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77 Questions Commonly Asked by Journalists During an Emergency or Crisis

Journalists are likely to ask six questions in a crisis (who, what, where, when, why, how) that relate to three broad topics: (1) what happened; (2) What caused it to happen;
(3) What does it mean. Specific questions include:

1) What is your name and title?
2) What are you job responsibilities?
3) What are your qualifications?
4) Can you tell us what happened?
5) When did it happen?
6) Where did it happen?
7) Who was harmed?
8) How many people were harmed, injured, or killed?
9) Are those that were harmed getting help?
10) How are those who were harmed getting help?
11) What can others do to help?
12) Is the situation under control?
13) Is there anything good that you can tell us?
14) Is there any immediate danger?
15) What is being done in response to what happened?
16) Who is in charge?
17) What can we expect next?
18) What are you advising people to do?
19) How long will it be before the situation returns to normal?
20) What help has been requested or offered from others?
21) What responses have you received?
22) Can you be specific about the types of harm that occurred?
23) What are the names of those that were harmed?
24) Can we talk to them?
25) How much damage occurred?
26) What other damage may have occurred?
27) How certain are you about damage?
28) How much damage do you expect?
29) What are you doing now?
30) Who else is involved in the response?
31) Why did this happen?

32) What was the cause?
33) Did you have any forewarning that this might happen?
34) Why wasn't this prevented from happening?
35) What else can go wrong?
36) If you are not sure of the cause, what is your best guess?
37) Who caused this to happen?
38) Who is to blame?
39) Could this have been avoided?
40) Do you think those involved handled the situation well enough?
41) When did your response to this begin?
42) When were you notified that something had happened?
43) Who is conducting the investigation?
44) What are you going to do after the investigation?
45) What have you found out so far?
46) Why was more not done to prevent this from happening?
47) What is your personal opinion?
48) What are you telling your own family?
49) Are all those involved in agreement?
50) Are people over reacting?
51) Which laws are applicable?
52) Has anyone broken the law?
53) What challenges are you facing?
54) Has anyone made mistakes?
55) What mistakes have been made?
56) Have you told us everything you know?
57) What are you not telling us?
58) What effects will this have on the people involved?
59) What precautionary measures were taken?
60) Do you accept responsibility for what happened?
61) Has this ever happened before?
62) Can this happen elsewhere?
63) What is the worst case scenario?
64) What lessons were learned?
65) Were those lessons implemented?
66) What can be done to prevent this from happening again?
67) What would you like to say to those that have been harmed and to their families?
68) Is there any continuing the danger?
69) Are people out of danger? Are people safe?
70) Will there be inconvenience to employees or to the public?
71) How much will all this cost?
72) Are you able and willing to pay the costs?
73) Who else will pay the costs?
74) When will we find out more?
75) What steps need to be taken to avoid a similar event?
76) Have these steps already been taken? If not, why not?
77) What does this all mean? Is there anything else you want to tell us?

Basic Risk Communication/Message Mapping Templates*

Use these templates to create effective messages in high concern situations

CCO TEMPLATE
Use when asked a question with high-emotion
Steps:
- Compassion
- Conviction
- Optimism

Example: *(1) "I am very sorry to hear about…..; (2) I believe that…; (3) In the future, I believe that ….*

"WHAT IF" TEMPLATE
Use when asked a low probability "what if, what might happen" question
Steps:
- Repeat the question (without negatives)
- Bridge to "what is"
- State what you know factually

Example: *(1) "You've asked me what might happen if….; (2) I believe there is value to talk about what is, what we know now; (3) And what we know is…"*

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*Source: Dr. Vincent T. Covello , Center for Risk Communication, Copyright 2009

BRIDGING TEMPLATES
Use when you want to return to your key points or redirect the communication

