Responsible Public Communication

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Intuitions Are Unreliable

People overestimate how well they understand and communicate with one another.

Some Varieties of Unreliable Intuitions

common knowledge effect
false consensus effect
fundamental attribution error
self-serving biases
myths (panic, adolescents' unique sense of invulnerability …)
…

Intuitions Are Unreliable

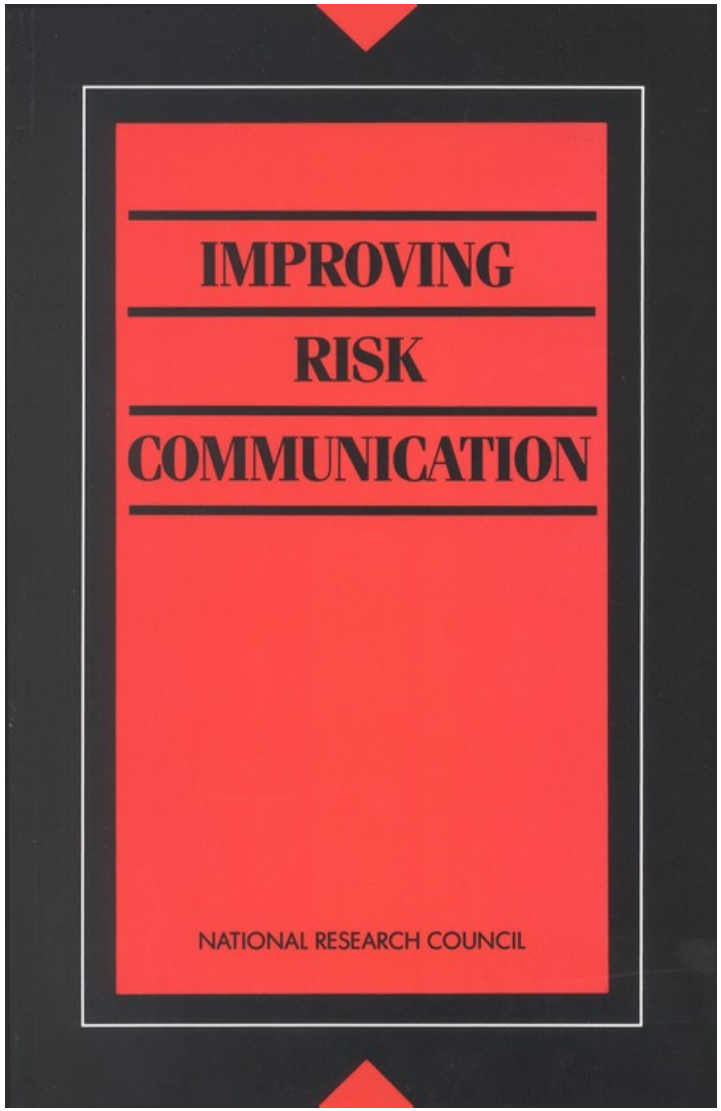
People overestimate how well they understand and communicate with one another.

As a result, we should rely on evidence, rather than intuition, in designing communication processes.

The Basic Science Is Mature

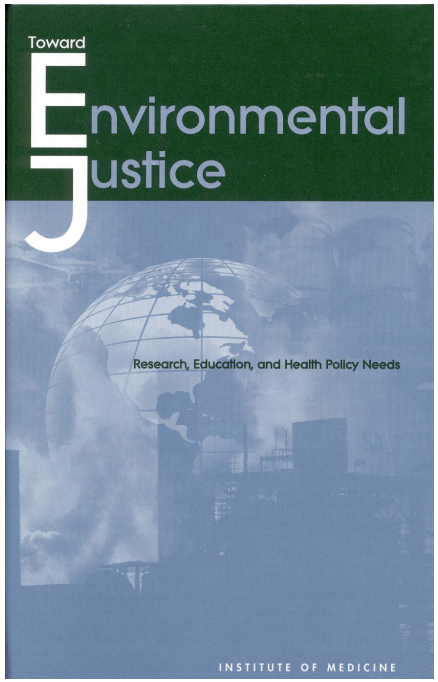
Constituent processes have been studied by the social, behavioral, and decision sciences, for many years.

