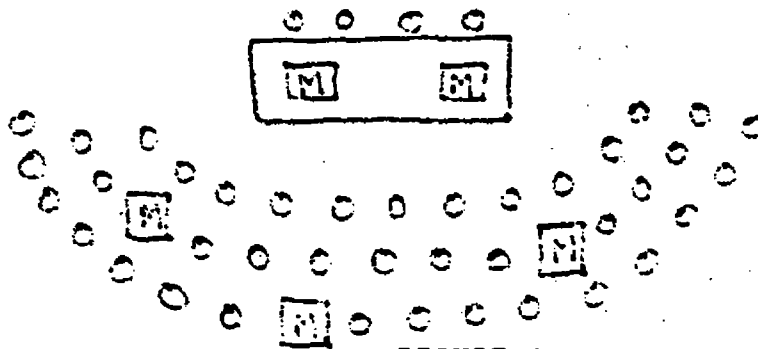


FIGURE A

Figure A shows an arrangement less formal than an auditorium seating style, with microphones placed throughout the audience, making it easier to engage the audience in discussion.

Another, more comfortable arrangement, is to seat people at small circular tables in a large room, (similar to a banquet) which puts them more at ease and induces informal one-on-one interaction as well. The tables can also serve as the focus for small group discussions.

The Meeting Record. Most large public hearings are electronically recorded in some way, transcribed, and published as a whole in an indigestible record which no one could possibly read. Either that, or some poor secretary is des-

perately trying to take minutes, identify speakers, and make sense out of what is being said.

An extremely effective alternative for recording the comments at a meeting is the use of flip charts to summarize. Meeting participants have the progress of the meeting before them (tear sheets should be hung up if possible), have the opportunity to verify the accuracy of what is being written as they go along, and have a clear summary which then serves as the meeting record. The tear sheets can also be transcribed and mailed to meeting participants later as feedback from the agency.

Small Group Meetings. Most of the meetings you will likely be holding are meetings with groups of less than 50. There are three basic kinds of small group meetings, depending on what the purpose of the meeting is:

- 1) briefing meeting - designed to inform the public and answer questions;
- 2) interactive planning meeting - designed to encourage a free exchange of information among all participants, with maximum opportunity for public input into the agency's planning process;
- 3) consensus formation/negotiation meeting - designed in anticipation of the need for resolving conflict among participants and reaching some kind of consensus or negotiated agreement.

The techniques which you decide to use to create the meeting format largely depend on the purpose of the meeting and the desired result. Below are brief explanatory notes about some useful techniques for small group meetings.

1. Charette. This involves a highly intensive meeting or series of meetings, often in a "retreat" atmosphere, where a small group finds mutual agreement on an overall plan. Many charettes alternate periods of intense discussion with periods of informal sociali-

zing, which helps build a close "team". The charette participants should be a broadly representative group, and they should come in to the meeting expecting a give-and-take resulting in mutual agreement.

2. Delphi Process. This process is not a "meeting" format, but it serves the same purpose. It was designed to by-pass the group dynamic by using questionnaire to obtain a consensus of opinion from a panel of experts about an issue or problem.

The usual procedure is for a small group of experts to design a questionnaire, which is then sent to a larger group. The questionnaire is generally very unstructured and open-ended. The responses are then analyzed by the design team, with particular attention to the reasoning of any respondents who may differ from the rest of the group. A follow-up questionnaire is then prepared and mailed, which summarizes the first "round" of the delphi. The process then continues for several more rounds if necessary, until the team has enough information.

The delphi process is useful when many diverse opinions are sought and it would be logistically difficult to bring the entire "panel" together in the same physical location. It is also a very effective technique for expert forecasting and is often used to develop consensus on forecasting future population recreation demands or probable environmental impact.

3. Workshops. This is often the preferred meeting format when a group needs to interact in order to accomplish a specific task. Examples of tasks to be completed are (a) scoping out issues; (b) developing alternatives; (c) selecting alternatives; (d) speci-

fyng impacts; and (e) developing a final plan.

Workshops should be limited to 30, but more people can be accommodated if the workshop is structured for a sufficient number of small groups. The ideal small group size is six to nine.

Five important steps in designing a workshop are:

1. Decide what the goal of the workshop is and carefully define the final product;
2. Decide who the participants should be who can effectively reach that goal;
3. Carefully prepare information which must be disseminated to participants in order to insure informed participation in the workshop;
4. Design the activities to get the desired result. Give the participants instructions and specify the desired products;
5. Evaluate the workshop.

Some techniques which are useful in a workshop format are specified below:

- 1) Brainstorming. This is perhaps the simplest of all small group techniques, although not necessarily the most effective in all situations. It is very useful for identifying problems and solutions, generating ideas, and stimulating creativity. The rules are simple:
 - a) All ideas are acceptable and written down on the flip chart. Participants are encouraged to be as "far out" as they want to be.
 - b) All evaluation is suspended and absolutely no remarks are allowed, not even giggles or expressions of incredulity.
 - c) After everyone has generated every idea, each idea is discussed in turn. The group may set

a time limit if they wish; or they may decide to go quickly through the list and discard those which are useless; or they may decide to take a straw vote on a particular number of ideas deserving further consideration.

- 2) Nominal Group Process. Nominal group process, unlike brainstorming, is highly structured and works on the theory that individuals are more thoughtful in the presence of one another, but not necessarily interacting. It is designed to confront value-laden or conflict-ridden questions and give all group members, aggressive and non-aggressive alike, the same opportunity to participate in discussion. The following procedure applies:

- a) the discussion leader explains the technique and asks each person to introduce her/himself to the other;
- b) the leader then poses a pre-developed, open-ended question and instructs participants to write their response on a 3 x 5 card for their own use;
- c) the leader then goes around the group and asks each member to offer one idea to be recorded on newsprint. The process continues until all ideas are recorded. No discussion is permitted;
- d) discussion is then allowed and should move rapidly;
- e) the group then ranks the top seven or eight ideas, again working silently on 3 x 5 cards. The rank order is recorded and a score for each idea is tallied and recorded;
- f) a final group discussion is held to discuss the results.

The biggest problem in using a nominal group process is that sometimes people feel manipulated; frustrated because they need more discussion time; or left out of the final results because "votes" are taken. But the process is very useful when discussion has been ex-

hausted and you want people to stop repeating themselves, or when you want to force an efficient prioritization.

- 3) Samoan Circle. This technique is useful when it is helpful for a large group (20-50) of people to interact as though they were a small group. It is a wonderful technique to use when emotions are high and people need to "vent" in a controlled atmosphere. The circle is structured in the following way:

- a) a small table with four to six chairs around it is placed in the center of the room. This is the "inner circle";
- b) concentric circles of chairs are placed around the table, one for each group participant;
- c) the only people allowed to speak are those sitting at the table in the middle, so a participant wanting to make a statement or engage someone else sitting in the center in discussion must leave his/her seat in the "outer circle" and move to an empty seat in the center;
- d) if all seats at the center table are filled, a person wishing to speak stands behind someone else until that person relinquishes his/her chair. Individuals may return to the center as often as they like;
- e) the circle ends when no one is left in the center.