1. "And what's most important to know is…"
2. "However, what is more important to look at is…"
3. "However, the real issue here is…"
4. "And what this all means is…"
5. "And what's most important to remember is …"
6. "With this in mind, if we look at the bigger picture…"
7. "With this in mind, if we take a look back…"
8. "If we take a broader perspective, …"
9. "If we look at the big picture…"
10. "Let me put all this in perspective by saying…"
11. "What all this information tells me is…"
12. "Before we continue, let me take a step back and repeat that…"
13. "Before we continue, let me emphasize that…"
14. "This is an important point because…"
15. "What this all boils down to is…"

1N=3P TEMPLATE
(ONE NEGATIVE EQUALS THREE POSITIVES) /BAD NEWS TEMPLATE
Use when breaking bad news or stating a negative

Recommendation: Balance one bad news or negative message with a least three or more positive, constructive, or solution oriented messages

AGL-4 TEMPLATE (AVERAGE GRADE LEVEL MINUS FOUR TEMPLATE)

Use when responding to any high stress or emotionally charged question

Recommendation: Provide information at four or more grade levels below the average grade level of the audience.

GUARANTEE TEMPLATE
Use when asked to guarantee an event or outcome
Steps
- Indicate that the question is about the future
- Indicate that the past and the present help predict the future
- Bridge to known facts, processes or actions

Example: *(1) "You've asked me for a guarantee, to promise something about the future; (2) The best way I know to talk about the future is to talk about what we know from the past and the present; (3) And what we know is…"* **OR**
"What I can guarantee [assure; promise; tell you] is…"

YES/NO TEMPLATE
Use when asked a yes/no question that cannot be answered yes or no
Steps
- Indicate you have been asked a yes/no question
- Indicate it would be difficult to answer the question yes or no
- Indicate why it would be difficult to answer the question yes or no
- Respond to the underlying concern

IDK (I DON'T KNOW) TEMPLATE
Use when you don't know, can't answer, or aren't best source
Steps
- Repeat the question (without negatives)
- Say "I wish I could answer that"; or "My ability to answer is limited by …;" or "I don't know"
- Say why you can't answer
- Provide a follow up with a deadline
- Bridge to what you can say

Example: *(1) "You've asked me about…; (2) I wish I could answer;; (3) We're still looking into it; (4) I expect to be able to tell you more by …; (5) What I can tell you is…"*

FALSE ALLEGATION TEMPLATE
Use when responding to a hostile question, false allegation, or criticism
Steps
- Repeat/paraphrase the question without repeating the negative; repeat instead the opposite; the underlying value or concern, or use more neutral language
- Indicate the issue is important
- Indicate what you have done, are doing, or will do to address the issue

Example: *(1) "You've raised a serious question about "x"; (2) "x" is important to me; (3) We are doing the following to address "x."*

27/9/3 TEMPLATE
Use when responding to any high stress or emotionally charged question
Recommendation: Be brief and concise in your first response: no more than 27 words, 9 seconds, and 3 messages

PRIMACY/RECENCY TEMPLATE
Use when responding to any high stress or emotionally charged question
Recommendation: Provide the most important items or points first and last

RULE OF 3 TEMPLATE
Use when responding to any high stress or emotionally charged question
Recommendation: Provide no more than three messages, ideas, or points at a time
Example: My three main points are: (1) …; (2)….; and *(3)….*

Advanced Risk Communication/Message Mapping Templates*

Use these advanced templates to create effective messages in high concern, high stress situations

TBC TEMPLATE

When responding to questions or concerns indicating high perceived risks or outrage.

- **(T)rust** Message (For example, messages communicating listening, caring, honesty, transparency, or competence)
- **(B)enefit** Message (For example, messages communicating benefits to the individual, organization, or society)
- **(C)ontrol** Message (For example, messages that give people things to do or that increase their sense of hope or self- efficacy.

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*Source: Dr. Vincent T. Covello , Center for Risk Communication, Copyright 2009

KDG TEMPLATE

Use to give upset people a greater sense of control.

