




COMMUNICATION AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

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PART 5 – 6 : COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIES (CUTLIP AND WHO)

- ▶ In these 2 lessons, we're going to analyze how communication should be done in the proper way, and how an international organization as WHO is doing it (and teaching how to do)



Communication (from Latin "communicare", meaning "to share") is the act of conveying meanings from one entity or group to another by mutually understood signs, symbols, and semiotic rules. The channel of communication can be visual, auditory, tactile/haptic (e.g. Braille or other physical means), olfactory, electromagnetic, or biochemical.

Human communication is usually divided into two parts:



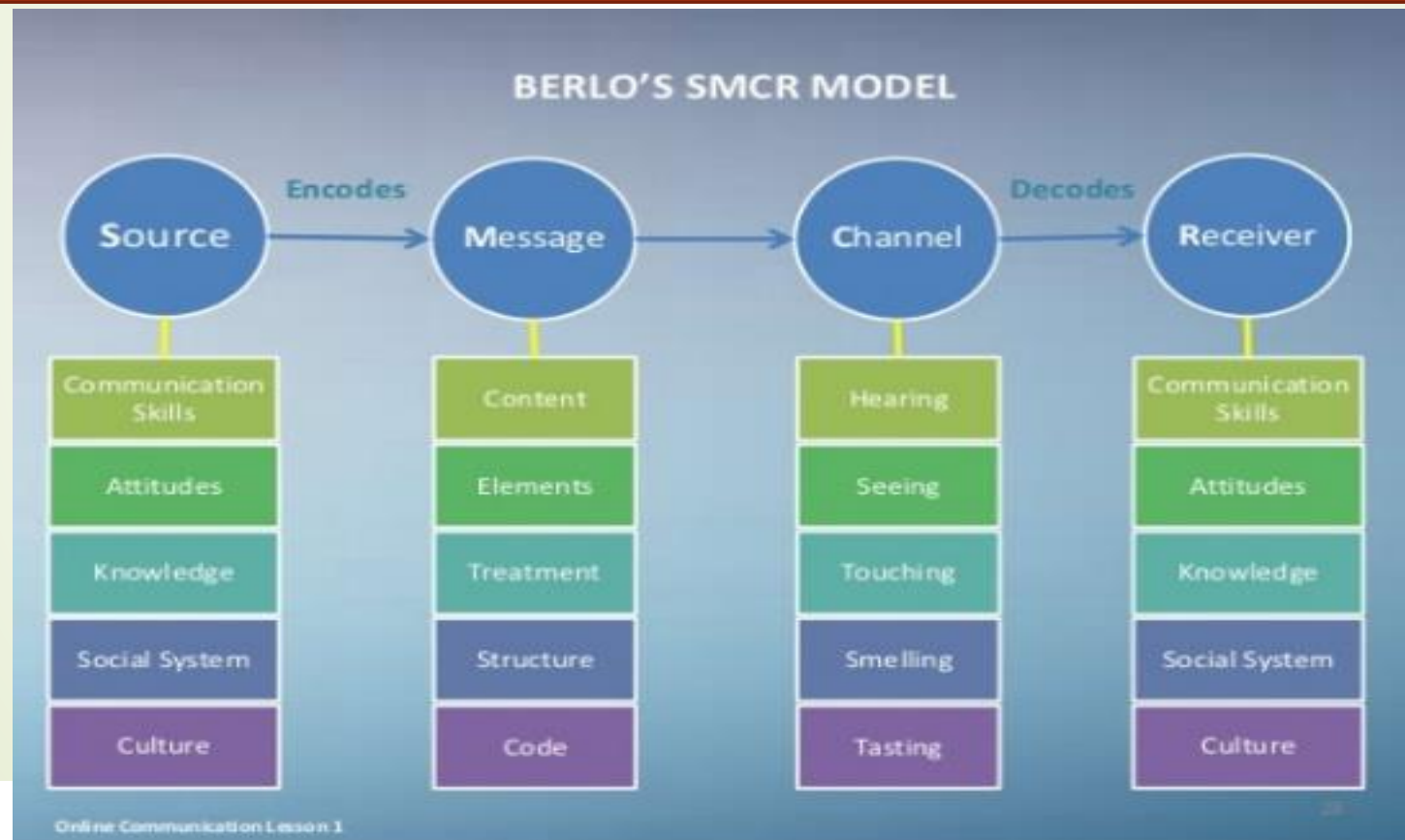
VERBAL
communication

NONVERBAL
communication

Communication is thus a process by which meaning is assigned and conveyed to create shared understanding. This process requires a vast repertoire of skills in interpersonal processing, listening, observing, speaking, questioning, analyzing, gestures, and evaluating.