It is possible to have a Samoan Circle which belongs completely to the participants. In other words, they "facilitate" their own meeting. Another possibility is to have a trained facilitator permanently seated in the center to guide discussion. The facilitator role is discussed in the next section.

PUBLIC MEETING CHECKLIST

CHECKLIST FOR CONDUCTING
PUBLIC MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

Status	Meeting Arrangements
	--Meeting date
	--Meeting location
	o suitable for expected audience
	o directions for finding
	o contact person
	o security
	o janitorial services
	o audio capabilities
	Notification
	--Public Notice
	--Press Release
	--Materials sent to Repositories
	--Mailing List readied; Mailing scheduled
	Meeting Plan
	--Agenda
	--Panel members notified
	--Court reporter
	--Moderator/Hearing Officer Introduction
	--Executive Summary prepared
	--Information handouts

Status	Supplies
	-- Registration Cards/pens
	-- Chalk/eraser
	-- Charts
	-- Paper/markers
	-- Scissors/tape
	Equipment
	-- Easel
	-- Overhead projector
	-- Film projector/screen
	-- Video equipment
	-- Sound system

Meeting Day Checks

	Room arrangement
	Nameplates
	Water for presenters
	Equipment available/working
	Supplies in place
	Court Reporter present
	Ventilation/lights/noise problems
	Rest Room locations
	Telephone location

PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE MEETING LEADERSHIP

--James L. Creighton

PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE MEETING LEADERSHIP

James L. Creighton

The Participants "Own" the Meeting:

The fundamental premise of effective meeting leadership is identical to that of democracy itself: all power derives from the consent of the governed. Or put another way: people accept meeting leadership because it is in their self-interest. For anybody to accomplish what they want in a meeting, there must be some structure. There needs to be some limits set on topics, procedures for recognition of speakers, rules to ensure that everyone gets heard, etc. So long as the leader provides that structure, it is in the interest of the participants to cooperate with and support the leader. Even if one individual wants to challenge the leader, as long as the leader has been seen as equitable and reasonable, the rest of the group will usually protect the leader. It is not really the leader they are protecting, but their own self-interest in having a fair and reasonable structure. But the minute that structure is no longer seen as equitable or reasonable, then the leader's power is diminished and is subject to challenge. If, for example, a meeting is run in such a manner that participants believe the meeting is solely for the benefit of the agency, and not the participants, it is no longer in their self-interest to accept the meeting format or respond to the meeting leader. If the issue being dealt with is of low intensity, then people's sense of propriety or respect for authority will keep them from openly challenging the meeting leader. But they will usually judge the meeting to have been a failure, and usually have little motivation to participate again in the future. If the participants perceive the consequences of the issue being discussed to be very severe, however, then they may feel obliged to challenge the meeting leader. While this

does not happen frequently, there have been public meetings that have completely broken down in bitter accusations, screaming, shouting, etc.

It should be noted that one guidebook to environmental activism called Eco-tactics describes procedures for breaking up meetings. Usually this consists of an emotional appeal to the crowd that the agency has stacked the decks, that the agency won't really respond to anything the public has to say anyway, and therefore the only meaningful protest is to walk out of the meeting en masse. If the meeting leader has clearly attempted to be fair, if the agency has demonstrated its willingness to listen and be responsive where possible, then this appeal will usually fall on deaf ears. The speaker stomps out of the room, followed by no one, and is usually seen slinking back into the room at a later date. But if participants are indeed frustrated because the meeting has been run solely for the agency, if ground rules have been unfair, or have set up barriers to people's participation, then this appeal may be responded to enthusiastically.

The essential point is that the effective meeting leader starts on the assumption that the meeting belongs to the participants. The meeting leader is a servant of the participants, not the ruler. The only reason for having a meeting leader is to provide a fair and reasonable structure so that everybody's interests can be served. Once this attitude is communicated to the participants, they are quite willing to accept reasonable limits, and allow ample opportunities for the agency to provide information, etc.

Avoiding Symbols of Power:

Many of the reactions of the public to agency staff leading meetings is based on the "psychological size" which

the public bestows on a representative of the state government. "Psychological size" is the tendency to treat someone with awe or respect when you perceive them to be important or significant. This can be someone who has actual power or control over you, or a celebrity such as a movie star, football player or wealthy individual. The psychological size you possess as a meeting leader differs from "control" in that it doesn't reflect your actual power in the situation, but rather a projection of importance based on people's feelings about the government.

Because it is a projection, it contains both people's positive and negative feelings about the government. As a representative of the agency you are likely to be perceived as powerful, but you may also be perceived as arbitrary, benevolent, repressive, or helpful, depending on people's experience of government. If people have not had much exposure to EPA they will usually react from feelings about the government generally. People who have had more experience with EPA will have feelings about EPA specifically, usually a mix of positive and negative.

All of us have ambivalent reactions to someone who has "psychological size". Someone with real power has the ability to directly reward or punish. Someone with psychological size has the ability to give psychological rewards or punishment based on approval or disapproval. We all are somewhat uncomfortable with people who hold this kind of power over us. Some people are challenged, and will excel or compete for approval. Others withdraw and avoid circumstances where disapproval might be possible. Others resist or fight the individual or agency that is seen as powerful.

The important thing to remember as a meeting leader is that people's reactions to you are not based solely on their reactions to you as an individual, but on their reac-

tions to you as a representative of the agency. This can lead to surprises, since you may be acting within a very realistic (and thus probably modest) view of your power and yet have people reacting to you in an exaggerated manner. In fact, since this is a matter of perception rather than some sort of verifiable reality, you may be reacting to them based on your perception of their psychological size (since they may be leaders of a significant interest group) at the same time they are reacting to the psychological size they perceive you as having.

The effect of psychological size is to exaggerate the impact of your actions. If you evaluate a participant's comment, the effects of this evaluation may be far more significant than you intended or imagined. If you are somewhat arbitrary, you may be perceived as excessively arbitrary. If you inadvertently cut someone off, this may be seen as an important political statement.

Some of the effects of psychological size are inevitable and can only be overcome by getting to know people on an individual basis. When you are known to people as Joe Smith or Patricia Green, human being, rather than "EPA representative", then most of the exaggerated reactions stop. But unless you are leading a meeting where everybody knows you personally, you can count on psychological size being an important dynamic.