- **(K)now** Message: Share what is most important for people to know.
- **(D)o** Message: Share what is most important for people to do
- **(G)o** Message: Share where people should go for credible information

KDD TEMPLATE

Use to give upset people a greater sense of control

- **(K)now** Message: Share what is most important for people to know.
- **(D)o** Message: Share what you are doing to address the concern
- **(D)o** Message: Share what people can do to address the concern

CARING/SHARING TEMPLATE

Use when responding to a question or statement containing incorrect information.

- **Caring** Message: State what you and the person holding incorrect information have in common.
- **Sharing (1)** Message: Invite the person holding incorrect information to share their information with you
- **Sharing (2)** Message: Re-share your information

Example: *(1)"I assume you asked this question because you care about ...., which I also care about; (2) I would greatly appreciate your sharing with me all the information you have so I can review it; (3) In the meantime, the information I have indicates..."*

CAP TEMPLATE

Use when responding to a high concern question or statement

- **(C)aring** Message: Provide a message indicating caring, concern, empathy, or compassion. The message should communicate the seriousness of the situation.
- **(A)ction** Message: State actions you have, are, or will take to address the issue or problem. For example, the message might indicate you are cooperating with other organizations or conducting an investigation.
- **(P)erspective** Message: Provide information that puts the issue in perspective or context.

AAF Template

Use when the immediate goal is build, maintain, or restore trust

- **(A)knowledge Uncertainty and Challenges** Message: Identify knowledge gaps and challenges.
- **(A)ction** Message: State actions you have, are, or will take to address the issue. For example, the message might indicate you are cooperating with other organizations or conducting an investigation.
- **(F)ollow Up** Message: Provide information on where people can obtain timely and credible information.

Acknowledging Uncertainty and Challenges: Sample Statements

- "I wish we knew more."
- "There are still many uncertainties."
- "I had hoped our answers could be more definite by now."
- "It must be difficult to hear how uncertain we are."
- "There is still much that we do not know..."
- "The evidence is still mixed and very confusing."
- "Some of what we think now may turn out later to be wrong."
- "There are many challenges, unanswered questions, and exceptions."
- "There is a range of expert opinion on this issue."

Tech Brief Principal Preparer:
Vincent T. Covello, PhD, Director, Center for Risk Communication

Risk Communication:
Principles, Tools, and Techniques

- **Risk communication is central to informed decision-making.**
- **Guidelines exist to help programs and providers present risk information clearly and effectively.**
- **People under stress typically want to know that you care before they care about what you know.**
- **People under stress typically have difficulty hearing, understanding, and remembering information.**

Background on Topic

Risk communication is the two-way exchange of information about threats, including health threats such as avian influenza, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), and HIV/AIDS. The goals of risk communication are to enhance knowledge and understanding, build trust and credibility, encourage dialogue, and influence attitudes, decisions, and behaviors. These goals apply to all four major types of risk communication: 1) information and education; 2) behavior change and protective action; 3) disaster warning and emergency notification; and 4) joint problem-solving and conflict resolution.

To communicate risks effectively, programs should prepare a written communication plan in advance. Deciding ahead of time about many of the necessary communication decisions and activities allows for a quick and effective response during an emergency. Key elements include answering questions such as: What needs to be done? Who needs to know? Who is the spokesperson? And who needs to act? For more information on components to include in a communication plan, see Annex 1 at http://www.paho.org/English/AD/PAHO_CommStrategy_Eng.pdf

Programmatic Considerations

There are seven cardinal rules for effective risk communication:

1. **Accept and involve the receiver of risk information as a legitimate partner.**
   People have the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives.
2. **Plan and tailor risk communication strategies.**
   Different goals, audiences, and communication channels require different risk communication strategies.
3. **Listen to your audience.**
   People are usually more concerned about psychological factors, such as trust, credibility, control, voluntariness, dread, familiarity, uncertainty, ethics, responsiveness, fairness, caring, and compassion, than about the technical details of a risk. To identify real concerns, a risk communicator must be willing to listen carefully to and understand the audience.
4. **Be honest, frank, and open.**
   Trust and credibility are among the most valuable assets of a risk communicator.
5. **Coordinate and collaborate with other credible sources.**
   Communications about risks are enhanced when accompanied by referrals to credible, neutral sources of information. Few things hurt credibility more than conflicts and disagreements among information sources.
6. **Plan for media influence.**
   The media plays a major role in transmitting risk information. It is critical to know what messages the media delivers and how to deliver risk messages effectively through the media.
7. **Speak clearly and with compassion.**
   Technical language and jargon are major barriers to effective risk communication. Abstract and unfeeling language often offends people. Acknowledging emotions, such as fear, anger, and helplessness, are typically far more effective.

Lessons Learned

A fundamental concept of risk communication is that people experiencing stress typically: (1) have difficulty hearing, understanding, and remembering information, and (2) want to know that you care before they care about what you know. A central theorem of risk communication is that people's perceptions of the magnitude of risk are influenced by factors other than numerical data (see Table 1 below). Dr. Peter Sandman, a risk communication expert, has pointed out that there is low correlation between the technical seriousness of a risk (for example, how many people die from the risk) and its cultural seriousness (for example, how many people the risk upsets and how badly it upsets them). In research studies, the correlation hovers around 0.2, accounting for a tiny four percent of the variance. This often results in two problems: (1) risks that are likely to harm people do not upset them so they fail to take appropriate precautions, and (2) risks that are not likely to harm people do nonetheless still upset them so they take unnecessary precautions.

Table 1: Characteristics of Risks That Influence People's Perception of the Risks

Risk Characteristics That Prompt People to Be More Accepting and Less Fearsome of the Risk	Risk Characteristics That Prompt People to Be Less Accepting and More Fearsome of the Risk
Voluntary	Coerced/Imposed
Has clear benefits	Has little or no benefit
Under an individual's control	Controlled by others
Fairly distributed	Unfairly distributed
Part of an open, transparent, and responsive risk management process	Part of a secretive, unresponsive process

Natural	Manmade or industrial in origin
Statistical and diffused over time and space	Catastrophic
Generated by trustworthy, honest, and concerned individuals or organizations	Generated by untrustworthy, dishonest, or unconcerned individuals or organizations
Affect adults	Affect children
Familiar	Unfamiliar or exotic

Many of the obstacles to effective risk communication derive from the complexity, incompleteness, and uncertainty of data. In addressing uncertainty, the following guidelines can help:

- Acknowledge – do not hide – uncertainty.
- Explain that risks are often hard to assess and estimate.
- Explain how the risk estimates were obtained and by whom.
- Announce problems and share risk information promptly, with appropriate reservations about uncertainty.
- Tell people that what you believe either (a) is certain; (b) is nearly certain; (c) is not known; (d) may never be known; (e) is likely; (f) is unlikely; or (g) is highly improbable; and also tell them (h) what can be done to reduce uncertainty.
- Tell people that what you believe now may turn out to be wrong later.

One of the most important tools for preparing clear and effective risk communication messages is the "message map" (see Table 2, below). A message map contains detailed, hierarchically organized information designed to respond to anticipated questions or concerns. It is a visual aid that provides, at a glance, the messages to be delivered. Message maps allow risk communicators to develop messages in advance. Once developed, messages can be tested through focus groups and other methods. As an example, Table 2 contains one of 65 message maps developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for avian influenza and pandemic influenza (see www.pandemicflu.gov for all 65 maps).