There are many “models” used to explain how communication works, but for our purposes I will analyze only one of those: the “Berlo Model”.





NOISE

- Environmental noise
- Physiological-impairment noise
- Syntactical noise
- Organizational noise
- Cultural noise
- Psychological noise

SOCIAL LEVERS (SUM OF BIASES)

- Information Cascade
- Conformistic Cascade
- Group Polarization
- Prejudices
- Pre-existing beliefs and confidence
- Emotions

CONSPIRACY THEORIES AND FAKE NEWS



FIRSTDRAFT

7 TYPES OF MIS- AND DISINFORMATION



SATIRE OR PARODY

No intention to cause harm but has potential to fool



MISLEADING CONTENT

Misleading use of information to frame an issue or individual



IMPOSTER CONTENT

When genuine sources are impersonated



FABRICATED CONTENT

New content is 100% false, designed to deceive and do harm



FALSE CONNECTION

When headlines, visuals or captions don't support the content



FALSE CONTEXT

When genuine content is shared with false contextual information










MANIPULATED CONTENT

When genuine information or imagery is manipulated to deceive

Also WHO, with the words of its president Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus speaks about “Infodemic” referring to the storm of news (true and fake) that are present on the web and warns the governments to fight it with any necessary mean.

CONSPIRACY THEORIES AND FAKE NEWS



FIRSTDRAFT		MISINFORMATION MATRIX					
	 SATIRE OR PARODY	 FALSE CONNECTION	 MISLEADING CONTENT	 FALSE CONTEXT	 IMPOSTER CONTENT	 MANIPULATED CONTENT	 FABRICATED CONTENT
POOR JOURNALISM		✓	✓	✓			
TO PARODY	✓				✓		✓
TO PROVOKE OR TO 'PUNK'					✓	✓	✓
PASSION				✓			
PARTISANSHIP			✓	✓			
PROFIT		✓			✓		✓
POLITICAL INFLUENCE			✓	✓		✓	✓
PROPAGANDA			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Italian unofficial communication (especially social networks) during the COVID19 lockdown period has been submerged by a huge quantity of fake news and conspiracies. In fact, it was the first “Infodemic” we had to face.

«CUTLIP'S SEVEN C'S» OF COMMUNICATION



We're going to analyze the famous «7 C» first listed by Prof. Scott Cutlip in his book «Effective Public Relations» in 1953 (now at its 11° edition, 2012)

PHILOSOPHY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Cutlip issued the call to study:
"Public relations strategies and tactics are increasingly used as weapons of power in our no-holds-barred political, economic, and cause competition in the public opinion marketplace, and thus deserve more scholarly scrutiny than they have had."
- Cutlip expressed the opinion that public relations is a "vital cog in the nation's information system" in the prologue to his book "The Unseen Power".
- He describes the public system as consisting of "government – federal, state, and local, political parties, pressure groups, non-profit organizations, public relations personnel, and the channels of communication, manned by reporters, editors, and gatekeepers".
- He noted that since citizens depend on this system, **practitioners have a social responsibility** while they skillfully advocate on behalf of clients.
- At best, a public relations counselor may inform a CEO or board of directors of a client firm of necessities when contending with negative public opinion. For instance, advice may avoid a loss of market share and thus prove valuable. More generally, public relations practitioners enrich public dialogue and consolidate the frayed threads of discord.
- Cutlip conceded that **practice may contribute to congestion and corrosion of communication channels.**
- As practitioners of the craft, Cutlip listed "propagandist, press agent, public information officer, public relations or public affairs official, political campaign specialist, lobbyist". The occupations operate under conditions of free speech. In a democracy, it is the informed votes of citizens that rights a listing ship of state, according to Milton. Cutlip also cited Hugo Black of the U. S. Supreme Court re-affirming **the free speech context of practitioners** in 1961.



CUTLIP'S 7 "C" OF COMMUNICATION

- Completeness
- Conciseness
- Consideration
- Concreteness
- Courtesy
- Clarity
- Correctness

(Cutlip et al., 2009)



COMPLETENESS

To be effective, the communication must be complete - that is, contain all the information necessary for the recipient to evaluate an offer / situation or to solve a problem. Communicating completely allows you to reach your goals more quickly, as the recipient already has all the data available to make his or her decisions. This improves the transparency of the message and reduces the amount of questions and doubts in the recipient.