While some of its effect cannot be eliminated, it is important that you avoid the symbols of power which reinforce psychological size. If you hold a meeting with ten staff people, a lecturn with the EPA symbol on the front, flags on both sides, pictures of previous EPA projects on all walls, \$1,000 worth of displays, microphones, and lighting devices; you can count on exaggerated responses, both positive and negative, to your psychological size.

The general rule to follow is to minimize the symbols of governmental power. A study by the U.S. Forest Service, for example, showed that participation in public meetings increased dramatically when they wore civilian clothes, rather than uniforms. When things get emotional, as they can in meetings, as long as you are a "symbol" to people, rather than a "human being", this gives permission to be abusive, to challenge, to question, to over react in ways that would never be acceptable in a person-to-person encounter. By avoiding the symbols of power, by being just plain Joe or Patricia, you reduce the likelihood of this occurring.

Leading The Process Not The Content:

Group dynamics experts point out that there are two levels of communication that go on during any meeting. The first level of communication is the Content Level. The Content Level consists of ideas, facts, information - the subject matter which is being discussed. The Process Level, the second level of communication, consists of how people work together - procedures, ground rules, processes. The reason that the Process Level is important is that it communicates people's relative standing, value or worth in the situation. If the way a meeting is being run affords some people a greater opportunity to participate than others, for example, then the process communicates that these people are more important or have more value in the situation. This is not always inappropriate - it may make sense for experts on a topic to be allowed somewhat more opportunity to participate - but it does communicate value. If the process always gives much more value to the government agencies than to the public, the agencies are, in effect, communicating to the public that they don't have much of worth and value to contribute. Worse yet, if the process values some publics over others, e.g. water users participate with the agencies, while other groups participate at

the end of the meeting, then the other publics will become resentful and mistrust the agencies' willingness to hear their point of view.

When a meeting leader participates in presenting or discussing the content of a meeting, then that leader becomes viewed as a participant, with a stake in the discussion. Once the leader has a stake in the discussion, his/her ability to create a process that is fair to everyone comes into question. For that reason, meeting leaders are encouraged to concentrate their efforts on providing an equitable meeting process, and avoid comments about the content which place them in the role of an advocate or participant. Since it is often necessary to present background about the proposed action, or answer questions about EPA's actions, etc., it is usually necessary to have at least two staff people present, one to conduct the meeting, and the other to present the information. Then it can be established that the meeting leader's sole function is to help with the process, i.e. make sure everybody gets heard, keep the meeting on track, encourage participation, etc.

The term "facilitator" is sometimes used to distinguish this kind of process-oriented meeting leadership from more authoritarian leadership. The meeting leader "facilitates" discussion and problem-solving, rather than "directing" or "leading" it. While it may communicate this distinction, the term is often confusing to the public and should probably be avoided in discussions with the public. The term is also often used in training sessions, encounter groups, etc. and carries connotations that are not necessary in this context. But the idea that the meeting leader leads the "process" of the meeting, rather than directs the "content" is significant and central to effective meeting leadership.

HOW AN EFFECTIVE MEETING LEADER SHOULD ACT

--James L. Creighton

HOW AN EFFECTIVE MEETING LEADER SHOULD ACT

Below are some guidelines for behaviors a meeting leader should engage in:

Opening The Meeting: _

A meeting leader can set the stage for the meeting with her/her opening comments. In general, if the meeting leader is relaxed and relatively informal, the audience will be more relaxed and comfortable. The audience will also feel more comfortable as they know what is expected of them and what is going to happen in the meeting. The opening comments establish this framework. In general, the items which should be covered in these comments include:

- a) Introduce yourself and very briefly say something about yourself. You want to be a person to the audience, not just an agency representative.
- b) Introduce others who will play a role in the meeting, but avoid "celebrity" introductions that will make some people feel left out or unappreciated.
- c) Review the purpose for this meeting, and how it fits in the context of the public involvement program.
- d) Outline the format of the meeting and just where and how you want people to participate.
- e) Outline the roles of anyone assisting you in meeting leadership, e.g. the person keeping a summary of the meeting on a flip chart.
- f) Set up any needed ground rules. Examples of ground rules might be: time limits, one person at-a-time, raise hand to be recognized, etc. One effective technique is to "propose" the ground rules, then ask if these are acceptable. So long as they are reasonable, the audience will usually agree to the ground rules or suggest only minor modifications.
- g) Quickly reiterate how and when the public is

invited to participate.

Leadership During Discussions:

During periods where the public is making comments or asking questions the meeting leader's role is to ensure that everybody feels included and accepted, and encourage participation. The meeting leader should avoid getting into discussions or debate on the subject matter of the meeting. Specific behaviors the meeting leader should engage in include:

1) Keep the meeting focused on the topic:

Point out that the discussion has drifted. Usually the meeting will quickly return to the topic.

Re-instate the original topic under discussion.
"My understanding is that we were discussing..."

2) Clarify and accept communications:

Summarize the contribution of participants. Summarize in particular, the contributions of participants who have not been actively involved. "Your feeling is that..."

Relate one participant's idea to another. "If I understand it correctly, your idea would add on to Mr. Smith's by..."

Accept incomplete ideas. "Could you develop that idea a little more?"

Point out when a participant's contribution is cut off and invite him to complete it. "I'm afraid that we may have cut Mr. Jones off. Did you have more you wanted to contribute, Mr. Jones?"

3) Accept feelings as valid data:

Summarize feelings as well as content. "You feel angry when..."

4) State a problem in a constructive way so that the meeting can work on it:

State the issue in such a way that it doesn't sound like any individual or group "caused" the problem.

Help clarify the areas of decision-making. "The construction of the project has been authorized. What we hope to accomplish tonight is how to reduce the impacts of construction on the local community."

- 5) Suggest a procedure or problem-solving approach:

Point out when it may be useful to move on to the next problems. "I'm wondering if we're ready to move on to..."

- 6) Summarize and clarify direction:

Summarize your understanding of what the meeting has accomplished and indicate what the next steps will be.

In addition to the behaviors listed above (which an effective meeting leader will employ), there are also certain behaviors which the meeting leader should avoid because they will make his role impractical. The meeting leader will not be effective if he does not remain neutral, becomes a major participant in the content, manipulates the group through the use of his role or uses his role to assert his own ideas.

Specifically, the meeting leader should avoid:

- 1) Judging or criticizing the ideals or values of others.
- 2) Projecting his own ideas and using his role to argue them. If you want to add your own ideas, make some clear identification that you are not making the comments as meeting leader - "I'd like to take my meeting leader hat off for a minute and comment." If you get involved, though, it would be better to ask someone else to assume the meeting leader role so that you are free to participate.
- 3) Making procedural decisions for the meeting without consulting participants.
- 4) Lengthy comments.

Closing The Meeting

At the end of the meeting, the meeting leader should clearly state: a) how the public comment will be used, and b) what will happen next in the decision-making process. This gives the public a sense of confidence that their participation has meant something, and maintains visibility in the decision-making process.