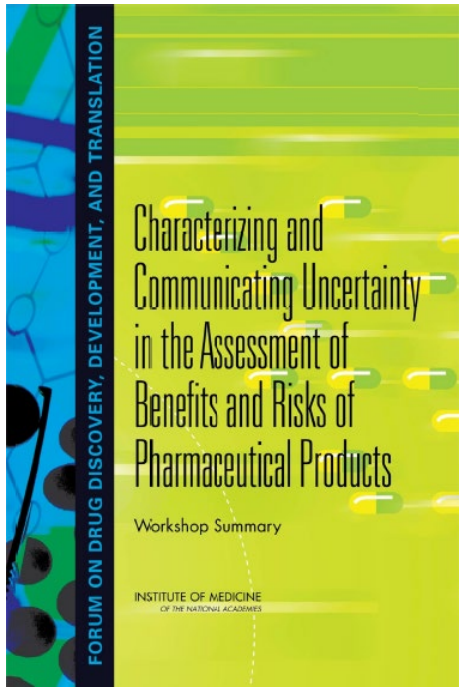
Risk Communication at NASEM



http://www.nap.edu/catalog/1189.html (1989)

Risk Communication at NASEM





http://www.nap.edu/catalog/6034/

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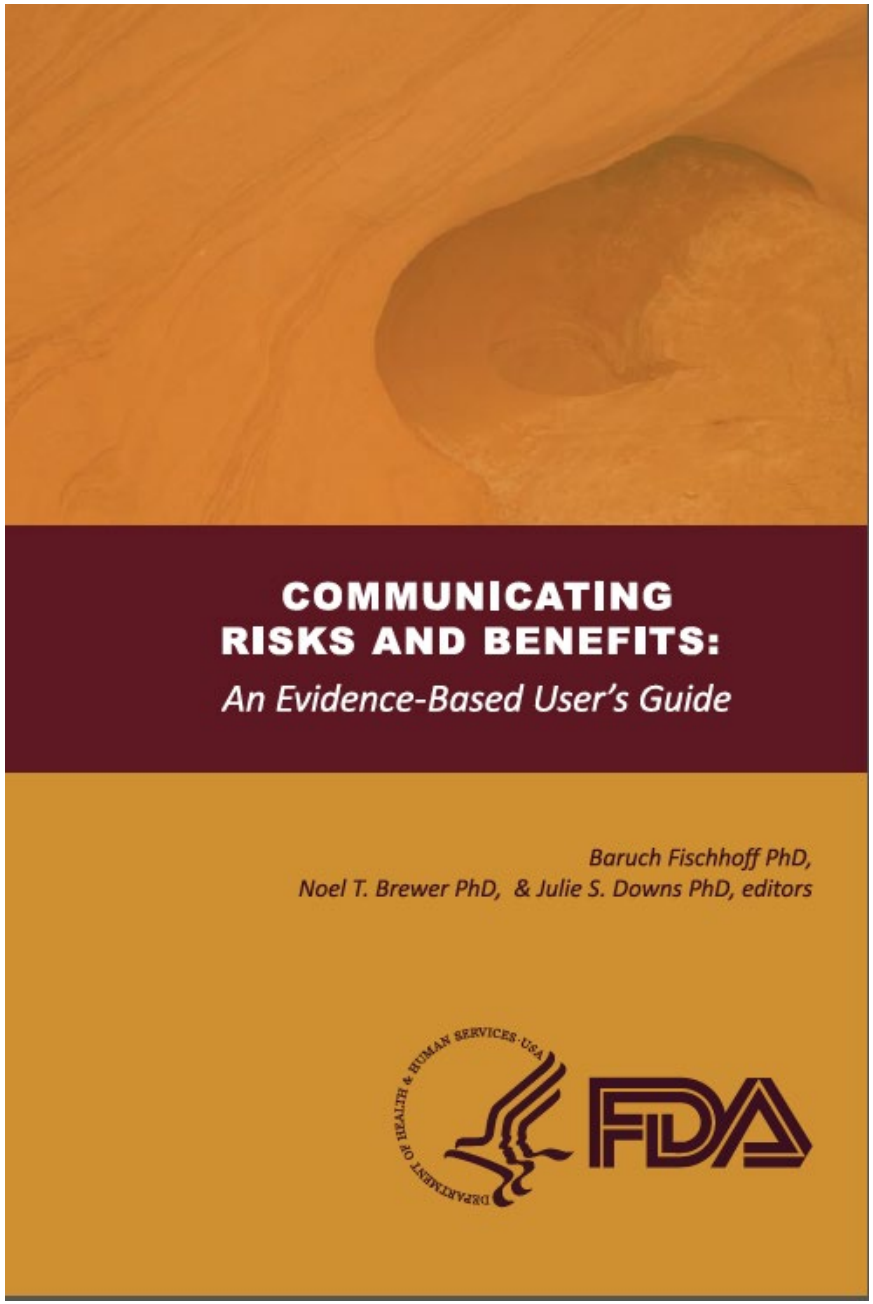
http://www.nap.edu/catalog/18870/