Table 2: Pre-Event Risk Communication Message Map for Pandemic Influenza

Stakeholder: Public and Media		
Question or Concern: How is pandemic influenza different from seasonal flu?		
Key Message 1:	**Key Message 2:**	**Key Message 3:**
Pandemic influenza is caused by an influenza virus that is new to people.	**The timing of an influenza pandemic is difficult to predict.**	**An influenza pandemic is likely to be more severe than seasonal flu.**
Supporting Fact 1-1:	**Supporting Fact 2-1:**	**Supporting Fact 3-1:**
Seasonal flu is caused by viruses that are already among people.	Seasonal flu occurs every year, usually during winter.	Pandemic influenza is likely to affect more people than seasonal flu.
Supporting Fact 1-2:	**Supporting Fact 2-2:**	**Supporting Fact 3-2:**
Pandemic influenza may begin with an existing influenza virus that has changed.	Pandemic influenza has happened about 30 times in recorded history.	Pandemic influenza could severely affect a broader set of the population, including young adults.
Supporting Fact 1-3:	**Supporting Fact 2-3:**	**Supporting Fact 3-3:**
Fewer people would be immune to a new influenza virus.	An influenza pandemic could last longer than the typical flu season.	A severe pandemic could change daily life for a time, including limitations on travel and public gatherings.

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Other technical briefs can be found at: www.maqweb.org/techbriefs/

THE MOST FREQUENTLY 300 PLUS ASKED QUESTIONS RELATED TO ACTIVE SHOOTER INCIDENT

Date:
February 17, 2019

Author:
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1.	How many people were killed at the site of the shooting?*
2.	How many people were wounded or injured?*?
3.	Who are among the dead?*
4.	Do you expect additional deaths?
5.	Where have the dead been taken?
6.	What is the condition of the injured?
7.	How many people are in critical condition?
8.	Where have the injured been taken?
9.	How many security personnel have been injured?
10.	How many security personnel have been killed?
11.	Do you believe there are any injured or wounded persons who have not been found?
12.	Did the shooter kill or injure anyone at a site other than where the shooting occurred?
13.	Can you give use any details on the condition of the wounded and injured?
14.	Where have the wounded and injured been taken?
15.	What hospitals are being used?
16.	How many shots were fired at individuals?
17.	How many people escaped from being killed or injured?
18.	Were any of those killed or injured children?
19.	Were any of those killed or injured pregnant women?
20.	Did anyone shoot back at the shooter?
21.	Did any of the victims have guns on them?
22.	How did people escape?
23.	Did any of those who escaped have guns?
24.	Where did people at the location hide?
25.	How long did people hide?
26.	How did people hide?
27.	What did people at the location do to protect themselves?
28.	How many people were hurt in the process of escaping?
29.	Did any of those who escaped or hid know the shooter?

Biographical Sketch

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Dr. Vincent Covello is a nationally and internationally recognized trainer, researcher, consultant, and expert in risk, crisis, and high concern communications He has conducted workshops and consulted for several thousand organizations. Dr. Covello's recent assignments include trainings, workshops, and consultations related to communications about transportation accidents, chemical spills, vaccine safety, hospital emergencies, active shooter incidents, occupational health and safety, consumer products, waste disposal, hazardous waste, air quality, water contamination, terrorist bombings, opioid addiction, operational disruptions, fires, hurricanes, earthquakes, radiological accidents, pandemic influenza, Ebola, Zika, cybersecurity, and climate change.

Over the past thirty-five years, Dr. Covello has held positions in academia and government. Prior to establishing the Center for Risk Communication, he was Associate Professor of Environmental Sciences and Clinical Medicine at Columbia University. Dr. Covello also serves as a senior advisor to the World Health Organization, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Defense. He has received numerous awards for his work, including the Medal for Excellence awarded by National Council on Radiation Protection.