The Recorder Role

The meeting leader may often be assisted by a "Recorder" who keeps a summary of the meeting on a flip chart where all participants can see it. In small meetings (10-15 people) the meeting leader may also act as the Recorder. In large meetings (100+) the flip chart may prove impractical since so few can see it, and it may be necessary to use an overhead projector, or abandon the efforts to keep a visual record.

The visual record can be useful even when there is a court reporter keeping a verbatim transcript. Transcripts are very rarely seen by the public (their cost is prohibitive), so they do not serve the same purpose as the visual record.

The purposes of the visual record are:

- 1) It "accepts" everyone's contributions by recording them.
- 2) It keeps the contributions very visible and helps people keep track of what has or hasn't been suggested.
- 3) It serves as visibly agreed-upon record of the meeting.

In order that the visual record be mutually agreed-upon there are two ground rules that need to be agreed upon. They are:

- 1) The Recorder must make every effort to avoid editing or editorializing in the summary in ways that change the meaning or bias the summary.
- 2) Any individual who doesn't believe the summary accurately reflects his/her comments is free to have the summary of their comments changed to their satisfaction.

Who Should be the Meeting Leader

Traditionally large meetings have been conducted by Directors or other high-ranking officials. This is based on the public's need to know that they are "getting through to the top." Also "high-ranking officials," like everybody else, like the recognition that comes with meeting leadership. But having high-ranking officials conduct meetings is not always the wisest decision. Some of the other factors which should be considered are:

- 1) The number of public involvement meetings has been increasing steadily. Establishing the precedent that every meeting must be conducted by a high-ranking official may put an undue stress on staff time.
- 2) Participants may react more to psychological size of a high-ranking official than they would to someone selected solely for their meeting leadership skills.
- 3) Directors, or others in power, may react with pronouncements or make commitments under pressure as a meeting leader which would be best made after more reasoned consideration.
- 4) The meeting leader should stay out of content discussions, which may be difficult for high-ranking officials.
- 5) Individuals who receive specialized training in leading public meetings may be able to lead meetings as well or better than individuals with higher organizational standing.

In many cases Directors, or other officials, may have ac-

quired excellent meeting leadership skills through training or experience. As a result, the combination of "getting through to the top" plus skills may be unbeatable. An alternative is to have the Director open the meeting, explain that he/she wants to give full attention to people's comments, and introduce a meeting leader. This combines the "getting to the top" effect, while reducing the risks outlined above.

As public involvement increasingly becomes a way of doing business in EPA, the likelihood is that the number of public meetings may make this an insignificant issue. It may become totally impractical for the Director or other high-ranking officials to be involved in any but just a few extremely important meetings. As a result, it is essential that individuals be identified who possess personal characteristics which make them potentially effective meeting leaders.

DELIVERING INFORMATION EFFECTIVELY

--Merle S. Lefkoff

DELIVERING INFORMATION EFFECTIVELY

Many citizen participation activities revolve around non-interactive techniques for the delivery of information. The use of slide shows and overhead transparencies, making a good speech, writing press releases and public service announcements, establishing hotlines and newsletters - all of these activities support the education function which underlies good participatory programming. Generally, agencies have public information offices which have staff specially trained to offer technical assistance in these areas. But it is useful to know the guiding principles which insure the effective delivery of information to the public.

Slide Shows and Overhead Transparencies. The single biggest mistake made by presenters of graphic materials on a screen is making the material too detailed. How often have you sat in the back of a room totally unable to read the fine print up on a screen - and you had your glasses on! Keep the material on each slide or overhead BRIEF. It should be a summary of your oral presentation only.

Also, keep the slide there long enough for people to make notes, unless you prepare a handout which is a copy of your screen presentation. Handouts of the material are probably a good idea anyway, since the projector is likely not to work or the fuse will blow.

An important rule to remember is to set everything up in advance. The wrong tone is set when an audience has to wait for the presenter to fumble around with his/her gadgets.

Your presentation should be as creative and varied as possible. Mix text with cartoons and line drawings or photographs. Use charts and graphs to illustrate and summarize

data, rather than numerical information. Pass around maps and other graphics during the presentation to help involve the audience.

Finally, studies suggest that a few days after a presentation people retain 10% of what they heard in a speech, 35% from a visual presentation, and 65% from a combined audio-visual presentation. You should think about the possibility of preparing video tape presentations whenever possible. The technology is becoming less expensive and more accessible all the time. A very useful application of video tape presentations is showing a site for some activity, when it is not possible to arrange a site visit for the audience.

Making a Good Speech. The oldest and best advice governing the delivery of a good speech is (a) tell them what you're going to say; (b) say it; (3) tell them what you said. Below are additional tips for good public speaking.

- 1) Plan your speech carefully. Work from an outline. Write out the whole speech in order to learn and refine your ideas. Audiences know when you're unprepared.
- 2) Try not to read the speech. Nothing is more deadly.
- 3) Establish direct eye contact with members of the audience around the room.
- 4) Don't talk down to your audience.
- 5) Sound confident and knowledgeable, and punctuate your speech with thought-provoking statements.

Working With the Media. Your public affairs staff are your specialists, but you will have some opportunity for direct contact with the press, and the following is some general guidance.

Above all, be credible. Don't be dishonest or evasive.

If you can't tell the whole story, you're probably better off not giving a story at all. Press people are sensitive professionals and can spot trouble immediately. Always return press inquiries promptly, and if you're not ready with a story, or you don't know all the details, tell the reporter when you'll be ready, or refer him/her to the appropriate person.

You might be asked to give another staff person some background information for a press release. Make sure all the important details are mentioned in the first paragraph, the lesser details in the next paragraphs, and so forth. Editors cut stories from the bottom up.

Press conferences are necessary only when a really big story is breaking, and then it is important to have a "name" figure associated with the story present at the conference. The press will want written background information or a press release available before the press conference.

Set up a special table for the press at public meetings. Reporters like this, and it helps you identify the reporters who are present. It also helps if you have established a personal relationship with both newspaper reporters and television and radio reporters beforehand.

If you desire television coverage at an event, you will have to make a personal call to the news director at the station. It is even better if you visit the news director in person, and even more impressive if you bring the chairperson of your advisory committee or an involved citizen leader with you as well. Always leave printed background material behind.

HOT-LINES. Establishing a "hot-line" enables the general public to call one telephone number at the agency and get

a quick response to a request for information. The "hot-line" should be a toll-free number.

The hot-line can be manned by a single staff person well-acquainted with the issue; can be hooked up to a recording device with a recorded message about the issue or upcoming events, but must include the name and telephone number of a real, live staff person to call for further information; or be hooked up to a recorder which asks the caller for his/her input about the issue. This last should be followed by a personal call from a staff person fairly soon.