http://www.pnas.org/content/110/Supplement_3
https://www.youtube.com/user/SacklerColloquia/videos

http://www.pnas.org/content/111/Supplement_4

http://www.cvent.com/events/the-science-of-science-communication-iii-inspiring-novel-collaborations-and-building-capacity/event-summary-f1b4c0b15f4c44de8aa974181ebe212f.aspx

Governance of Dual Use Research in the Life Sciences:
Advancing Global Consensus on Research Oversight
Zagreb, Croatia, June 10-13, 2018



http://www.fda.gov/AboutFDA/ReportsManualsForms/Reports/ucm268078.htm

Each Chapter

Summarizes the science
Offers best guesses at practical implications
Shows how to evaluate communications
(<3000 words)

The Basic Science Is Mature

Constituent processes have been studied by the social, behavioral, and decision sciences, for many years.

As a result, communication teams should include people with requisite expertise.

Content Design is Straightforward

The design process applies basic science in an orderly way, extracting its relevant results and methods.

Content Design Process

Analysis

What specific decisions do people face?

Description

How do they make them intuitively?

Intervention

How can they be helped in making them?

Evaluation

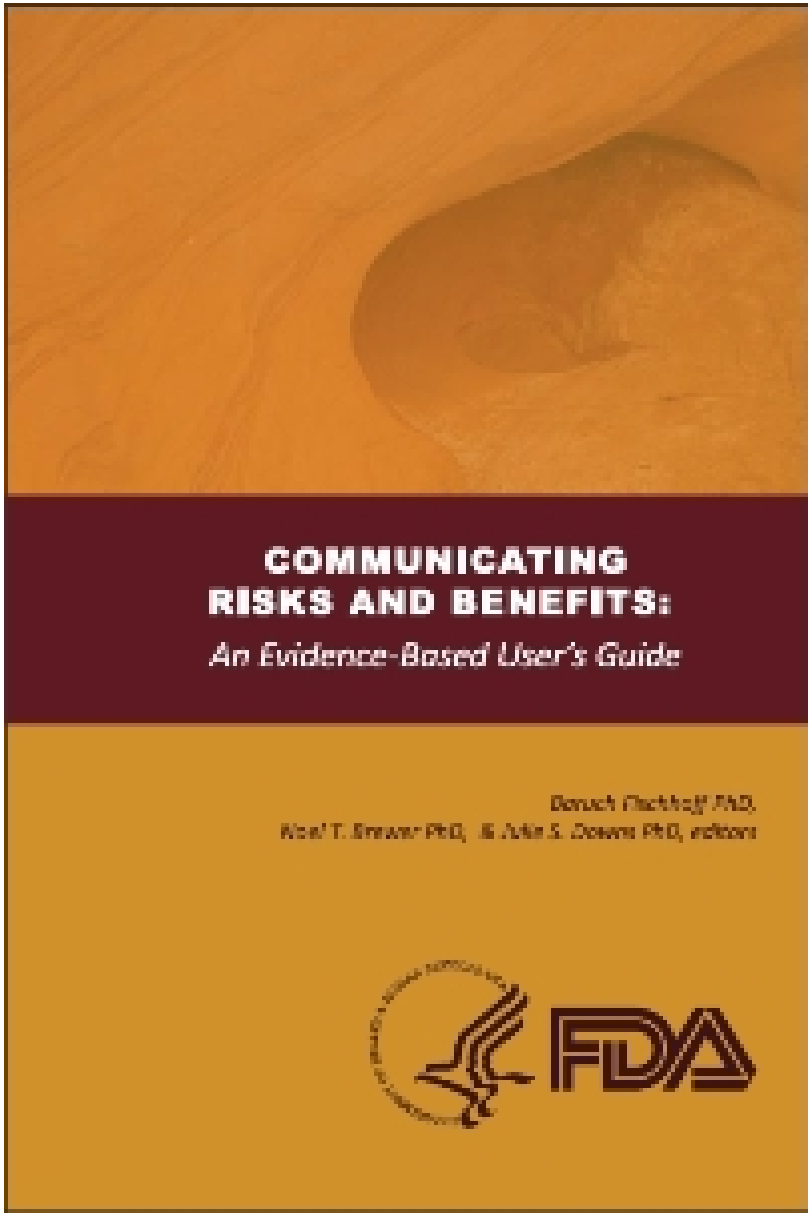
Are our current efforts good enough?