Dr. Covello serves on the editorial board of several journals and is the Past President of the Society for Risk Analysis, a professional association with several thousand members. Dr. Covello received his doctorate from Columbia University in 1976 and his B.A. with honors and M.A. from Cambridge University in Great Britain. He has authored or edited more than 25 books and over 150 published scientific articles on risk and crisis communications. One of his most popular books is titled: *"Effective Media Communication During Public Health Emergencies: A World Health Organization Handbook."*

Table XXX: Eight Factors in an Effective Apology

I.   Primary Factors
1.   Admits to the mistake, harm, or offence
2.   Accepts ownership and responsibility
3.   Apologizes
4.   Shows authentic and sincere empathy
5.   Promises a future that won't repeat the past

Additional Factors
6.   Provides evidence of regret, remorse, sorrow, penitence (e.g., community service)
7.   Is timely (a too late apology loses power, effectiveness, and impact)
8.   Gives power to the offended party

High Concern, Risk, and Crisis Communication:
Findings from Neuroscience and the Behavioral Sciences

Executive Summary

Date: May 2, 2016
Source: Dr. Vincent T. Covello, Director, Center for Risk Communication, New York City

When people are fearful, stressed or upset, they typically:

1. ...want to "*know that you care before they care what you know.*"
- o Caring, empathy, and listening typically account for as much as 50% of trust determination.
- o Trust is often established in the first 9-30 seconds.
- o Once lost, trust is difficult to regain.

2. ...have difficulty *hearing*, *understanding*, and *remembering* information.
- o "*Mental noise*" can reduce our ability to process information by up to 80%.
- o 95% of high concern questions can be anticipated and prepared for in advance.

3. ...receive information best when delivered in *small digestible chunks/bytes.*

- o Message chunks/bites contain a maximum of 27 words; can be delivered in

  9 seconds or less; are supported by 3-5 facts; are repeated 3 times.

4. ...are more likely to recall information they hear *first and last.*
5. ...process information at *four grades below their educational level.*
6. ...**focus *more on negative information* than positive.**
- o Negative statements need to be balanced by three to four positive or constructive ones.
- o Avoid absolutes ("no, not, never, none, always, every, all, etc.").
- o Avoid words with high negative imagery (they typically go to the visual part of the brain for processing and "stick").

7. ...focus *more on perceptions* than on facts or data.
- o 95% of fears and concerns are driven by perception factors such as trust, benefits, control, and fairness.
- o Less than 5% of fears and concerns are driven by facts.

8. ...actively look for *visual information* to support verbal messages
- o People typically give greater weight to non-verbal cues than verbal information in determining trust and credibility.
- o People typically assign a negative interpretation to non-verbal cues.
- o As much as one-third of high concern information is processed in the lizard part of the brain, which largely processes visual information.

Message Map

Stakeholder Question or Concern:

Key Message	**Key Message**	**Key Message**

Support-ing Info. 1.1		**Support-ing Info. 2.1**		**Support-ing Info. 3.1**	
Support-ing Info.. 1.2		**Support-ing Info. 2.2**		**Support-ing Info. 3.2**	
Support-ing Info. 1.3		**Support-ing Info. 2.3**		**Support-ing Info. 3.3**	

PERIODIC TABLE FOR HIGH CONCERN COMMUNICATION

INSTITUTE for HIGH CONCERN COMMUNICATION

Use these templates for high concern, risk, crisis, and change management situations

Basic Templates — Key Templates — Advanced Templates

R3 (Rule of 3)
Use when responding to any high stress or emotionally charged question.

Recommendation: Provide no more than three messages, ideas, or points at a time.

IDK (I Don't Know)
Use when you don't know, can't answer, or aren't the best source.
Steps:
• Repeat the question (without negatives)
• Say "My ability to answer is limited by…;" or "I don't know"
• Say why you can't answer
• Provide a follow up with a deadline
• Bridge to what you can say

CCO (Compassion, Conviction, Optimism) ✓
Use when asked a question with high emotion.

Steps:
• Compassion (Caring, Empathy, Listening)
• Conviction
• Optimism
Example: (1) "I am very sorry to hear about…; (2) I'm confident that…; (3) In the future, I believe that…"

ALE (Authority, Logic, Emotion)
Use to encourage appropriate attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors.

• (A)uthority Message: Appeal to authority-those perceived as high in credibility
• (L)ogic Message: Appeal to logic (if x, then y).
• (E)motion Message: Appeal to an emotion (anger, fear, joy, empathy, surprise, grief, hope, etc).

KDG (Know, Do, Go)
Use to give upset people a greater sense of control.

• (K)now Message: Share what is most important for people to know.
• (D)o Message: Share what is most important for people to do.
• (G)o Message: Share where people should go for credible information.

P/R (Primacy/Recency)
Use when responding to any high stress or emotionally charged question.

Recommendation: Provide the most important items or points first and last.

FA (False Allegation)
Use when responding to a hostile question, false allegation, or criticism.
Steps:
• Repeat/paraphrase question without repeating the negative; repeat underlying value or concern, or use more neutral language
• Indicate the issue is important
• Indicate what you have done, are doing, or will do to address the issue

27/9/3 (27 Words, 9 Seconds, 3 Messages) ✓
Use when responding to any high stress or emotionally charged question.

Recommendation: Be brief and concise in your first response; no more than 27 words, 9 seconds, 3 messages.

TBC (Trust, Benefit, Control)
Use when responding to questions or concerns indicating high perceived risks or outrage.

• (T)rust Message: Listening to messages communicating listening, caring, or transparency.
• (B)enefit Message: Messages communicating benefits to the individual, org, or society.
• (C)ontrol Message: Messages that give people things to do or give them a sense of control.

KDD (Know, Do, Do)
Use to give upset people a greater sense of control.

• (K)now Message: Share what is most important for people to know.
• (D)o Message: Share what you are doing to address the concern.
• (D)o Message: Share what people can do to address the concern.

G/WI (Guarantee/What If)
Used when asked a "what if" question or to guarantee an event or outcome.

Steps:
• Indicate that the question is about the future
• Indicate that the past and the present help predict the future
• Bridge to "what is": known facts, processes or actions

AGL-4 (Average Grade Level Minus Four)
Use when responding to any high stress or emotionally charged question.

Steps: Provide information at four or more grade levels below the average grade level of the audience.

IN=3P (One Negative Equals Three Positives) ✓
Use when breaking bad news or stating a negative.

Recommendation: Balance one bad news or negative message with at least three or more positive, constructive, or solution-oriented messages.

CAP (Caring, Action, Perspective)
Use to give upset people a greater sense of control.

• (C)aring Message: Communicates listening, caring, empathy, and compassion.
• (A)ction Message: Actions you are taking to address the concern.
• (P)erspective Message: Helps put the concern in perspective.

VCD (Voice, Choice, Do)
Use to give upset people a greater sense of control.

• (V)oice Message: Messages communicating listening, dialogue, or participation.
• (C)hoice Message: Messages communicating options, alternatives, or available choices.
• (D)o Message: Messages that give people things to do, increase feelings of hope, etc.

AAF (Acknowledge, Action, Follow-up)
Steps:
• (A)cknowledge Uncertainty: Identify knowledge gaps and challenges
• (A)ction: State actions you have taken, are taking or will take to address the issue
• (F)ollow-up: Provide information on where people can obtain timely and credible information

Y/N (Yes/No Template)
Use when asked a yes/no question that cannot be answered yes or no.
Steps:
• Indicate you have been asked yes/no question
• Indicate it would be difficult to answer the question yes or no
• Indicate why it would be difficult to answer the question yes or no
• Respond to the underlying concern

KDK (Know/Don't Know)
Use when there is high uncertainty.

Steps:
• State what you know
• State what you don't know
• State what you are doing to achieve greater certainty or knowledge

C/S (Caring/Sharing)
Use when responding to a question or statement containing incorrect information.

• (C)aring Message: State what you and the person holding incorrect information have in common.
• (S)haring Message (1): Invite person holding incorrect information to share their information w/ you.
• (S)haring Message (2): Share the correct information again.

Reference
INSTITUTE for HIGH CONCERN COMMUNICATION