Newsletters. Newsletters are a relatively inexpensive method for insuring a continuing and timely flow of information to the public. They should never be used as an "advertisement" for the agency, but rather should seek to establish credibility for a specific citizen participation process.

Newsletters can be as imaginative as you are. But some things are important to remember when preparing a newsletter.

- 1) Make sure all technical language is translated for public consumption. A good newsletter is jargon-free.
- 2) Use photographs, cartoons, and line drawings liberally. You will need professional assistance for layout, but it is important that the newsletter not only be readable, but interesting and easy to look at.
- 3) Provide some space in the newsletter for readers to fill in a request for information form which can be easily mailed back to you.
- 4) Publish a calendar of upcoming events with each newsletter.
- 5) Number and date all newsletters.
- 6) Distribute the newsletter to other media representatives.

THE PRINCE POLITICAL

ANALYSIS SYSTEM

--William D. Coplin

--Michael O'Leary

Syracuse University

USING THE PRINCE POLITICAL ANALYSIS SYSTEM

This "political accounting" system was devised by Bill Coplin and Michael O'Leary, two men who are a cross between a vaudeville act and a couple of Political Science professors at Syracuse University. Named after the infamous Machievelli, one of the applications of this simple technique is to gain a better understanding of some political activity you are observing - to figure out why political actors act the way they do and why some succeed and some fail.

The mechanics of the PRINCE analysis include the following:

SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES TO BE MADE

ISSUE POSITION. How each actor feels about the issue-outcome under study. It ranges from +3 for strong support, through 0 for neutrality, to -3 for strong opposition.

POWER. How much usable capability each actor has to affect the outcome. It ranges from 0 for no power to 3 for maximum power.

SALIENCE. How important is the issue to the actor. How much of the actor's agenda is taken up with this issue. It ranges from 0 for no importance to 3 for maximum importance.

Some Steps To Keep In Mind

- 1) Be sure the issue you are dealing with is very specifically defined and all members of the group fully understand the definition. Remember that the issue must be defined in terms of an observable outcome that some people will want to have happen and others will want to prevent.

It may turn out that in trying to define an issue-outcome you will discover that you are actually talking of several different possible outcomes. If this happens, try to get agreement to analyze one of the issues and later cover others if there is time. Members may submit minority PRINCE reports if they wish.

- 2) After formulating an agreed-upon statement of the issue engaged in general group discussion to develop a preliminary partial listing of the relevant actors. At this point keep the list of actors small, probably no more than ten should be included. Make sure that all group members understand clearly who all of the actors are - they should be identified as clearly and specifically as the issues.
- 3) After the preliminary list of actors has been agreed upon, assign an actor to each member of the group. (Two members can deal with one actor or one member may deal with two actors, depending upon the group size.) Take a few minutes while each group member works independently to estimate the actor's issue position, power, and salience on the issue.
- 4) After this has been done, have the group member responsible give his or her estimates for the issue position, power, and salience of the first listed actor. Follow this with general discussion to develop group consensus on the estimates for that actor. Follow the same procedure for each actor.
- 5) When the charts have been filled in, complete the issue-outcome calculations. Multiply issue position times power times salience for each actor. Add the resulting numbers, being careful to include the positive and negative numbers correctly.
- 6) If the resulting number is a large positive number

(above +5) the prediction is that your issue is likely to occur; if the number is a large negative number (below -5) the issue is very unlikely to occur; if the number is close to zero, the prospect for the issue is fifty-fifty.

7) If you feel that the number you have achieved is unreasonable (either too positive or too negative), go over the charts again to see if you would revise your estimates. You should also consider whether you have left out one or two actors whose scores would make substantial differences in the predicted outcome.

MINI-PRINCE ISSUE ANALYSIS FORM

This form is to be used when an individual or group wishes to acquire a quick understanding of a single political issue. Prior to the implementation of strategies developed under the PRINCE political accounting system, we suggest the longer analysis be performed.

To identify the issues & actors that must be dealt with in confronting a permitting decision.
 Issue: To reach an informed public consensus on decision to
 (State in terms of a desired political outcome)

Site of a new facility in Sebastian
~~Speedy Waste~~

Actors	-3 - +3 Issue position	x	0 - +3 Power	x	0 - +3 Salience	=	Total support by actor
Town Council	+2	x	+3	x	+3	=	18
State Agency	+3	x	+1	x	+3	=	9
Speedy Waste	+3	x	+1	x	+3	=	9
Older Sebastianites	+2	x	+2	x	+2	=	8
Newcomers	-3	x	+1	x	+3	=	-9
Media (local)	+3	x	+2	x	+3	=	18
Media (State)	+2	x	+1	x	+1	=	2
	x			x		=	
	x			x		=	
	x			x		=	64
Total for all actors=							55

THE SEBASTIAN CASE STUDY

**--Robert L. Burke
EPA Public Affairs**

INTRODUCTION

This case study involves state and local conflicts that occur when a pollution control issue is perceived as increasing risks to public health or community welfare. Although the issue in this case involves the location of a new hazardous waste treatment facility in a small town, the general health and community impacts are common to many other EPA programs.

We would like you to employ the skills and suggestions that have been discussed in this training session to address the issues and questions that appear on the last page of the case study. They involve initiatives to understand and communicate the benefits and risks involved, reduce community conflicts, and maintain EPA's credibility in the process.

Three teams will be established apportioned equally from those attending this training session. This will give those involved a chance to collectively draw on the skills developed during the training program.

T H E S E B A S T I A N C A S E

TOWN PROFILE:

The Town of Sebastian is located somewhere in the United States. The town's population has doubled in recent years from about 3,500 in 1970 to slightly over 7,000 by the end of 1983.

Sebastian has a town form of government. There is a five member town council elected on an at-large basis every two years. Four of the members have held office for over 15 years. None has ever faced serious opposition in past elections.

As the population of the town mushroomed during the 1970's and early 1980's, three resident groups evolved with different philosophies about the future economic and development needs of Sebastian.

Older Sebastianites: These residents comprise about 52 percent of the voters in Sebastian. Some trace their roots back to the 17th century when the town's economy was agrarian. Other "old-timers" are descendents of immigrants who settled in Sebastian because of its proximity to blue-collar jobs in a nearby textile and industrial city. Most long-term residents believe that the town must attract industry and jobs to maintain future viability. This belief is fueled by drastic declines in farming, small business, and blue-collar jobs. Concern also exists about residential property taxes which have doubled in the past decade.

The Newcomers: The newcomers began arriving in the early 1970's. Most are young to early middle-aged families with small children. They are professionals employed in high-tech industries located within commuting distance following the completion of two interstate highways. They comprise 48 percent of the town's voters. The newcomers were drawn to Sebastian's semi-rural environment with its clean air and water. Drinking water supplies come from a large underground aquifer which feeds into small streams and ultimately into a large saltwater bay used by town residents for recreational activities. The nearest surface fresh water source is over forty miles away.

The newcomers tend to interact within neighborhood groupings in six relatively affluent subdivisions. None has run for town office and they seldom attend meetings of the Town Council. Their major concern is that development within the town is getting out of hand.

THE EMERGING ISSUE OF WASTE MANAGEMENT:

By the late 1970's, the problem of safe disposal of municipal and hazardous wastes was becoming highly visible. State legislation was introduced that would give the state full power to site and permit treatment, storage, and disposal facilities in any city or town where it could be done without major environmental or health impacts. Support for the proposed legislation developed as evidence of illegal and illicit dumps emerged in the state. Major environmental groups supported the siting and permitting legislation as did industry lobbyists, organized labor, and public interest groups. The Governor threw his full weight behind the legislation.

In Sebastian, the proposed legislation became an issue only among some of the town's newcomers who had a high consciousness about environmental issues. A few lobbied their state representative in support of the legislation. Despite strong statewide support, the legislation repeatedly became bottled up in a house rules committee charged with scheduling legislation for floor action. On three occasions, the chairman of the committee was able to muster the one-third vote needed to prevent the legislation from coming to the floor. Like many other representatives from rural areas, he felt strongly that the siting authority would give the state too much control over local interests and concerns.

SEBASTIAN SELECTED AS SITE

Despite this setback, the state environmental agency began to investigate areas that might be willing to receive facilities without the siting legislation. Three rural towns were identified as initial sites of a proposed statewide network of hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facilities. The most favorable area was in the Town of Sebastian. On paper, it looked so promising that state officials dubbed it "The Goldmine."

Sebastian had several advantages as a site.

- (1) There were miles of undeveloped non-agricultural land around the proposed site area. No residents were located near the site and none would be displaced for it.
- (2) The soil and rock formations and other geological features of the area were generally favorable. Most important, the water tables lay deep beneath the earth's surface. The threat of groundwater contamination seemed small.
- (3) The completion of the two interstate highway systems meant that there would be easy access for truck transport hauling the wastes.
- (4) Some community elements had actively lobbied for the state siting legislation. There seemed to be an awareness about the need for such facilities.
- (5) The area in which Sebastian was located was certain to achieve federal air quality standards for all major air pollutants by the end of 1982. The air quality considerations that would govern a "non-attainment" area in terms of development and emissions would not apply here to either transportation or stationary sources of pollution.
- (6) By coincidence, Speedy Waste, a large private contractor specializing in hazardous waste treatment, had also identified Sebastian as a potential site area.

SUPPORT FROM THE TOWN GOVERNMENT:

The State Environmental Agency (SEA) wanted to move quickly on the matter. The Director of Local Government Relations was aware of the importance of securing support within Sebastian for the site. A recent state economic development planning report suggested that town officials would likely support a facility because of what it could mean for jobs and an expanded tax base. The official also knew that the Town Council President in Sebastian seemed to have considerable influence within the community. He decided to contact him personally and explain the matter and the benefits to the community.

The Council President liked what he heard but recalling a recent explosion of chemicals in a neighboring state demanded assurances that the facility "wouldn't blow up." The state official convinced him over the next several days that there was almost no chance of that happening. The President of the Council subsequently arranged for the state official to brief the full Town Council two weeks later.

The Sebastian Sentinel was published every Friday and usually included a brief and approving report on the previous meeting of the Town Council. The paper's editor, owner and publisher was the Council President's sister. She had never seen the need to include an agenda of upcoming meetings, only what had been decided at previous ones. So when the state official came to Sebastian to brief the town council, only a few people knew he was coming. Even the other council members had only a vague idea of what it was all about.

The state official described in detail the benefits of the proposed plant, and its safety features. It would provide about 200 temporary construction jobs and 50 or so permanent positions. Some of the details seemed vague to the other council members. Two of them expressed concerns about the kinds of wastes that would be treated at the facility, and where they would come from. But two of the other members took their cues from the Council President who was nodding agreement to everything the state official was saying.

After the briefing, the Council discussed the proposal and the Council President pushed for an immediate vote. The facility was approved by a 3-1 vote. One member abstained. The majority felt certain that citizens would support the proposal. The state also led them to believe that delay could prompt the state to consider another location. When they were told of the Council's approval, Speedy Waste submitted its permit application for the facility to EPA.

The Sebastian Sentinel editorialized in support of the facility. There was little immediate reaction from long-term residents but The newcomers reacted negatively. The shock was not so much at the Town Council's vote as at the state's intention to site a facility in Sebastian.

At the next meeting of the Town Council, emotions ran high among the large crowd that attended. Opponents and council members exchanged sharply different points of view and charges. Finally, the meeting adjourned with the differences unsettled. During the next eight months, the positions solidified.

TOWN COUNCIL

- Members were divided in their support, but the majority held firm in support of the facility.
- Proponents drew heavily on the state's position regarding the suitability of Sebastian and relative safety of the facility.
- They blasted the opposition for selfishness on the issues of concern to many of the long-term residents. These views are echoed in the Sentinel.

EPA ROLE

- The Agency receives a permit application from Speedy Waste.
- A subsequent review by EPA indicates that the application was fully completed by Speedy Waste.
- The application is released for public comment.
- Objections to the application surface and the Regional Administrator calls for a public hearing.

THE STATE AGENCY

- Stressed the need for a voluntary agreement on a facility in Sebastian because of growing waste management problems statewide and the absence of siting authority.
- Worked closely with town officials to hold town residents in line behind the project.
- Felt they had to hold on in Sebastian to prevent a precedent that could adversely affect their plans for a statewide network of facilities.
- Held a major press conference releasing a study which concluded that environmental damage or health risks from the facility are extremely small over a 15-year period.

THE OPPOSITION

- Raised questions concerning health and safety precautions at the site.
- Demanded more information on the impacts of the proposed facility especially concerning the possibility of groundwater contamination.
- Got heavy coverage in statewide TV, radio and newspapers denouncing town officials and the state for their insensitivity, particularly to the potential long-range health effects on the town's children. Received editorial support from several of the most influential newspapers, television and radio stations in the state.
- Organized a petition drive against the facility which surprisingly secures signatures from 44 percent of the households in the town. Opposition begins outreach to areas where long-term residents live. Some begin to have concerns about possible health risks and adverse community impacts of the project.
- Opposition leadership raises funds to hire a groundwater expert to do a study on the long-range impacts of the facility on the town's drinking water supply.

SPEEDY WASTE

- Embarked on several outreach activities within the community following submission of permit application to EPA.
- Got feature stories in area newspapers stressing the benefits of the facility in terms of jobs and an improved tax base.
- Met with town officials periodically to sustain their support for the facility in the face of growing opposition within the town.

