Better Engaging Communities: Moving Beyond Cardinal Rules

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Roadmap

• Cardinal Rules and Best Practices

• Why Does Context Matter?

• Stakeholder Engagement and Context

• Toward a New Model

• Case Studies
Cardinal Rules and Best Practices

1) Accept/involve the public as a legitimate partner
2) Plan carefully and evaluate your efforts
3) Listen to the public's specific concerns
4) Be honest, frank, and open
5) Coordinate/collaborate with other credible sources
6) Meet the needs of the media
7) Speak clearly and with compassion

(Covello and Allen, 1988)
Available Information, Choices, Risks, and Risk Perceptions Are Often Place-Based

- Contaminants
- Exposure pathways
- Socioeconomic/demographic factors
Good Decision-making Requires Both Evidence and Sensemaking

- Retrospective
  - Capacity
  - Commitment
  - Expectations
- Collective
Paducah Superfund Communication Study

• What happens to relationships among stakeholders when cardinal rules guide risk communication practices for decades?

• What are the implications for improving agency risk communication approaches?
Why Paducah?

- Kentucky’s largest Superfund site
- Competing risks
- Access

Map Courtesy: University of Kentucky Superfund Research Program
Methodology: Datasets

- **Paducah Sun Articles** (2005)
- Property Acquisition Study
- Public Comments
- Stakeholder Focus Groups
- Local Blogs

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**DOE plant site gets new cleanup firm**

By Joe Walker
Sun Business Editor
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After two years of procurement delays, the Department of Energy has awarded a $19.6 million contract to a firm founded by Shaw Environmental and Infrastructure and Portage Environmental to do cleanup work at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant.

The contract, to Paducah Remediation Services LLC, will run through Sept. 30, 2009. Following a transition period, the company will replace longstanding cleanup contractor Bechtel Jacobs, whose contract expires April 20. DOE said Tuesday.

Bechtel Jacobs employs 157 people out of its Kevil offices and oversees another 400 subcontract workers with various cleanup firms. It was not immediately clear if all the Bechtel Jacobs workers will move to Paducah Remediation Services, although that largely was the case when Bechtel Jacobs took over for Lockheed Martin Energy Systems in 1998.

Repeated attempts to reach senior executives of Shaw, based in Baton Rouge, La., and Portage, based in Espanola, N.M., were unsuccessful Tuesday.

Portage's Web site says Michael Spry, majority owner and president, is a Mississippi Band member of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. He grew up on the White Earth Indian Reservation in northern Minnesota.

Portage, classified as a small, disadvantaged business, is the managing partner of the joint venture with Shaw, according to DOE.

Both Portage and Shaw have extensive cleanup experience, notably with closed DOE plants such as in Hanford, Wash., and Fernald, Ohio. Shaw, a subsidiary of Shaw Group, has more than $1 billion in annual business.

DOE announced two years ago that Bechtel Jacobs would be replaced with a smaller firm to try to be more cost-efficient. After repeated delays, North Wind Paducah Cleanup Co. was named the successor last January, and a separate firm was named to head cleanup work at the closed uranium enrichment plant in Piketon, Ohio.

But protests came from other holders, including Portage and Shaw, forcing DOE to rejoin Bechtel Jac...
Methodology: Analyses

- Textual
- Constant Comparative
- Narrative Inquiry
- Crystallization
## Results

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The Government</th>
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<th>Secrecy Manipulation Deception</th>
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<td>Contested Membership</td>
<td>Late Info Limits # &amp; Diversity of Informed Stakeholders</td>
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<td>Us/Them Rhetorical Binaries</td>
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<td>Confrontation, Lack of Trust</td>
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Implications: Cardinal Rule Enhancements

1) Accept and involve other site stakeholders as legitimate partners in both the operationalization of these guidelines and the creation and evaluation of subsequent communication, education, and engagement activities.

2) Jointly plan and evaluate specific risk communication efforts with other stakeholders.

3) Listen, respond, and incorporate stakeholder-specific concerns into messages and engagement protocols.

4) Engage diverse stakeholders to develop and implement open, transparent processes that affirm honesty and multiple perspectives as central tenets for communication activities.

5) Coordinate and collaborate communication and engagement activities with relevant groups, including community-based, governmental, and media stakeholders.

6) Work with stakeholder groups, including the media, to meet information needs in appropriate, targeted ways.

7) Engage in clear, compassionate, respectful dialogue with diverse stakeholders.
Our Model

- Evaluate Messages/Protocols
- Disseminate Messages/Implement Protocols
- Adapt Messages/Engagement Protocols
- Test Messages/Engagement Protocols
- Design Messages/Engagement Protocols
- Prioritize Information Needs
- Information Needs Assessment

Stakeholders
How Can Engagement Privilege Support Context-Driven Environmental Decisions?

Engaging stakeholders directly through interviews, focus groups, and projective techniques identify and address knowledge gaps to support empowered decision-making by:

- Identifying Stakeholder Groups and Information Needs
- Recognizing **Convergent** and Divergent Values and Information Preferences
- Developing Targeted, Stakeholder-Appropriate Informational and Educational Materials
Case Study 1:
Engagement at a Superfund Site

What We DID

• Semi-structured interviews
• Stakeholder identification and segmentation
• Empanelled community research process input group
• Developed future use visualizations
• Focus groups
• Community meetings
• Online information portal
Case Study 1: Engagement at a Superfund Site

What We FOUND: Stakeholder Groups

- Residents Near the Site
- Regulatory Agencies
- Plant Employees
- EH Advocates
- Healthcare Providers
- Education (Postsecondary)
- Media
- Religious Community
- Wildlife/Recreation
- Tourism
- City Government
- Border County Leadership
- PRP and Subcontractors
- Educators
- Site Citizens Advisory Board
Case Study 1: Engagement at a Superfund Site

What We FOUND: Information Needs

• What chemicals are “out there”?
• What do the chemicals do to health?
• How much groundwater contamination is there?
• How are “they” monitoring the waste?
• Could an earthquake disturb the waste?
• What keeps contamination from moving further south?
• Is a wind farm an option for the site after it’s cleaned up?
• How does the site affect my cancer risk?
In Context: Stakeholder Engagement in Post-Crisis Preparedness Planning

What We DID

- Proxy case studies of crisis communication best practices
- Technical expert interviews
- Empanelled advisory group
- Stakeholder segmentation
- Developed decision tree and radio “news” triggers
- Focus groups
Case Study 2: Engagement in Preparedness Planning

What We FOUND: Stakeholder Groups

• Promotoras/Community Health Workers
• African Americans
• Millennials (College Students)
• Educators
• Public Health Professionals
• Healthcare Providers
• Elderly men
• New Immigrants
Case Study 2: Engagement in Preparedness Planning

What We FOUND: Information Needs

• What are the “national drinking water standards”?
• How is the water tested, and by whom?
• If water isn’t safe for the pregnant, elderly, and children to drink, how can it be safe for me to drink?
• What symptoms should I look for?
• How do I clean my sink after I flush my pipes? My water heater?
• Why should I believe that clear-looking water is dirty?
Case Study 3: Engagement in Natural Resources Planning

What We DID

• Preliminary stakeholder identification
• Listening tour
• Focus groups
• Website
• Community meetings
• Community scoring
Case Study 3: Engagement in Natural Resources Planning

What We FOUND: Stakeholder Groups

- Government/utilities/health departments/universities
- Farmers and agricultural organizations
- Environmental groups
- Preservation and wildlife groups
- Economic development, local businesses, builders
- Recreational organizations and golf courses
- Residents and neighborhood associations
Case Study 3: Engagement in Natural Resources Planning

What We FOUND: Information Needs

• What do we know about the specific impacts of various activities on nutrient load, including wastewater, agricultural, and urban run-off contributions?

• What policy strategies are available for improving water management?

• What would the consequences be for economic development? For environmental preservation?
In Conclusion

• Stakeholder engagement activities identify and address critical context-specific information gaps

• Varied stakeholder groups differ in information needs, relevant experiences, and preferred information sources and channels

• Stakeholder engagement strategies foreground context, helping scientists identify stakeholder-specific needs and preferences toward the development of appropriate, targeted informational and educational materials to support evidence-based environmental decisions
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- Kentucky Transportation Center
For More Information

University of Kentucky Superfund Research Center (UK-SRC)
www.uky.edu/Research/Superfund

UK-SRC Research Translation Core
http://www.uky.edu/Research/Superfund/Cores/ResearchTranslation.htm

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