Repeat, as necessary.

Some Applications

radon
pre-term birth
pharmaceuticals
climate change
phishing
breast cancer
nuclear incidents
tornadoes
xenotransplantation
smart meters
HIV/AIDS
…

sexual assault
intelligence analysis
EMF
avian flu
palliative care
breast implants
nuclear energy in space
Plan B (morning after pill)
small modular reactors
vaccines (anthrax, MMR)
critical care medicine
…



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Each Chapter

Summarizes the science

Offers best guesses at practical implications

Shows how to evaluate communications

- for no money at all
- for a little money
- for money commensurate with the personal, organizational, and political stakes riding on effective communication

Requisite Expertise

Subject matter specialists for accuracy
Decision scientists for relevance
Social and behavioral scientists for mutual understanding
Practitioners for execution and local knowledge

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Subject matter specialists for accuracy
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All opinions are welcome, but authority is vested in those who know each topic best.

Content Design is Straightforward

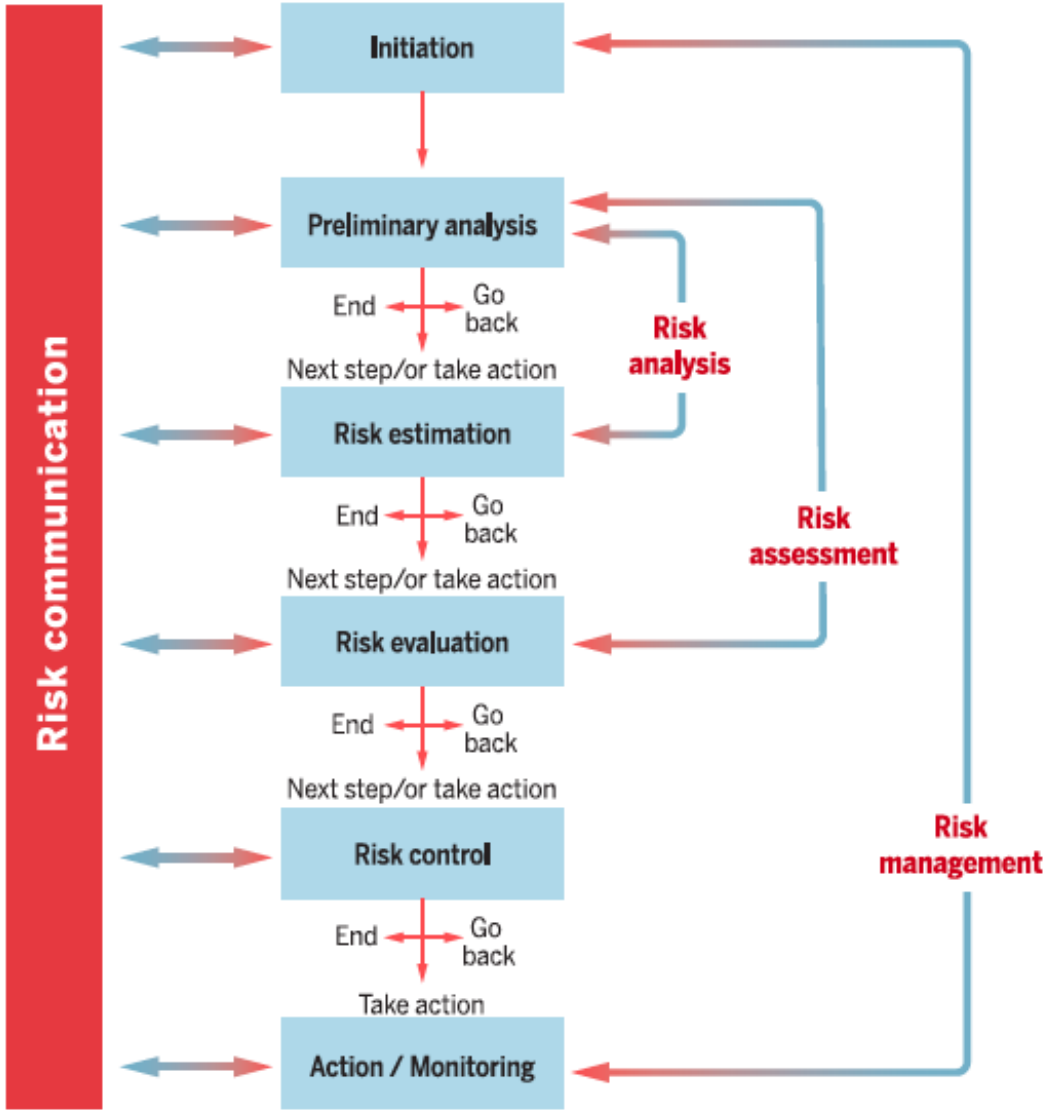
The design process mobilizes basic science in an orderly way, extracting its relevant results and methods.

As a result, communication teams need requisite expertise and coordination.

Process Communicates

When and how an organization communicates (or stays silent) shapes how its messages are interpreted and how well it is trusted.

A Communication Process Standard



Fischhoff, B. (2015). The realities of risk-cost-benefit analysis. *Science*, *350*(6260), 527. http://dx.doi.org/10.1126/science.aaa6516

FDA Risk Communication Advisory Committee (RCAC)

Charter of the Risk Communication Advisory Committee to the Food and Drug Administration

Authority:

The Advisory Committee on Risk Communication, referred to herein as the Risk Communication Advisory Committee, was established by 21 U.S.C. 360bbb-6, as added by section 917 of the Food and Drug Administration Amendments Act of 2007. The Committee is also governed by 21 CFR Part 14 and Pub. L. 92-463 (5 U.S.C. App.), the Federal Advisory Committee Act, which sets forth standards for the formation and use of advisory committees.

http://www.fda.gov/oc/advisory/OCRCACACpg.html

FDA'S STRATEGIC PLAN FOR RISK COMMUNICATION

Fall, 2009

https://www.fda.gov/AboutFDA/ReportsManualsForms/Reports/ucm183673.htm
https://www.fda.gov/downloads/AdvisoryCommittees/CommitteesMeetingMaterials/RiskCommunicationAdvisoryCommittee/UCM526451.pdf

Recommendations for Managing Emerging Events

Have a consistent policy in all domains
Provide useful, timely information
Address: risks and benefits, uncertainty, personal actions, FDA actions
Audience needs should drive agency analyses
Use standard formats; evaluate routinely
Consider needs of diverse populations

http://www.fda.gov/oc/advisory/OCRCACACpg.html

The Voice of the Patient

A series of reports from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) Patient-Focused Drug Development Initiative

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Public Meeting: April 25, 2013
Report Date: September 2013

The Voice of the Patient

A series of reports from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) Patient-Focused Drug Development Initiative

Sickle Cell Disease

Public Meeting: February 7, 2014
Report Date: October 2014

https://www.fda.gov/downloads/ForIndustry/UserFees/PrescriptionDrugUserFee/UCM418430.pdf

Process Communicates

When and how an organization communicates (or stays silent) shapes how its messages are interpreted and how well it is trusted.

As a result, communication should be treated as a strategic function.

Bad News

Everyone is an intuitive communicator, leading to improvised content and processes.

Without a strategic commitment, events overtake evidence-based communication.

Organizations often lack absorptive capacity for social, behavioral, and decision science expertise.

Good News

Broad and deep basic science.
Principles for addressing many recurrent issues.
Applications to many specific risks.
Costs are low; economies of scope are possible.
Primary barrier is institutional inertia.