* * *

WORK PROBLEM AND QUESTIONS

You have been assigned as the EPA hearing officer for the public hearing on the Speedy Waste Permit application. The hearing is scheduled in 60 days. Assume that you have received a briefing on the situation from the information on the previous pages. Employ the Prince Analysis System to assess the characteristics and strenghts of the various groups involved in the issue.

Then consider the following questions:

1. What strategies could you employ for handling and communicating the risk of groundwater contamination and other risk issues posed by the proposed facility?
2. What are the various options that could be developed for resolving the conflicts before the public hearing?

---From the skills training.

---From areas where there are common interests or agreement.

---From a possible desire by some of the actors to change or modify their position.

MEDIA FOR MANAGERS

--Frank Corrado

Pre-Assignment

MEDIA FOR MANAGERS - PRESS CONFERENCE TOPICS

1. You have just shown up in a "moon suit" and are getting out of a government van at a children's playground in downtown Boston.
2. A group of citizens has gathered outside your office and is demanding to see you to protest EPA's decision to approve a hazardous waste site in their community.
3. Mr. Mayor, the major bridge connecting this community to the outside world has just collapsed, sending two autos and a school bus to the bottom. No survivors have been found.
4. Your best employee has just been arrested for selling defense secrets to foreign agents.
5. The Office of Management and Budget has publicly taken issue with your decision to require scrubbers on power plants to cut down on acid rain.
6. Mr. Regional Administrator, the meeting with your state administrators, you know, the ones who are unhappy about the cutbacks in program grants, is about to begin in your conference room.
7. You are announcing to your staff that you are going to end flex time in your division.
8. The GAO has issued a report critical of your program, criticizing the overuse of outside consultants.
9. The Governor has just issued a statement criticizing the EPA regional office for not responding quickly enough to a call for help during a major oil spill.
10. One of your employees was just arrested for selling cocaine in the regional office. The FBI says that he has been a dealer in the drug and has been selling coke in the office for the last two years.
11. A scientific researcher for a public interest group has charged that EPA let residents of Clearview return to their homes following a train derailment and release of acetyl chloride before the area was safe.

12. Your new intergovernmental affairs director, a schedule C appointee, is being investigated by the district attorney for involvement in a mail fraud scheme, according to a report in this afternoon's newspaper.
13. The governor has demanded that you fire your public affairs director because of a press report stating that the public affairs director had told a public meeting in Burlington, Vt. that the state was not capable of managing federally delegated environmental programs.
14. Two of your best on-scene coordinators are hospitalized in serious condition after visiting the scene of a newly-discovered hazardous waste dump. There are rumors that you ordered them to the scene against advice that the area was "too hot."
15. Local environmentalists are charging that EPA is not adequately monitoring state enforcement of the water permit program.
16. You are announcing sanctions against the State because of EPA's finding that the State has not made a good faith effort to deal with the auto emissions problem.
17. A draft report prepared by your staff citing that unsafe drinking water conditions may exist in 50 New Hampshire communities has been leaked to the press.
18. It has been alleged that your enforcement division sought civil instead of criminal penalties against a midnight dumper because of his good political connections.
19. The employees union has charged that you have failed to name any women to high positions in your division, and claims that you have made disparaging comments about women employees.
20. The grapevine has it that you are abusing your travel and you have called a meeting of your staff to dispute the charge.

DEALING WITH THE PRESS

--Frank Corrado

COMMUNICATING WITH THE MEDIA

I. Introduction

One of the most important means of communicating with the public in a community is via the news media. As many of you know, this is not always an easy or enjoyable experience.

Too often that communication takes place during a difficult period, when community concerns about PA actions and their impact on health or the environment are strong. It can be a "pressure cooker" situation, and you may find yourself in a defensive situation with many elements in the community, including the news media.

It is important then, that you have a positive strategy for dealing with the news media.

First, the media are a major channel for you in communicating with the community. Second, a positive communications strategy will help you communicate your message more clearly. If the media trusts what you say, you will be able to communicate more directly. There will be less chance that the media will filter or distort what you say.

Issues that we will cover in this presentation include:

- (1) Basic communication techniques
- (2) The principles of crisis communications
- (3) Understanding the media's perspective
- (4) Tips for conducting media interviews

II. Basic Communications Techniques

Techniques for communicating with the press can include:

(1) Formal Press Conferences - all media are called.

A statement is prepared announcing a major action. A news release is prepared. Graphics are prepared. The formal statement should run less than a minute. Questions are answered. Running time is usually about an half hour. This technique should be used sparingly and only for major announcements that affect the entire community. Everything is on the record.

(2) Informal Briefings - for some or all the media.

Generally informal, and normally not for the purpose of making an announcement, but rather clarifying a policy or providing technical information. Should be on-the-record.

(3) Media Interviews - One-on-one interviews with a

radio, TV station or newspaper. Should be on-the-record. Usually initiated by the media. Be careful not to play favorites by giving information to one interviewer over others.

(4) News Releases - Written announcements of Agency

actions released to media. Must contain name and phone number of person who can answer questions.

(5) Media Tours - Formally conducted tours by EPA

officials to describe activities that are site specific. Often conducted jointly with other local government agencies.

Other points to remember:

(1) Touch base with enforcement or general counsel if enforcement activities are involved to set groundrules on

what information, if any must be held confidential and for what periods of time.

(2) Determine key spokespersons. Decide who will speak regarding policy/technical issues.

(3) Inform key community leaders and local officials just before any announcements to the media about sensitive test results, study findings or other actions. DON'T LET THEM LEARN ABOUT IT FROM THE MEDIA.

III. Principles of Crisis Communication

Much of EPA's communication with the media can probably be categorized as "crisis communications." Our experiences in many communities take place during periods of turmoil and great public concern over the health impacts of hazardous pollutants on the community.

There are a number of important rules to follow in crisis communication, but the cardinal one is, TELL IT ALL AND TELL IT FAST. Get the information out quickly and all at once.

Getting out information quickly stops rumors and helps calms nerves. Keep a continuing flow of information. It indicates that while there are problems, someone is active, trying to get a handle on them.

Dealing with rumors is an important aspect of crisis management. Rumors, whether they are true or false, should be answered immediately with the truth. A "no comment" does nothing but fuel rumors.

Here are some other major rules of crisis communications:

(1) Be sure that all sources speak from the same platform about a situation at a specific time. It is best to have only one spokesperson who can call on others for help as the need arises.

(2) Make everything possible public. Cover all the bases and all the important subjects as long as security and confidentiality are not breached.

(3) Update the information regularly. When the situation is fluid, frequent updates of information are important. In a crisis situation there are few situations where there can be too much public contact. Frequent accounting to the community helps build trust and confidence. Lapses in the flow of information stimulate speculation and increase anxiety.

