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defining your audiences and communication channels before the fire

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COMMUNICATIONS

BUILDING COLLABORATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

PRE-FIRE WORK

- Map your audiences, partners, and common channels or methods used to communicate recovery messages and resources (template below)
- Analyze your audience reach - are you and your partners able to communicate with everyone in your area? Are there any groups that you're missing?
- Determine what channels you want to use to communicate with one another, and what communication groups would be most effective (by LRSF, for leadership group, etc.), and how they will be coordinated
- Ensure you know what type of information each of your group members needs, and when they will need it (different members of the recovery group will activate on different timelines)
- Assess risk for the communication channels you are using to coordinate internally and share information with the public - how might they be affected by fire? Do you have backup systems or plans?

DURING FIRE

- Monitor your internal communication channels and coordination - are your plans working and are you getting the information you need?
- Monitor public outreach channels for misinformation and disinformation
- Track situation to prepare for what resources will be needed and in what areas
- Identify if there are organizations in your recovery group serving the impacted area or if you need to prepare for emergent leaders and volunteers
- Prepare for different types of outreach that may be most effective for the impacted population (public meetings, door-to door outreach, etc.

TRANSITION

- Work with the Disaster Recovery Center planners and resource providers to message resource availability, location, etc.
- Repeat messaging regularly in different channels to effectively reach everyone
- Track reaction and replies to help identify unmet needs and disinformation as well as message reach and uptake

SHORT-TERM

- Communicate and coordinate around provision of resources, and communicate with LRSFs with about unmet needs
- Connect people to resources, updates, and news with accessible, easy to access information

AUDIENCE DESCRIPTION

Use this template to collect information on your audiences, how partners are connected to them, and what communication channels might be best for reaching them

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION & ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS

RESOURCE NEEDS

PARTNERS CONNECTED TO THIS AUDIENCE

What key messages might be important for this person?

What key communication channels should be used to reach this person?

WORKING WITH PEOPLE UNDER STRESS

10 TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH PEOPLE UNDER STRESS

1 Use the following format for giving information:
  1. Overview - go over the "big picture"
  2. Add detail - show how details fit into the big picture
  3. Summarize clearly and simply

2 Confirm understanding by asking what parts people get and what they don't get. Wait until they respond; don't start from the beginning again.

3 Ask people to tell you when their brains are full and can't take in any more information.

4 Use visuals, especially when providing choices. Don't expect people to hold a verbally transmitted idea in their memories while comparing to another verbally described choice.

5 Limit your words and keep sentences short. Around seven words is ideal.

6 Allow time for drinks and snacks and stretches. Take care of yourself as well. Stress regulation improves when people work with someone with good stress regulation.

7 Use ample white space on printed pages

8 Use "start" and "finish" markings on pages for forms

9 Work a sample with them if they're filling out forms or applications, or show them examples of completed forms

10 Speak more slowly

Adapted from "Communication Tips for Working with People Under Stress" by Deborah Gray

ACCESSIBLE OUTREACH TOOLS

WEBSITES

Website: Guidelines for making sure your web content is accessible

Tool: Use the WAVE tool to review websites for accessibility and compliance with above guidelines

SOCIAL MEDIA

Tool: Use this handy checklist to quickly make sure your social posts are accessible: Accessible social media checklist

Blog Post: Social media etiquette for accessibility

Website: Known accessibility barriers on different social media platforms

Blog Post: Do emojis and accessibility go together?

MAPPING

Website: Four tips for creating interactive and accessible maps

Tool: Help with designing color blind friendly maps

Quick Guide: Creating accessible story maps with ESRI

Quick Guide: More tips for creating accessible maps for low-vision audiences

MEETINGS

Website: How to create accessible meetings (virtual and in person) at every step, from sending invites to sharing the recording

Website and Guide: Universal accessibility and design for online meetings

Quick Guide: 15 tips to make meetings more accessible

Quick Guide: These tips are focused on the needs of deaf and hard of hearing participants in virtual workplace meetings

Quick Guide: Accessible Information Exchange: Meeting on a Level Playing Field

Tool: Checklist for making online, in-person, and hybrid meetings accessible

Blog Post: Tips for making your meeting accessible for blind and low vision participants

Tool: A Toolkit for Planning Accessible Meetings and Events

FLYERS & INFOGRAPHICS

Tool: Checklist for Accessible Infographics and Flyers

Blog Post: ADA Standards for Accessible Design: How to be Compliant

Quick Guide: Creating Accessible Flyers: A List of "Do" and "Don't"

Website and Training Videos: Tips and guidelines for creating accessible digital content (documents, slideshows, spreadsheets, etc.)

Quick Guide: Key considerations for making data visualizations accessible

Website: Making graphs accessible for blind and low vision users

Article: How thinking about accessibility can make your data visualization better for everyone

Website: ADA requirements for effective communication

OTHER ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Website: Getting Started with Accessibility Funding

Quick Guide: Equitable Compensation for Community Engagement Guidebook

Blog Post: Advice for building childcare into meeting planning and why it matters

Training Videos: These trainings offer an introduction into legal obligations, communication, and etiquette guided by the Americans with Disabilities Act

Also consider partnering with existing services such as paratransit, elder services, meals with wheels, schools, etc. to help with transportation

SURVEYS

Quick Guide: Tips for making your surveys accessible

Website: Making Google Forms accessible