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COMMUNICATING HEALTH RISKS TO THE PUBLIC



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RISK COMMUNICATION

- ▶ High concern
- ▶ Effectiveness = message you want or need to convey is heard the way it was intended

What is your GOAL?

- ▶ To warn
- ▶ To change or adopt a new behavior
- ▶ To inform
- ▶ To partner in decision-making

What Makes it So Challenging?

1. Issues of perception
2. Audience capacity
3. Earning trust & credibility

Factors that Influence RISK

.....MORE ACCEPTABLE.....THAN....

Voluntary	vs.	Imposed
Beneficial	vs.	Not Beneficial
Natural	vs.	Man-made
Affects adults	vs.	Affects children
Familiar	vs.	Exotic
Fair	vs.	Unfair distribution

Perception vs. Reality

THEIR
perception
becomes
YOUR
reality...



Audience Capacity

- ▶ Language barriers
- ▶ Background information (e.g. how groundwater works)
- ▶ Resources (library, internet)

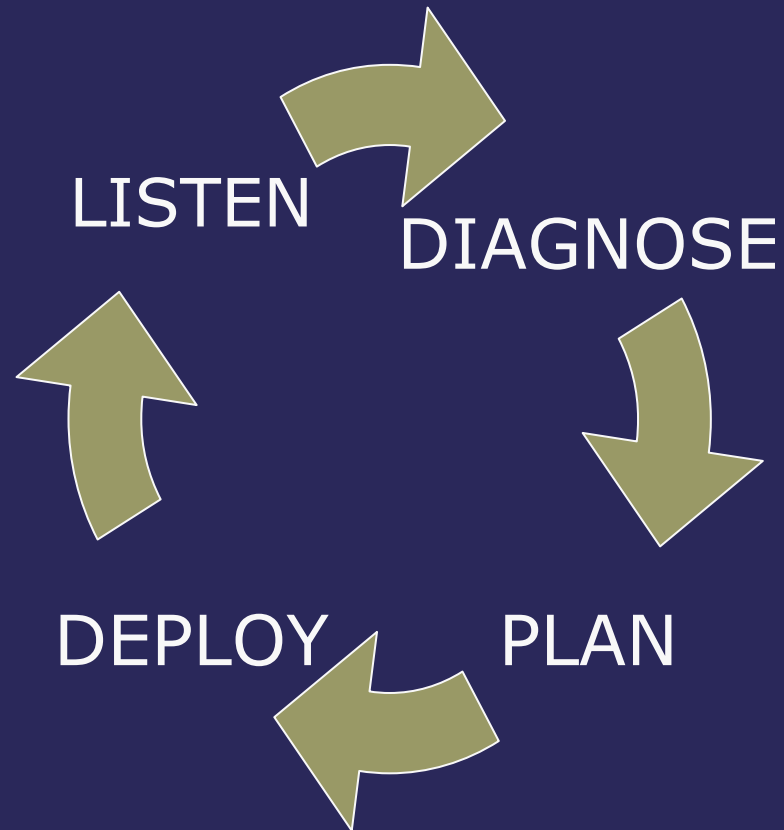
Earning TRUST & CREDIBILITY

- ▶ Be consistent, caring & competent
- ▶ Be transparent
- ▶ Exercise follow-through

Earning TRUST & CREDIBILITY

- ▶ Partner with credible agencies, groups
- ▶ Involve audience as much as possible

Communication Strategy



SUMMARY

- ✓ Know your audience so you can start where they are
- ✓ Design messages that they can HEAR
- ✓ Deliver information based on how THEY want the information

Resources & References

How to get in touch with us at HRC:

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