(4) Cooperation is paramount. Individuals who brief the news media must have direct access to informed sources of information. Technical liaison people should be designated to inform briefers and serve as a resource of the news media.

(5) Stay on the record. Don't go off the record with reporters. There are exceptions to this, but the best rule is don't say anything that you don't want to see in print.

Understanding of the needs of the media can help you in more effectively getting your point of view across.

General principles

(1) The News Media have a special status - the "media" is a business. Their business is reporting the news. They

make their money from the advertising that is folded in with the news. At the same time, the media are a constitutionally protected (First Amendment) institution that has a tradition of covering government issues.

(2) Be customer oriented - Being sensitive to the needs of reporters. Treat them as people who have a job to do. Understand their needs for information and deadlines and above all be responsive - be quick to answer their calls and helpful--it builds good will.

(3) Be proactive - Many times a reporter will not understand what's going on and will need help. By being helpful, you can at the same time find an opportunity to get the points of view across that you want. When you talk with a reporter, be clear on what points you want to make.

(4) TALK IN ENGLISH - Avoid jargon at all costs. We use jargon because it is precise. But it confuses outsiders.

(5) Keep track of what you said - if you are concerned about being "set up" or misquoted, have someone else present with you during the interview.

(6) If you don't know an answer, say so. Then get back to the reporter with the answer as soon as possible.

Rules for Small Communities

(1) In small communities, you will have to go out of your way to brief and educate reporters on what's going on because they are, of necessity, generalists.

(2) The local reporter for the weekly newspaper, or the single radio station can be one of your main channels to the community.

(3) Be proactive - suggest ideas for stories.

(4) Be informal - be available on a regular basis, either in person, or by phone to keep that reporter updated on what's going on. In a small town, news travels fast. You may not be able to beat the local "grapevine" in telling people "what" is going on. Your trump card is your ability to communicate via that reporter "why" something is happening.

V. Tips for Communicating with the Media

Preparing for the Interview -- There are some rules you should remember as you prepare for a media interview:

(1) Find out what the reporter is interested in - ask him ahead of time, so you can prepare.

(2) Decide what you want to say - think about the points you want to make; don't just wait for questions.

(3) Practice questions and answers - a simple one-on-one with a fellow employee who plays devil's advocate will help you formulate answers to potentially difficult problems ahead of time.

(4) Expect to be nervous - we're all not Johnny Carson - especially on television. But look at the interviewer, not the camera, and have a clear idea about what points you want to make. Dress neatly.

(5) Evaluate what you did. Look at the newscast or the paper and see how the story was played. Think about how you can do it better next time.

(6) If the media get the story wrong - the best advice in most instances -- is to forget it. If it makes you feel better, write a letter to the editor. The most effective rule is be more careful the next time.

Interview Techniques -- Here are some common traps that you may encounter and some ideas for coping with them:

(1) The "set up". A long preamble precedes a question, sometimes loaded with misinformation or a "when did you stop beating your wife" question.

EXAMPLE "Considering the low regard that people have for the oil industry, how do you, as a major oil company chief executive, expect people to believe you're not ripping them off?"

SOLUTION There are two schools of thought on how to deal with this problem. One is to break in politely to challenge the premise. (By the way, don't nod your head when the question is being asked...it makes viewers think you agree with what's being said.) The second approach is to wait until the question is finished, then go back and knock down the preface: "Yes, it's true that some people don't think much of our business, or business in general, but in fact, our profits have been flat

for the last two years..." or simply: "What you've said is just not true. Let's look at the figures...."

(2) "Either...or". The interview poses two unacceptable alternatives.

EXAMPLE "Either you're naive, or you're protecting some one higher up..." Another example: "Now were those irresponsible statements due to ineptness or greed?" or "Are you for or against takeovers?"

SOLUTION One solution is to answer the question directly: "Neither. The real issue here is..." and move to the points you want to make. Or you can just ignore the trap and respond the way you want to.

(3) Irrelevancy. In this situation, you are called upon to answer a question in an area related to your own. The problem is that you can end up being quoted out of context. A memorable remark of Jimmy Carter in the Playboy interview about lusting in his heart is a classic example of what can happen when you get into an area far afield of your area, as it were.

EXAMPLE "Mr. Jones, besides being marketing director of Widgets Unlimited, you're also on the Youth Commission. Do you think the drinking age should be lowered?"

SOLUTION You might simply remark that your youth commission believes in supporting the laws in existence,

then launch into some information regarding the good works of the commission.

(4) The empty chair. In this situation, the interviewer quotes an opponent or person with a different point of view who has criticized your view but is not present.

EXAMPLE "Mr. Nader has said that your product is a health hazard and should be recalled immediately." or Congressman X says your industry is notorious for price-fixing..."

SOLUTION You can respond simply "I haven't seen those remarks." or "I don't understand in what context those remarks were made." or "I can't believe the Congressman said that, but I believe the facts will show..." You should make sure not to attack an opponent who is not present.

(5) The broadside. This is the "ad hominem" argument, in which you are attacked directly.

EXAMPLE "You're a polluter, aren't you?" (or a liar, or racist, or redliner, etc.)

SOLUTION The best advice: deny it straight out, if it's not true; or be candid if there's some truth in it: "We previously did have a pollution problem, but in the last two years we've licked it," or "Redlining has no place in our loan operations."

(6) Let's pretend. This technique involves the interviewer asking a hypothetical question, a "What if..." question.

EXAMPLE "What if gasoline goes up to two dollars a gallon. Should the government take over the oil companies then?"

SOLUTION Politicians are constantly asked these types of questions. The best advice is to demur and move to the point you want to make: "I think such a question is pure speculation. I think our real problem is conservation..."

(7) Inconsistency. If you or your organization has changed opinions or policies over time you might be asked about that change.

EXAMPLE "Your firm issued a press release previously, indicating that you would not leave this community and move to Arkansas..." or "You previously stated that there were absolutely no health problems with your new drug..."

SOLUTION You should clearly explain the reasons for the change, whether it was due to a change in policy or circumstances. "Our intentions have always been to maintain a plant in this community. However, the difficult economic conditions nationally and the flood of competing imports have forced us to consolidate operations..." or "Our research until recently indicated that our new drug had sufficient safeguards..."

(8) No Comment. "No comment" is not the same as "I don't know. "No comment" can be stated a number of ways. If you don't know, you don't know.

EXAMPLE "Is it true your company is considering buying our local TV station?"

SOLUTION If the answer is "No comment," it can be done smoothly: "Our firm has a history of attempting to expand into many new areas. We look at over five hundred companies a year for possible acquisition. But it's a major decision in every case and one in which there must be consensus within the company. There has been no decision at this time about buying your local TV station."

Summary

These pointers should help you when you have to deal with the media. Remember the TEAM APPROACH is important. You can get help, and you should expect it, from Public Affairs Office when there are major media events or needs in your program area.