(Cutlip et al., 2009)



CONCISENESS

A short message and a concise message are not the same thing. Being concise means communicating only information relevant to the content of the message. Even a short message can be incomplete or too flowery.

Concision allows both the issuer and the recipient to focus only on essential information. It reduces the risk of distractions and promotes the immediacy of communication.

(Cutlip et al., 2009)



CONSIDERATION

To communicate effectively, the issuer must take into account the recipient's point of view, his needs and his mood. By modulating the communication on the basis of the other, the issuer can transmit information and concepts more effectively, since it will be able to use arguments and examples closer to the recipient's experience. And, consequently, more easily assimilated and understood.

(Cutlip et al., 2009)



CONCRETENESS

Effective communication is concrete, that is, it is based on data and facts to support the contents of the message. Communicating in a concrete way also means answering questions promptly - or developing your own arguments starting from the specific case under examination rather than from theories and general cases. Being concrete allows the recipient to understand the message more deeply.

(Cutlip et al., 2009)



COURTESY

Communicating politely, without attacking the interlocutor and without wanting to force a response, improves the climate of communication and predisposes the sender and receiver to a positive and constructive conversation. Courtesy in communication also implies respect for the other's values and culture, as well as the use of a linguistic register suitable for the target audience.

(Cutlip et al., 2009)



CLARITY

One of the characteristics of effective communication is clarity, or the specificity of the message. Communicating clearly means focusing on one goal, thus emphasizing its importance and making it easier for the recipient to assimilate the message. Another important element for the clarity of the message is the use of appropriate terminology, which reduces the possibility of confusion and the ambiguity of the message.

(Cutlip et al., 2009)



CORRECTNESS

To be effective, finally, communication must be carried out correctly. The absence of grammatical or syntactic errors increases the impact of the message, also positively affecting the impression that the recipient gets of the issuer during communication. By communicating correctly, the issuer acquires credibility and, consequently, the credibility of the message it wants to convey increases.

(Cutlip et al., 2009)



RESUME

Any message, for any purpose, must be:

- TRUE
- PRECISE
- CONCISE
- CLEAR
- EMPHATIC

WHO AND COMMUNICATION



WHO principles for effective communications

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WHO principles for effective communications

This Framework supports the broad range of communication activities occurring across all parts and levels of WHO.

It is organized according to six principles to ensure WHO communications are:

- Accessible to decisions-makers
- Actionable by decisions-makers
- Credible and trusted as perceived by decisions-makers
- Relevant to decisions-makers
- Timely to enable decision-making
- Understandable to decision-makers

WHO strives at all times to ensure these principles are at the core of its communication activities and are reflected in the full range of materials and activities: social media messages; web-based fact sheets, feature stories, commentaries, infographics, Q&As; intranet content for WHO staff; press conferences, news releases and media advisories; videos; visibility and outreach activities etc.

By integrating the principles of this framework into all WHO communications, we will stimulate innovation toward improved health outcomes, constantly challenging ourselves to identify better and more efficient ways to engage key audiences in communication and interaction.

Contact us

[Questions about the Framework?](#)

[Contact the communications team](#)





WHO PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

It is organized according to six principles to ensure WHO communications are:

- Accessible to decisions-makers
- Actionable by decisions-makers
- Credible and trusted as perceived by decisions-makers
- Relevant to decisions-makers
- Timely to enable decision-making
- Understandable to decision-makers



WHO PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

WHY?

Given the nature of the WHO as a supranational organism, it is clear that their target of choice are the decision-makers of the various countries of the world.

This is because the nature of the WHO allows it to express only "guidelines" and not to be able to interfere of any kind on any country, which therefore maintains its decision-making sovereignty.



WHO COMMUNICATION CHANGES IN CASE OF AN OUTBREAK

WHY?

Effective risk communication is an essential element of outbreak management. When the public is at risk of a real or potential health threat, treatment options may be limited, direct interventions may take time to organize and resources may be few.

Communicating advice and guidance, therefore, often stands as the most important public health tool in managing a risk.

Pro-active communication encourages the public to adopt protective behaviors, facilitates heightened disease surveillance, reduces confusion and allows for a better use of resources - all of which are necessary for an effective response.

(Source: <https://www.who.int/ihr/elibrary/WHOOutbreakCommsPlanngGuide.pdf?ua=1>)

WHO AND «OUTBREAKS» COMMUNICATION

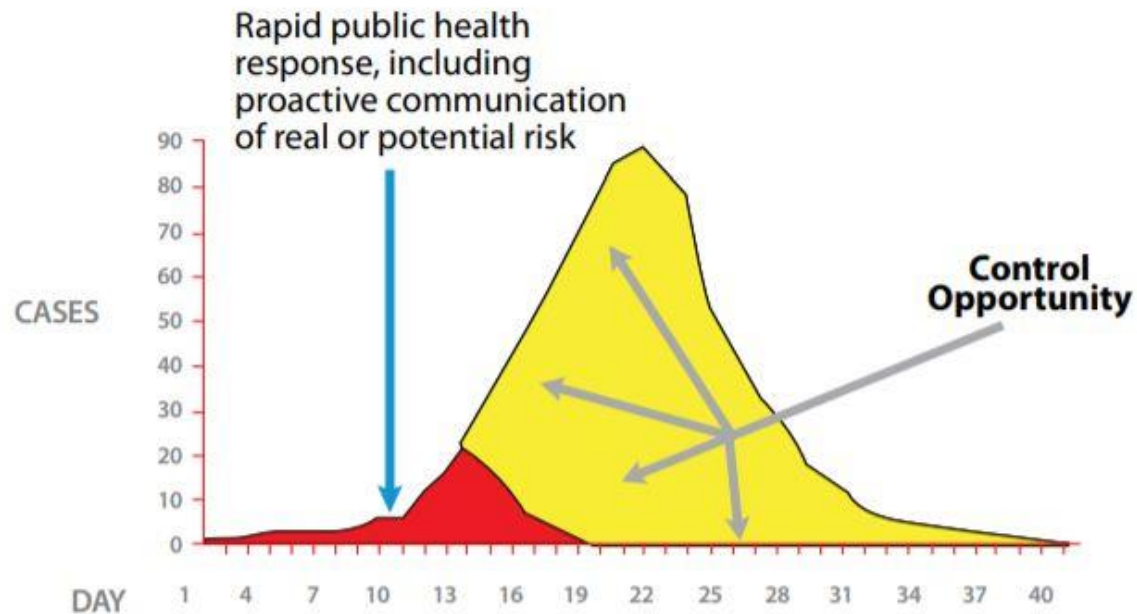


FIGURE 1



World Health
Organization

Proactive Communication in Infection Control



Rapid public health response, until day 10th -12th, dramatically reduces risk exposition and gives a huge control opportunity of the outbreak



World Health Organization Outbreak Communication Planning Guide

2008 Edition



The handbook, free
downloadable, has its last
update on 2008 and represents
an excellent tool for planning

(you will find it in the folder together with all my teaching
materials)

WHO AND «OUTBREAKS» COMMUNICATION



Step 1: Assessment

Conduct an assessment of existing public communication capacity and existing research of community understanding, including demographics, literacy levels, language spoken as well as socio-economic and cultural backgrounds

Step 2: Coordination

Identify likely public communication partners and develop a communication coordination mechanism

Step 3: Transparency

Put in place a national level policy or guideline on the public announcement and ongoing release of information in the event of a verified or suspected infectious disease risk

Step 4: Listening during outbreaks

Develop a system for ongoing information gathering during an outbreak about public knowledge, attitudes and behaviors related to infectious disease risks, interventions and involved organizations

Step 5: Communication Evaluation

Ensure there is an evaluation mechanism to identify public communication strengths and weaknesses during and following infectious disease events

Step 6: Constructing an Emergency Communication Plan

Capturing the previous steps, develop a written outbreak or emergency communication plan

Step 7: Training

Ensure readiness by establishing a risk communications training program, including simulations and exercises to test the emergency public communication plan and its components

They found 7 steps to do

Of course, some of these steps should better be done “before” a real outbreak.

It is strictly time-related !!



COMMUNICATION FOR BEHAVIOURAL IMPACT (COMBI)

A toolkit for behavioural
and social communication
in outbreak response

The handbook, free
downloadable, was published
in 2012

It gives many tools for
behavioural and social
communication response
during an outbreak

(you will find it in the folder together with all my teaching
materials)



We will going to analyze deeply the COMBI system in the next lesson (n° 7) because it will give a clear view of WHAT to do and HOW to do.



THANKS FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION !