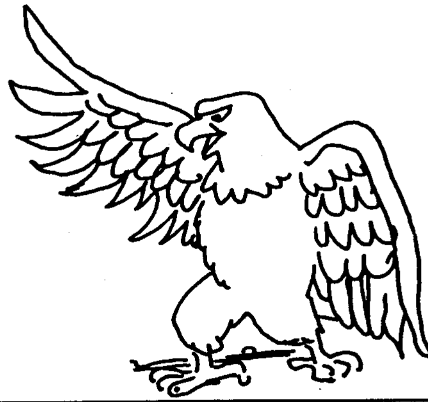
A Publication of the
National Wildfire Coordinating Group

Sponsored by
United States Department of Agriculture

United States Department of the Interior

National Association of State Foresters

Fire Communication and Education



PMS 458
NFES 2602

March 1999

Fire
Communication
and
Education

Sponsored for NWCG publication bt the Fire Prevention Working Team, March 1999

Additional copies of this publication may be ordered from:
National Interagency Fire Center,
ATTN: Great Basin Cache Supply Office,
3833 S. Development Ave., Boise Id 83705.
Order NFES #2602

Preface

This Wildfire Prevention Guide is a project of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group. This guide is one in a series designed to provide information and guidance for personnel who have interests and/or responsibilities in fire prevention.

Each guide in the series addresses an individual component of a fire prevention program. In addition to providing insight and useful information, each guide suggests implementation strategies and examples for utilizing this information.

Each Wildfire Prevention Guide has been developed by Fire Prevention Specialists and subject matter experts in the appropriate area. The goal of this series is to improve and enhance wildfire prevention programs and to facilitate the achievement of NWCG program goals.

NWCG Wildfire Prevention Guide development:

- Conducting School Programs (1996)
- Event Management (1996)
- Wildfire Prevention Marketing (1996)
- Wildfire Prevention and the Media (1998)
- Wildfire Prevention Strategies (1998)
- Effective Wildfire Prevention Patrol (1998)
- Recreation Area Fire Prevention (1999)
- Fire Communication and Education (1999)
- Fire Education Exhibits and Displays (1999)
- Industrial Operations Fire Prevention Guide (1999)

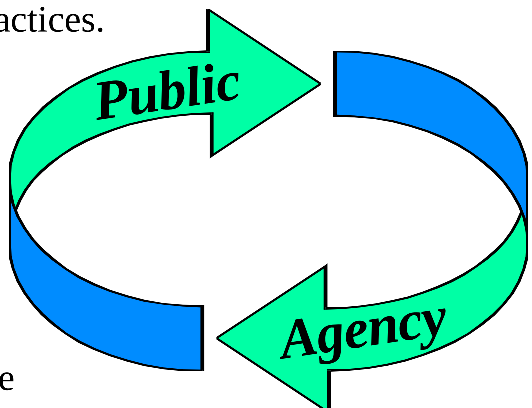
Contents

Introduction to Fire Communication and Education *1.0*

This chapter describes wildland fire communication and education, the need for fire education, the importance of communicating this subject to the public and key points about fire education activities.

Introduction to Fire Communication and Education *1.0*

Every wildland agency employee should be knowledgeable about wildland fire communication and education. When we answer a visitor's question, work with a contractor, or help a hiker locate a landmark on a map, we could be involved in the subject of how our agency manages wildland fires. Our response—whether good or bad—is often retained. Days, months, or even years from now, these persons may decide to support or oppose an agency fire management program based on the impressions they formed during that individual contact. That is why it is important that every employee understands fire education, how it relates to the ecosystem, and agency policy and practices.



At the basic level, this is nothing more than two-way communications. These communications occur every time we answer the telephone, respond to a letter or meet with a member of the public. These kinds of communication have been going on since the day the agency was formed. They are at the foundation of the agency's reputation and are our most effective tools in forming viable land management decisions and policies.

As our growing population turns increasingly to the wildlands and its many resources, our opportunities for making one-to-one contacts with the public will increase. To be successful, we must be prepared to take advantage of these opportunities.

Marketing wildland fire management has also grown to become more than random individual contacts. As the nation's population has grown, it has also become more centralized in urban areas where individuals have less opportunity to interact with agency representatives. The task of reaching these publics and providing them with accurate information and the ability to participate in the many aspects of wildland fire protection processes and policy development has become more complicated.

Fire education is aimed at changing people's behavior through awareness and knowledge. Traditional fire education fundamentals include: signs, mass media, volunteers, public education, educational programs, public contacts, school programs, fairs, parades, sports exhibits, poster contests, Smokey Bear appearances, high visibility patrols, printed materials and wildland urban interface education.

The following is a review of key points about fire communication and education activities:

- Fire education is a continuous process.
- It involves everyone.
- Even greater emphasis will be placed on it in the future.
- It must be considered in the initial planning stages of every program and proposal.
- Fire management program success will depend upon a well educated agency, public and partners.

Fire education provides an understanding of the role of fire in natural processes. It can increase credibility with customers, leading to further program successes.

Like other programs, fire education requires planning and effort to be successful. The information in this guide, along with appropriate agency policy, provides the guidance needed to plan and conduct an effective fire education program.

Notes

Goals of Fire Education 2.0

This chapter covers:

- Goals of a Fire Education Program
- Goal Implementation

Goals of Fire Education 2.0

This guide is a fire education "how to." It is designed to assist all personnel who plan and carry out fire education programs and actions and/or are responsible for their implementation.

I. GOALS OF A FIRE EDUCATION PROGRAM

A. To help the agency make better fire management decisions.

B. To better inform agency personnel and the public of fire management activities, plans and decisions.

C. To develop public understanding of fire education and participation in the planning and decision process.

D. To consider and be responsive to the values of the publics we serve and to evaluate how these publics will be affected by fire management decisions.

E. To ensure that the agency understands the needs and concerns of the public.

F. To broaden the information base upon which decisions are made regarding fire activities.

II. GOAL IMPLEMENTATION

A. Integrate fire education in planning and program implementation.

B. Use fire education to assist with:

1. Identifying and resolving wildland fire issue conflicts.

2. Assessing fire management and other program needs.

3. Planning strategies and developing work plans.

4. Gathering necessary public input and data.

5. Formulating alternatives and predicting their consequences.

6. Analyzing, evaluating and comparing trade-offs among alternatives.

C. Provide accurate and timely wildland fire information and give opportunities for the public and cooperating agencies to be involved in agency decisions involving fire management.

D. Identify the publics affected by wildland fire programs or projects and facilitate their participation in the communication process.

E. Respond effectively to public recommendations.

Notes

Planning *3.0*

This chapter covers the fundamentals of developing a fire education program. Consideration is given to:

- Steps for a Fire Education Program
- Pre-Planning
- Identification of Publics
    - Individual Analysis
    - Group Involvement Analysis
- Communication Networks
- Identification of Public Issues and Concerns

Planning *3.0*

Consider fire education as planning begins on new programs or projects. Identify points in the process where fire education efforts are required or appropriate.

Ultimately, a fire education action plan can be developed in which specific goals and objectives are identified, activities are selected, tasks are assigned and accomplishments can be measured.

I. STEPS FOR A FIRE EDUCATION PROGRAM

The following outline suggests steps to be considered when planning and executing a fire education program.

A. Pre-plan overall project and fire education needs.

B. Identify the interested and affected publics.

C. Identify communication networks.

D. Identify public issues and concerns.

E. Set realistic goals and objectives for the fire education action plan.

F. Develop a checklist of fire education strategies and alternatives.

1. Address major public issues and management concerns.

2. Select activities that meet goals and objectives.

3. Inform public of strategies and potential effects.

4. Gather public responses and comments.

G. Analyze and summarize comments.

H. Document and monitor fire education activities.

I. Assess effectiveness of the fire education process.

II. PREPLANNING

Before the fire education plan is developed, preplanning will help set the stage and formulate ideas about what will be needed.

Preplanning should define the program or project(s) and any problems. Who will be the affected publics? What are the major issues as the public sees them, as the agency sees them? What are the agency's goals and objectives for the project?

III. IDENTIFICATION OF PUBLICS

A. Although we frequently refer to "the public" as a single entity, there are any number of publics, each having its own fairly uniform viewpoint on a given issue. A public may be composed of a large organized group, a few individuals or even a single person.

One key public often overlooked is agency employees. They, too, have an interest in an issue and can contribute valuable insights and fire educational messages. Frequently, they are opinion leaders in their communities. Through their contacts, they are a valuable tool in educating publics about these issues.

When identifying those publics which may be affected or interested, some key factors to consider are:

1. Past and current involvement with the agency.

2. Adjacent landowners.

3. The presence of public or private interests in the area, (represented by such things as special use permits, contractual obligations, timber sales, mining claims and private property).

4. Involvement by certain individuals or groups in similar issues elsewhere.

5. Communications between a public known to be affected or interested.

6. Publics requiring legal notification, for example:

    a. Other federal agencies.

    b. State agencies.

    c. Local governments.

    d. Native organizations.

7. Individual and other user groups.

Having identified these publics, it will prove useful to take the time to analyze each. An analysis will help answer such questions as: "Where should we concentrate our efforts? To what extent should publics be involved? What is the most efficient way to communicate with these publics?"

This analysis will identify specific and accurate predictions about fire education needs.

B. Target Group Analysis

Target group analysis is one of the primary steps to identify interested, affected and required publics. Similarity of informational needs will help show convergence of interest on specific issues.

1. Identifying target groups and their information needs.

   a. Who are the target groups? Make a list of all individuals, groups or organizations that will be affected by the action and should be involved.

   b. What are the areas of concern? Make a list of questions that each of the target groups might ask.

      By making a check opposite each question and under the appropriate target group or groups, convergence of interest by different groups will be evident.

The following information is useful in target group analysis. Although it isn't necessary to follow a specific format, the information in the analyses should be similar.

C. Group Involvement Analysis Sheet

1. Identify what kind of involvement is needed from the different target groups identified. People prefer and need involvement in different ways. Identify each group's preferences, their information needs and how the information should be packaged. This can greatly affect communications and the resulting quality and quantity of input.

2. Some variables about people and their reactions to public involvement:

    a. Some people are more interested than others.

    b. Some people have a definite stake in the outcome of an issue.

    c. Some people are more skilled than others in communicating their ideas.

    d. Some people will listen and believe a TV program—others want to hear from a person.

    e. Some people are convinced by hard data—others, by emotion.

    f. Some people will *never* come to a meeting—some people will *always* come to a meeting.

    g. Some people like to be contacted on a one-to-one basis.

    h. Some people like to be on an ad hoc committee, study team, etc.

    i. Some people like to submit reports.

3. To get the most from fire education, these following questions should be asked:

    Group:

    a. How do you want to be involved?

    b. When do you want to be involved?

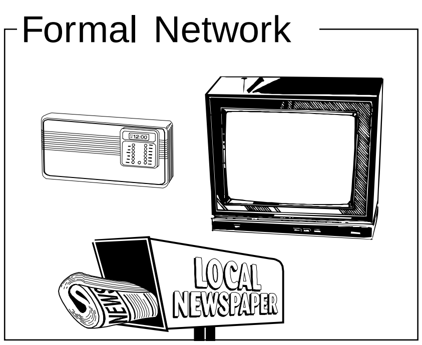
c. Why do you want to be involved?

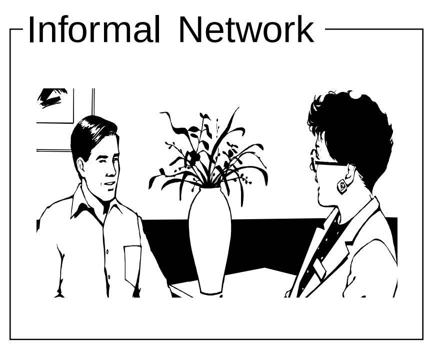
d. In what form would you like the information?

e. In what form would you like to give information?

IV. COMMUNICATION NETWORKS

People communicate with each other in a number of different ways. “Communication networks” is the term used to describe different methods by which people exchange information. Some networks are formal and established, such as internet, radio, television, newspapers or advertising flyers. In addition to these, each community maintains a number of more effective but informal communication networks. One example of such a network is the “barbed wire telegraph” that exists in many rural communities, whereby news is spread from one individual to the next by word of mouth.





These informal communication networks exist in all cultures and communities. They are dependable, effective, efficient and easy to identify. Once these communication networks are identified, use them to share information. Using communication networks can greatly increase the effectiveness of fire education efforts. The information received from these networks should be documented and used in the planning process.

People form communication networks because they share similar interests, have developed friendships, hold similar values, perform the same types of work or have identified issues where mutual efforts will enhance their position.

To identify these communication networks, be aware of who is communicating with whom on a regular and predictable basis. For example: the downtown businessmen always gather for coffee at 10 A.M. at the cafe; the ranchers from Star Valley always gather at the sale barn on Friday afternoons; the local Sierra Club chapter meets on the second Thursday of every month at 7:30 P.M. at the American Legion Hall.

Communication is two-way. Networks must be provided with pertinent information if intelligent responses are to be expected. Here is an example of information that could be provided to a network: "We've got a problem with many escaped campfires on Red Mountain. What are your suggestions to help solve the problem?"

Communication networks can be useful in fire education efforts if some basic information about them is known:

A. The persons within the network.

B. The leadership of the network (formal and informal).

C. The ways in which people within the network generally communicate with each other.

D. The locations and times when people within the network gather.

E. The natural resource interest of the network.

F. The level of involvement of members of the network in agency activities.

COMMUNICATION

The identification and use of informal communication networks should be something done routinely in the local community. However, efforts may need to be expanded to new communities or networks to meet the needs of a fire education action plan.

V. IDENTIFICATION OF PUBLIC ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Once the project and possible strategies for fire education have been viewed from the agency's standpoint, enlarge the scope of examination by taking a look at the situation from a public viewpoint. This is a vital step in the process.

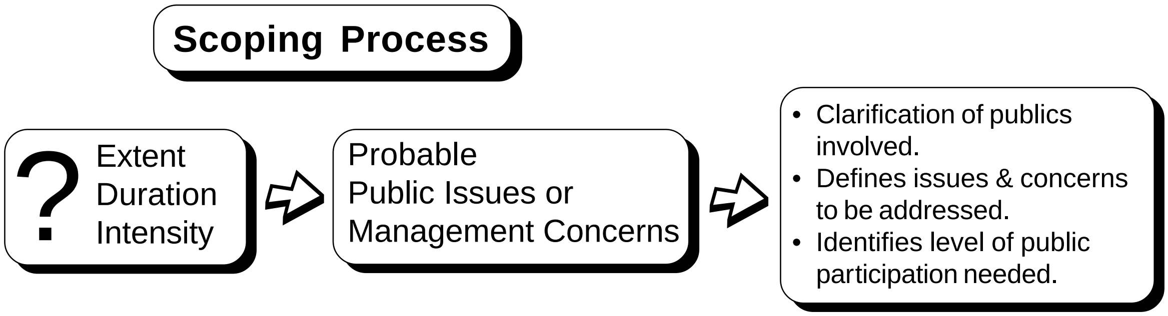
The failure to identify a significant and potential issue or concern can lead to ultimate defeat of the process. A public issue is a concern identified by individuals or groups. Management concerns are the questions or problems identified by the agency. Both need to be identified before a program can be successful.

Begin by gathering some historical information about the area and similar projects which may have been accomplished in the past. Talk to people who may be affected because they live within the proposed area or go there for work or recreation. Talk to regular contacts and to community leaders. Check the news clipping file. Try to learn who is interested and how they may be affected and why.

Identify public issues and management concerns which occurred in the past. Predict how these historical conditions may affect decisions made in the future.

View the present situation. Are conditions unchanged from the past or are public uses, attitudes or perceptions changing? Have agency goals or programs changed? Are there problems or opportunities today that didn't exist previously?

This should lead to the identification of issues that can be anticipated during the course of the project or program. As each issue is identified, it can also be "scoped." The scope of an issue is measured by three factors: **extent, duration** and **intensity**.



The **extent** of an issue refers to the geographic distribution of the publics likely to be affected or involved. Predict whether each issue pertains to local, agency-wide, regional or national levels.

Duration is a measure of the length of time an issue is likely to be of public interest. Predict whether the issue is likely to generate public debate or comment for only a short period of time, for the length of the program or longer.

Intensity is the level of public interest or conflict that may be generated by the issue. An issue of high intensity may generate newspaper headlines, petitions and other strong expressions of public opinion. Issue identification may also polarize public debate. Issues of medium intensity may result in some comment in the news media and only moderate public discussion or debate. A low intensity issue may be quickly passed over in favor of more important matters.

Scoping the issues is a fairly simple task if a thorough job of contacting the publics beforehand has been done. It is a judgmental effort and is instrumental in identifying the level of fire education activities which will be needed.

Having identified and considered the scope of the potential public issues, the same can be done for management concerns. Management concerns may have been identified during preliminary talks with agency personnel or a review by line and staff may need to be done.

To further ensure correctly identifying the major issues and concerns, participation could be invited from federal, state and local agencies, affected Indian tribes and other interested persons to get their reaction. Identification of issues may be right on target—on the other hand, there may be ideas and concerns that need further definition or that no one was aware of. If the issues and concerns have not been correctly identified, fire education efforts may fail at a later date and will not adequately reflect and respond to the correct issues and concerns.

It is important to remember throughout the fire education process that each step is directly linked to the others. What is done in the early stage of planning will affect the outcome of the project. If each step is done well, the result will be a credible job.

Notes

Communication Techniques 4.0

This chapter covers ways to get information to publics and target audiences. The following are discussed:

- Sharing Information with Publics
- Involving Publics

Additional information on these methods can be found in these NWCG guides:

- Wildfire Prevention and the Media
- Fire Education Exhibit and Displays

Communication Techniques 4.0

I. SHARING INFORMATION WITH PUBLICS

There are numerous ways to get information to identified publics; by Internet, television, newspapers, radio, or posters and displays. However, there are certain techniques that work better with a particular audience than others. The next few pages contain a variety of ways to get information to publics using media related techniques.

- News release.
- Magazine article.
- Brochure, pamphlet, newsletter.
- Posters/displays.
- Public service announcement (PSA), radio and television.
- Hotline.
- Paid advertisements in newspapers or other publications.
- Radio and TV interview shows.
- Participation-style television program.
- Participation-style radio program.
- Documentary (television, video, etc.).
- World Wide Web/Internet (home page and links).

A. News Release

1. Activity.

A news release reaches a wide range of news outlets, making information available to a large and diverse audience. This method may satisfy the intent of applicable laws and regulations which require a notice be sent to the news media.

2. Considerations.

A news release spells out exactly what the organization wants to say about a topic. However, the material is often rewritten or shortened by the newspaper staff. The story the public gets may not contain all the information and it may not be accurate. With the amount of news available to people, they may not see or hear the article.

Appropriate photographs showing local examples of the topic may increase the likelihood of the article being printed. Many TV stations will use good slides.

3. How to do it.

Identify a topic that would be of interest to news organizations in the area. Write the story clearly and concisely, giving pertinent facts of what, why, when, where, how and who. Make sure the first sentence tells the reader the most important piece of information. Releases that start with “who” said something are generally not as effective as those that start with “what” or “why.” Make sure the information is accurate and timely. Be ready to respond to follow-up questions from the media.

4. Things to remember.

The media's use of a news release is directly related to its quality, the topic's newsworthiness and the amount of other news competing for the editor's attention. Once submitted, the editor may change the release to meet the newspaper's writing style and standards and the space available.

In metropolitan areas, there is strong competition for news space so your release must stand on its own merits. Don't use the news release as the sole method for notifying the public.

B. Magazine Article

1. Activity.

A magazine article explores the full scope or a facet of a topic in greater detail than a news release. Magazine publishing is a growing industry with publications devoted to nearly every interest. Editors are constantly looking for new topics which would interest their specific audience.

2. Considerations.

Magazine articles reach a large target audience giving considerable explanation of the topic. The audience tends to retain more information through this medium than through radio, television or newspapers. However, a magazine article reaches only one segment of the public. Publishing an article requires considerable lead time. For example, many magazines gather their winter articles in the summer. Once the topic is suggested, the agency frequently has little control over what gets printed. Instead of writing the articles, topics may be suggested to an editor. Magazine articles should not be the only method for notifying the public.

3. How to do it.

Research the publication, its audience and circulation. Talk to the editor first. If interested, the editor will spell out the publication's needs. The topic may have to be approached from a particular angle to interest a specific magazine editor. Most magazines desire exclusive coverage, however, other publications may be interested in the same topic using a different approach. Many will take written copy, while others rely on free-lance or staff writers.

4. Things to remember.

Magazines appeal to a very select audience. You have to tailor the piece to interest that audience. Magazines often require several months to prepare, lay out and print an article. Make sure the lead time fits your fire education schedule. Nearly all articles require graphics or pictures to complete the package. The editor will explain the needs. The editor is the final judge of what gets printed.

C. Brochure, Pamphlet, Newsletter

1. Activity.

Brochures, pamphlets and similar informational tools are used to keep the publics informed about meetings, events and the progress being made on a particular project. They also promote agency-community contact and supplement messages through mass media.

2. Considerations.

They are economical and provide a record of written information given to the public. They can give updated information including omissions, corrections, etc., but they should not be used as the sole source of information.

3. How to do it.

   a. Determine what information the public needs to have to understand the project—its purpose, planning and decision-making processes, data collection, time lines, etc. Decide what topics or themes will be covered in the different issues. Will it be all information giving or will there be opportunities for the public to comment?

   b. Decide what type of publication to use for different topics.

      (1) Pamphlet - Beginning of project to give a quick overview.

      (2) Brochure - Detailed description of project and steps.

      (3) Newsletter - Continuous or intermittent updating on project.

   c. Decide on quantities for printing, photographs, mailing list distribution, etc.

4. Things to remember.

   Newsletters may require approval through the agency before dissemination. Requests should be forwarded through the Publications Control Officer. Know and follow Government Printing Office regulations.

D. Poster/Displays

1. Activity.

The purpose of posters and displays is to provide information. They may be used in conjunction with any meeting format or by themselves.

2. Considerations.

Posters/displays present a large amount of printed and visual information. However, if the display is too technical or cluttered, no one will read it. Displays that are higher than six feet and lower than two feet are difficult to read.

3. How to do it.

Determine what will be displayed (data, maps, concepts, process). Identify how the display will be used so the size can be estimated. Write the text to go with the display.

4. Things to remember.

A display does not have to be professionally done. What is important is that it's easy to read and uncomplicated in design. Make sure the size is correct for the location. If the display is unattended for a long time, make sure it is checked periodically.

E. Public Service Announcement (PSA), Radio and Television

1. Activity.

The purpose of PSAs is to create an awareness about a subject through radio and television announcements.

2. Considerations.

PSAs reach a wide segment of the public. They generate an awareness of a topic but messages are too short to create an understanding. PSAs run throughout the programming day. The agency can seldom arrange for a specific time for airing.

3. How to do it.

Radio and television stations are required under their license to provide time for public service announcements. The public service director should be contacted about the station's technical needs. Indicate a contact name and telephone number and the dates to start and end the PSAs.

4. Things to remember.

Prepare scripts in 60-, 30- and 10-second increments. Scripts must "sound good." The public *hears and sees* the message rather than reads it, so it must be simple to understand. PSAs which address local topics are more likely to be used than those Regional or National in scope.

F. Hotline

1. Activity.

Hotline is a telephone answering system in which a caller is able to call in a question and receive either a personal response to a question or a recorded announcement.

2. Considerations.

Hotline gives easy access to information via the phone. The person responsible for answering the telephone must be very knowledgeable about the subject and must have the ability to deal with complaints in a nondefensive manner. A telephone log should be kept for documentation.

3. How to do it.

Contact the office purchasing agent and have arrangements made for installation of the hotline. Adequate publicity must be given so that the telephone number is readily available to the public.

4. Things to remember.

Someone must be available to answer the telephone during the hours the hotline is in service. This may require staggered lunch hours and/or adjustment of work hours to have the telephone available during hours that are convenient to the public.

G. Paid Advertisement

1. Activity.

Paid ads guarantee that the information gets in a newspaper the way the agency wants it. Ads may have to be placed in several papers to get adequate coverage.

2. Considerations.

Check with contracting officers on legal aspects. Consider which groups need to be reached and the best publication to use.

3. How to do it.

Talk with the advertising department to determine how material should be presented (have some ideas in mind on size, when, location in paper, etc.). Get cost estimates. Write the information wanted in the ad and have it reviewed by all those involved, particularly the line officer.

4. Things to remember.

For maximum exposure, the ad should *not* be put in the want ads, but in the body of the paper. It costs more, but the chances of it being read are better. Ad rates are based on total circulation. Consider the cost per thousand readers and whether the publication reaches the target audience. Before submitting the ad for publication, make sure it conveys the necessary information.

H. Radio and TV Interview Shows

1. Activity.

These shows give in-depth explanations of the topic to large radio and television audiences.

2. Considerations.

Electronic media, especially radio, creates an "intimate," more responsive feeling between the audience and the guest. Talk shows are an excellent medium to inform the public.

3. How to do it.

Nearly all radio and television stations regularly air talk shows. While the formats differ, they generally have a regular host(s) who interviews the guests about topics of interest to the audience. Contact local stations to find out shows available, their producers and hosts. These people are always looking for topics which would interest their audience. Whether aired "live" or taped for late broadcast, the guests generally have only one shot at a question. The agency representative needs to be very knowledgeable about all facets of the topic, and familiar enough with other agency policies and topics, to be able to handle unrelated questions. If used as a part of the fire education plan, the representative needs to explain how the public can respond to the topic.

4. Things to remember.

Talk shows have large audiences that often have little prior knowledge of the topic. Lead them into it by explaining the background before covering the major items. Provide the host with a series of questions which will help explain the background and explore the topic. Hosts often handle several topics in a week and have little time for prior research. Help them as much as possible. Talk simply and concisely. Keep responses short. Long or jargon-filled responses lose the audience and frustrate the host. Make arrangements with the station to get a tape of the program for documentation.

I. Participation-Style Television Program

1. Activity.

The purpose of this TV format is to explain a topic and solicit comments from the viewing public. This technique can increase the possibilities of involving publics who ordinarily would not respond.

2. Considerations.

A popular TV program reaches a large segment of the public and makes it easy for citizens to participate. Visual as well as spoken information is presented. This kind of programming is expensive and time-consuming and may require close coordination with other fire education activities. Timing is critical and must be determined far in advance.

3. How to do it.

In some areas, television stations offer programs to inform viewers about a topic and solicit comments from the studio and viewing audience. The Public Affairs Director can help determine if a topic is appropriate to the station's needs. The station will frequently ask for suggestions on who to invite to be in the studio audience and other guests on the program. The agency may need to provide people to staff the phones and gather studio comments.

4. Things to remember.

The appearance should be arranged several weeks (or months) in advance. The visual material should be simple and clearly visualize the necessary information. Publicize the event and notify interested groups. Present feedback on a subsequent program. Brief the program's host(s) so they can ask knowledgeable questions.

J. Participation-Style Radio Program

1. Activity.

This kind of programming explains the topic and solicits public comment through radio. It increases the possibility of involving those from whom we traditionally don't hear.

2. Considerations.

Radio reaches a large number of people but, depending on the program and station, it may reach only a narrow segment of the public. The station manager knows who will be listening. Radio can easily be recorded for documentation.

3. How to do it.

Many radio stations regularly air "call-in" programs. The station's Public Affairs Director and the program's host can help to arrange a program on an agency topic. Advance publicity will alert interested groups. These programs are broadcast "live." The audience hears everything the guest says, even the mistakes.

4. Things to remember.

Provide the host with a series of questions to explain the background and details of the topic, but be prepared to respond to all questions and anticipate comments on unrelated topics. Talk naturally, avoid jargon or lengthy responses. Arrange for a tape recording of the program.

K. Documentary (Television, Video, etc.)

1. Activity.

Documentaries can tell the full story or summarize major areas of a topic.

2. Considerations.

A well-produced documentary can create a total understanding of a topic. Copies may be shown to agency and non-agency audiences. While it takes a considerable commitment of time and personnel to develop and shoot the topic, a documentary can reach a wide audience.

3. How to do it.

In several areas, local television stations produce documentary programs about topics affecting their viewers. If the topic affects a large segment of the audience, can be told well visually, and portrays a sense of drama, a producer may be willing to consider the suggested topic. Many agencies have the facilities and staff to develop video documentaries.

Shooting takes weeks, and sometimes months to capture the essential elements of a topic. Considerable time must be devoted to working with the other staffs to write the script, locating appropriate sites, and completing the documentary.

4. Things to remember.

A documentary may require considerable "lead time" and the topic must compete with others for attention. This is a visual medium and wildland fire is an excellent subject for this media.

L. World Wide Web/Internet (Home Page and Links)

II. INVOLVING THE PUBLIC

Previously, we discussed techniques that were basically one directional. They either gave information to the public or collected it. Here are some examples of techniques that supply a give and take sharing of information. Some of these will provide instant two-way communication such as meetings, field trips, working groups, etc., and others will be slower, such as task forces.

- Field or show-me trips.
- Open houses.
- Field demonstrations.
- Task forces.
- Listening sessions.
- Brainstorming.
- Exhibits and displays.
- Working groups.
- Workshops.
- Seminars.
- Group meetings and discussions.

A. Field or Show-Me Trips

1. Activity.

These trips provide on-site examination of activities, proposed projects, etc. This activity gets people to the "site" to discuss items of interest. It creates a more neutral environment for discussion and raises the level of knowledge.

2. Considerations.

These trips can be guided or self-guiding; there are advantages to both.

a. Guided.

A trip conducted by a knowledgeable representative can be an excellent way to share information and exchange ideas. Enough time must be allowed to share adequate information, but there is a tendency to want to show too much too fast, compromising the success of their efforts. A realistic program should be designed.

(1) How to do it.

Decide the purpose of the trip and set up in a way to anticipate the number of people. Decide upon the most effective transportation method(s). Set a starting point, time, and agenda. Prepare handouts of necessary background material. Identify necessary agency personnel. Rehearse the trip to identify any scheduling or route problems and consider a "bad weather" contingency plan.

(2) Things to remember.

Physical condition of people will vary. The trip should be suited to the capabilities of the audience. The information given should not be too technical or too detailed. Adequate time must be given for people to ask questions and respond to what they see.

b. Self-guiding.

A self-guiding trip allows people to move at their own pace and at their own convenience. The information given is limited to what has been put in the brochure, on the signs, or produced electronically. There is no opportunity for exchange of ideas or discussion when desired.

(1) How to do it.

Map and directional signs must be very clear. Information at each stop must be clearly and concisely written. Use graphics to help the audience understand messages.

(2) Things to remember.

Check the area on a regular basis to make sure signs are in good repair and the route is still functional. Consult agency signing and recreation policy and staffs for additional guidance.

B. Open House

1. Activity.

   This activity provides an informal, one-on-one atmosphere.

2. Considerations.

   Open houses work in situations where a large turnout is not expected. They are helpful where a process is being described, data is being discussed, etc. They work best in discussing noncontroversial matters. Adequate audience notification must be given.

3. How to do it.

   Check out facility and determine how to arrange room, what equipment is needed, etc. Select appropriate personnel to participate. Choose appropriate staff specialists based on subject matter. Schedule when maximum attendance is expected. Use signs to direct people to the facilities. Be ready with equipment and personnel one-half hour before the open house starts.

4. Things to remember.

   Select a facility that is well known, commonly used, or easy to locate. This is particularly important in a small community. Move the furniture, set up displays, arrange the room as necessary. Schools, clubhouses, Chamber of Commerce offices and other common meeting sites are sometimes better than agency facilities. Familiarity with a site is important, both for the agency and for the public.

C. Field Demonstrations

1. Activity.

A field demonstration shows an activity such as mechanical fuel reduction, firewise landscaping, prescribed burning, etc. It increases knowledge and exposes the audience to various aspects of fire management.

2. Considerations.

It demonstrates a specific subject, providing an opportunity for learning about the activity in detail. However, a poor demonstration can be a negative influence.

3. How to do it.

Select an appropriate method to notify the public. Set up a location with easy access, if possible. Determine if written or display information is necessary. Rehearse the demonstration to work out the time needed and to solve any problems ahead of time that may occur.

4. Things to remember.

Provide for the safety of participants at the demonstration. Have sufficient parking and turnarounds. Provide good directions to the site (or sites).

D. Task Force

1. Activity.

The purpose of a task force is to assemble a small group to work on one aspect of a situation. It can be used for group resolution of a common problem (example: improving street signing in a wildland/urban interface area).

2. Considerations.

This approach permits a small group of interested people to work together and can remove the agency from the leadership role. If members do not work well together, a solution may not be found.

3. How to do it.

A task force of about six to ten people is usually assembled to work on one specific task. The task must be clearly defined and understood by all.

4. Things to remember.

All background material and information needs to be available to the task force participants.

E. Listening Session

1. Activity.

This activity establishes a forum so individuals may hear each other's views.

2. Considerations.

This technique provides people an opportunity to share information with the appropriate agency individuals. Time limits may be necessary to allow all who wish to speak the opportunity to do so.

3. How to do it.

Estimate amount of interest before determining facility. (Two or more sessions may be more appropriate than one long one.) Decide how comments will be received: written, orally or a combination. In the announcement of the meeting, clearly describe what is expected from the people making comments. Identify equipment needed, such as microphones and tape recording equipment. Decide how the moderator will keep comments to a specified time limit.

4. Things to remember.

This type of session can be publicized through announcements in the local newspaper or notice to individuals on the mailing lists.

F. Brainstorming

1. Activity.

Brainstorming is designed to gather thoughts and comments. To be successful, all comments must be accepted without value judgments. In some cases, brainstorming can be used as an icebreaker.

2. Considerations.

Brainstorming is a positive experience, with thoughts spoken and recorded as given. It is very important that no value judgments be made.

3. How to do it.

   a. Know the topic to be brainstormed ahead of time (i.e., concerns about a prescribed fire, how to make homes more fire resistant, etc.). Have adequate wall space to display the comments. Identify people to record comments as they are made. Have a facilitator. Record all comments. If a response is lengthy, paraphrase the comment. Make no evaluation of the comments. Write them on the easel paper as they were said.

   b. After a list of items has been developed, it is useful to group similar items so that different groups may analyze them.

      (1) Group similar items together in individual categories.

      (2) Assign appropriate titles for each category.

      (3) Divide the participants into as many groups as there are categories. Assign one or more categories to each group to develop possible solutions.

4. Things to remember.

The brainstorming exercise may start out with a wide diversity of ideas. The objective is to "lump and split" as needed to produce usable results.

G. Exhibits and Displays

1. Activity.

Exhibits and displays can provide a lot of detailed information. They can raise the level of knowledge and permit one-on-one discussions between agency personnel and the public.

2. Considerations.

Use of exhibits and displays can provide opportunities for materials distribution and one-on-one discussions. They can be used at public events like fairs, seminars, workshops, home and garden shows or special agency events.

3. How to do it.

Identify the appropriate special event and develop or obtain the proper exhibit or display. Plan and organize to meet your goals (refer to the guide “Fire Education Exhibits and Displays).

4. Things to remember.

An agency person knowledgeable on the subject matter and with good communication skills must be at each display or exhibit.

H. Working Group

1. Activity.

This method establishes a small group of people who interact with agency personnel from the beginning to the end of a plan or project. Working group members are the communication link to their parent organizations, agencies or groups.

2. Considerations.

A working group format gives "instant" feedback on phases of the process. It reduces lengthy public response time. It help keeps agency people abreast of the public's level of understanding. However, it may require a substantial commitment of time and energy. There may be resentment from those not selected as part of the working group. The group must understand its relationship to the decision-making process.

3. How to do it.

Decide the make-up of the group (usually 6-12, but may have more participants). Members should represent a variety of different groups. Outline how and when (frequency and duration) the working group will meet. Describe what the group will be asked to prepare and show how it will be used. Identify one or two agency people as a contact.

4. Things to remember.

A working group can be called together the first time by the agency. Other meetings can be called by the group. The group's purpose must be clearly defined.

I. Workshop

1. Activity.

A workshop will elicit specific information from attendees while providing an opportunity for people with a variety of interests to discuss their values with one another. It increases the knowledge of the participants about a topic and usually occurs as one phase of a longer process.

2. Considerations.

This is a direct involvement process and promotes communication. Participants complete a task within the workshop time frame. A facility with tables and chairs is required, as well as skilled facilitators.

3. How to do it.

Select a facility that will promote group interaction and will accommodate the number of people anticipated. Decide how workshop attendees may be identified. Groups, organizations, and agencies may be asked to provide a participant. Pull together all the material and data in an understandable form. Decide what facilitator skills are needed and identify appropriate personnel. Decide how to form the groups. Should individuals with like interests be in the same group or different groups? There must be a clearly stated objective on what the workshop will produce and how the product will be used.

4. Things to remember.

The facility *must* be appropriate for the size of group anticipated. Each step of the workshop must be carefully thought out so appropriate data, materials, etc., are available to the participants. Public commitment to the outcome can be great if the results are obtained through a mutual process.

J. Seminar

1. Activity.

Seminars can provide a forum for different interest groups to learn about each other's goals, attitudes and concerns. They can also provide the agency with valuable insights into public values.

2. Considerations.

The public at large has an opportunity to learn about many diverse viewpoints. If a seminar is community-led, agency credibility may be enhanced. Issues can be identified through points of view given in different presentations. Without supplemental information, the general audience may have difficulty separating facts from concepts. Since presentations must be short, they may contain a lot of generalities.

3. How to do it.

Use a discussion leader. Agree on a topic and objectives. Inform the various publics of the proposed seminar. Give adequate notice. Arrange for meeting space. Ask speakers for an outline of their topic two weeks prior to meeting. Request written copies of the presentations so they may be sent to all participants. After each presentations, allow a question and answer period. Let the public know about how the information obtained from the seminars will be used.

4. Things to remember.

Discussion leader's handling of questions and answers can mean success or failure.

K. Group Meetings and Discussions

1. Activity.

   These activities provide participants with information and give them an opportunity to discuss and take action on a project or product. It involves people from similar or different groups in discussing mutual concerns and interests.

2. Considerations

   This activity allows agencies to present information and inform groups on specific subject matter (example: the risk of wildfire and mitigation techniques to a neighborhood association or the benefits of a prescribed fire to a hunting club). It provides a way for everyone to contribute, no matter how large the group.

3. How to do it.

   Offer to come to a group meeting to make a presentation of interest to the group. Provide an overview of the situation and possible courses of appropriate action. Keep the presentation brief, focused, avoid the use of jargon and technical terms and allow for input and questions from the group.

4. Things to remember.

   Target the appropriate knowledge level of each group. Provide enough information but not too much. The group may just need help identifying a problem and not be ready for technical solutions.

Developing Communication Strategies 4.1

This section is excerpted from “U.S. Forest Service Communications Strategy: Prescribed Burning,” prepared by George Mason, APR and Rocky Bowler Public Relations, September 1998, for the Pacific Northwest Region. The report in its entirety is available from the U.S. Forest Service.

I. WHAT WE KNOW FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES:

A. Information collected from previous studies/research:

1. Public awareness of the frequency and impact of catastrophic wild fires has grown considerably in the last few years—on both the global and the local levels.

2. Judging from news reports, public perception of the role of global warming, global climate change, or “El Nino” as a causal factor in the circumstances of wild fire probability and severity has increased.

3. The environmental movement has given rise to the public belief that humans, including forest managers, cannot improve a natural ecosystem (Baas et al. 1985).

4. In one study conducted in Oregon’s Blue Mountains, respondents expressed mixed signals regarding their trust in the Forest Service’s ability “to implement a responsible and effective program.... A majority (51%) give the agency a vote of confidence, while one-fourth do not trust the Forest Service and about another fourth (24%) are either neutral or undecided.” (Shindler, Reed 1996)

5. In the same study, the majority (66%) of residents of the Blue Mountains rated the health of their local forests as unhealthy or very unhealthy.

6. Public supporters of prescribed burning policies tend to be more knowledgeable about the effects of fires than those against such policies (Manfredo 1990, Manfredo and Zinn 1993); and similarly, the level of acceptance of prescribed burning is related to an individual's knowledge of the uses and impacts of fire (Gardner et al 1985; Taylor and Daniel 1985), and to higher levels of education (Shindler, Reed 1996).

7. The more involved a person is in the forest industry, the better they understand and agree with prescribed burning policies. Some of the lowest signs of support were from off-road drivers and hunters. (Although not stated, this finding suggests differences between rural and urban populations).

8. Evidence exists to show that public acceptance of prescribed burning increases by providing information on the beneficial effects of fire (Taylor and Daniel 1985).

9. Public agreement for the use of prescribed burning has increased, yet understanding of the reasons for prescribed burning has lagged behind this increase. (Omi and Laven 1982; Stankey 1976; McCool and Stankey 1986).

10. Public support of prescribed burns increases if it is used to reduce the risk of severe wildfire, to manage ecological conditions by simulating the historic fire regime, or to improve recreation potential (Zwolinski et al. 1983; Gardner et al. 1985; Taylor and Daniel 1985).

11. In the Blue Mountain Study (Shindler, Reed 1996), "A large majority agree the practice (of prescribed burns) is useful in decreasing the chance of wildfire (74%) and reducing excess fuels (70%)."

12. In repeated public opinion studies, the importance and value people place on clean air, water, health, visibility and aesthetics is very important and can be instrumental in determining the level of public support for prescribed fires. In at least one study (Shindler, Reed, 1996), short term impacts on air or aesthetic qualities were acceptable, "Currently, smoke and air quality are not major issues for most people in the region; however, we know that it does not take many dissenters to elevate the status of this concern."

13. Public attitudes are not easy to change. Information campaigns in Grand Canyon National Park, and a similar program in Olympic National Park, failed in significant ways to increase public knowledge about fire effects or support for its use (Baas et al. 1985), or if they do manage to raise understanding, they may not influence core opinions (Rauw 1980).

14. At least one study (Bright et al. 1993) with visitors to Yellowstone National Park, found limited impact in giving persuasive messages to people with reported negative and positive attitudes to prescribed fire. Anti-messages were given to people with positive attitudes, and positive messages were given to those expressing negative attitudes. Concurrent with persuasion theory, the stronger the initial attitude, the less likely that attitude will fundamentally change with exposure to contrary messages. However, both groups did relax their position (intensity of attitude) and became more moderate as a result of being presented with contrary messages.

15. In the Blue Mountain study (Shindler, Reed 1996) it was found "that a solid majority support the public's participation in federal forest management." Again, this appears to be as much an issue of trust in management practices as a matter of dispensing information.

II. COMMUNICATION PROGRAM GOALS:

A. To develop for implementation in Oregon and Washington a communications program that:

1. Increases public understanding of the purpose and benefits of prescribed burns.

2. Improves public support of prescribed burning plans.

3. Minimizes public opposition to prescribed burning plans.

B. To develop and implement in Oregon and Washington a program that effectively communicates:

1. The appropriate stewardship of the USFS and BLM of public lands (ecosystem management agency).

2. The natural role of fire in woodland and grassland ecosystems.

3. The short and long term value of prescribed burning strategies in helping to maintain the health of ecosystems, decrease the frequency and severity of catastrophic fires, and improve aesthetics and recreational value to wildlands.

4. To address and answer the negative issues associated with prescribed bums, including smoke, aesthetics, and wildlife.

C. To develop informational materials and delivery methods which meet the following criteria (as suggested by Bright in, "Influencing Public Attitudes Toward Prescribed Fire Policies," as well as from other studies). Specifically, informational materials must be presented that are:

1. Understandable (appropriate readability, non-technical, use of key words or call outs).

2. Relevant to the intended audience (appropriate and mindful of their concerns).

3. Credible (from a believable, non-biased source).

4. Attractive.

III. COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES:

Earlier surveys conducted in both the Northwest and nationally demonstrated there are two distinct audiences—each with a unique baseline of knowledge, experience, values, and attitudes. These are the urban residents (those living in the major metropolitan centers), and rural residents.

Previous research has shown that both groups require different approaches with key and sub-messages, and different delivery methods. Generally, efforts to inform and persuade are more effective and possible with rural populations in a small group setting with message that primarily address:

- Safety
- Preparations (air quality, fire control, etc.)
- Utility or purpose (including aesthetics)
- Prevention of future catastrophic fires

Evidence also exists suggesting that the methods of involving rural publics in the decision making process through advisory councils and public input where input is perceived as heard and acted on, increases trust and support of management policies.

Urban residents generally are best reached through mass media outlets (newspapers, magazines, television) with messages that focus on:

- Resource protection
- Ecosystem health
- Aesthetics

(Note: this distinction between urban and rural residents has some evidence to indicate validity; however, it is one of the areas future surveys should specifically measure to gain a higher degree of certainty).

A. Key Messages:

The following three key messages are suitable for use with either urban or rural audiences.

1. **Our forests and range lands are in danger.** 50 years of fire fighting combined with a changing climate has led to many of our forests and range lands becoming vulnerable to catastrophic fires.

2. **Our ecosystems are in danger.** 50 years of fire suppression has changed the basic ecosystem of our forests and range lands.

3. **We are in danger.** Homes, fire fighters, and those using wildlands for work and recreation are in danger from catastrophic fires-and valuable timber, water, wildlife and harvest resources are in danger of being lost.

B. Sub-Messages:

Based upon the collected findings and our expertise in communications, we suggest that the following six sub-messages are applicable differently to urban and rural audiences. Each audience in noted in the parenthesis as to its relative weight (the first listed is the primary audience for this message). Sub-messages would be selectively used in public communications to better tailor to audience needs. Please note: we believe this is another key area for subsequent communications research.

1. **Wildland fire severity and frequency have increased over the years.** Combined with greater human encroachment into wildlands this has increased the loss of life and property from wildfires. (Rural, Urban)

2. **Fire prevention education has worked.** In 1941, wildland fire burned 30 million acres, 90 percent caused by human carelessness. Today we see half that number of acres burned, despite a 10-fold increase in population. (Urban, Rural)

3. **Low intensity fire historically is an essential element** of forests, shrublands, grasslands and riparian systems, and is necessary to the life cycles of these ecosystems. (Both)

4. **Prescribed fire is one important tool we have to properly manage our wildlands.** Prescribed fire can save lives, save wildlands, save resources, save economies. (Both)

5. **Fire managers make every effort to minimize the impacts of prescribed fires** (smoke, visibility,

appearance, wildlife survival, prevention of spreading). (Rural, Urban)

6. **Prescribed fire allows for better control of smoke** compared to wildfires. Since prescribed fires are closely managed according to climatic and geographic conditions, smoke management is much more controlled than in natural fires.

IV. DELIVERY METHODS:

The following is a list of communication tools that can be used in this program. However, budget, resources, time, location, and research findings will determine which of these are best to meet the program's communications goals.

A. Advertising and Public Relations Collaterals:

- Ad shell for local newspapers
- Logo
- Poster announcement
- Slide show presentation
- Video
- Display
- Prepared speech(es)
- Press release template
- Fact sheet(s)
- Radio PSA
- Web site information, feedback and links

B. Press/Media Relations:

- News coverage
- Informational materials to local columnists
- Fact sheets
- Editorial board meetings/briefings
- Media tour of site prep and follow-up

- National television/radio (NOVA, National Geographic, Science Friday, etc.)

C. Direct Public Outreach:

- Automated courtesy phone alerts
- Public presentations/community briefing meetings
- Direct mail (by resident zip codes)
- E-mail notification
- Road signage/FS signage (such as at trail heads and interpretive kiosks)
- Local fire, police and hospital or health care signage (including warnings for chronic respiratory patients)
- School announcements
- Local decision makers (i.e. mayor, city council, legislators)
- Regional FS Station rack cards, signage, info sheets

D. Feedback:

- 1-800 call in
- Write in (including e-mail)
- Post survey
- Press clip monitoring
- Letters to the editor monitoring
- Complaint monitoring (via fire departments, sheriff's office, health facilities, etc.)

V. SUGGESTED COMMUNICATION PLAN:

Note: Our preliminary work to draft a useful and suitable public survey instrument (draft attached) and seek federal approval to conduct a regional telephone survey has changed with the discovery of another survey instrument developed for a study in the Blue Mountains in 1996 (Shindler, Reed 1996).

It is our opinion that the survey instrument used in that study is excellent and can be easily adapted and shortened for reuse to meet the needs of our program in the future.

A. **Produce and finalize a public opinion survey on prescribed burning.** We believe that the Forest Service should arrange to make use of the Oregon State University survey mentioned above-with modifications. A shorter form of this survey will be very useful in sampling urban population attitudes, rural Oregon and Washington populations, and comparing results against the 1996 study. The USFS should initiate the process of obtaining OMB approval to implement the survey.

   1. Upon approval, initiate telephone survey and compile results.

   2. Compare results of survey with informal research (from task 2, below).

   3. Produce summary of results with comparisons to previous surveys.

   4. Revise any materials or strategies accordingly.

B. **Develop and test communication models** for:

   1. Speaking points

   2. Informational brochure

   3. Fact sheet

   4. Press release template

   Produce these via desktop publishing and test in informal settings during normal Forest Service/BLM public meetings.

C. **Produce final recommendations advising on use of communication strategies and suggestions for additional needed materials.**

D. **Examine best practices** of other agencies in using public participation models in smaller communities. These may include advisory boards, public participation meetings or other examples. Consider the feasibility, risks and costs associated with incorporating these models into future communications programs.

After completion of the above steps, we believe the USFS/BLM is ready to initiate a proactive and complete communications plan of action. At this time, we envision future steps to include:

E. **Design and develop a full compliment of communication tools.** These may include: informational poster, ad shell, press kit, logo, slide show, radio PSA, and Web site. Other tools may be added as determined from surveys, additional research, feed back and examples of best practices.

F. **Arrange for selected media tours of prescribed burn sites for rural media.** (Resulting clips can then be used to send to urban media outlets, thus gaining third-party endorsement).

G. **Develop appropriate information for use on the FS and BLM Web sites.** Arrange links with relevant sites such as university forestry and land management sites, and timber industry.

H. **Arrange speakers bureau** for both urban and rural venues, and arrange engagements.

I. **Conduct on-going evaluation and revisions of program** through spot-interviews, media monitoring, key-informant surveys, and other feedback tools such as 1-800 phone lines, or monitoring letters to the editor and complaints.

VI. PRESCRIBED FIRE PRESENTATIONS: POINTS OF PERSUASION

Rationale: Repeated studies have shown that public attitudes can be persuaded, or hard positions of opposition can be mitigated with credible, face-to-face presentations. Improved probability of success is achieved through the use of:

A. **Credible information sources.** Presenters who are considered "experts" in the field they are addressing are ranked more believable by audiences. This means scientists, engineers and senior technicians will be more persuasive than line employees, public information officers, bureaucrats, and managers.

B. **Third party views.** Audiences judge presenters higher who they perceive are not visibly connected with the topic, and who do not directly benefit from the purpose of their arguments.

C. **Keeping the message simple and direct.** Public presentations are the most effective when they succinctly state their thesis, explain the thesis, illustrate the thesis, elicit public support in the thesis, and conclude with the thesis. Adding any additional issues only distracts from the persuasion. "Prescribed fire" is an issue that is "counter intuitive." For more than half a century the public has been successfully persuaded to "prevent forest fires." Prescribed fires must be cast in the context of helping to meet this mission in order to prevent the audience from experiencing cognitive dissonance.

D. **Personal identification.** Audiences respond best when their vested interests are addressed directly. We can guess that most attendees to USFS/BLM public meetings on prescribed bums will already have a vested interest (homes, business, timber, health). The effective presenter should know these interests and directly address them in the presentation. How will a prescribed fire help them? What are the immediate and long-term benefits to them (as opposed to the forest or ecosystem benefits which often are intangible or future benefits).

E. **Confirmation of what is already known.** The American public is well attuned to the prevalence of catastrophic fires, global warming, and climatic change. Confirming these points as causal factors for the need for prescribed burning helps to better ensure success of persuasion.

F. **Directly addressing negative attitudes regarding human intervention in ecosystems.** Studies have shown that the public tends to believe that people, including land managers and USFS/BLM employees cannot improve natural ecosystems. The issues of prescribed fire may be more persuasively addressed as a prevention method rather than an improvement model (testing must be done to demonstrate or refute this assumption).

G. **Directly addressing fears and apprehensions.** Problems and mistakes can and do happen. People know this. Excess smoke, prescribed fires getting out of control and other problems are possible. However, if a presentation is capable of attaining a high degree of trust and credibility, dealing honestly with these issues is easier. It is important to acknowledge their probability, realistically framing that probability as low, convincing that preparation has been made for contingencies. Of greatest importance is the need to balance and compare these possibilities with the higher probability of catastrophic fire-fire that will be the most damaging, be most difficult to contain, produce the most smoke in an uncontrolled setting, and have the longest term impacts.

H. **Effective calls to action.** Studies have demonstrated the most convincing and persuasive presentations are those where the audience is asked at the conclusion to conveniently do something. Filling out a survey, discussing the issues with their children, posting a list of alerts or safety measures in their homes are all small examples of providing the audience with easy action steps that help to certify their acceptance of the issues.

I. **Focus on the goals, not the methods.** Studies have demonstrated that audiences are for more inclined to agree with the goals than with the methods used to attain those goals. Elaborate explanation of the specific methods of conducting a prescribed fire is far more likely to elicit opposition than an explanation of the reasons and needs for conducting a prescribed fire.

J. **Illustrate the issues.** As much as possible, a presentation will be effective that can show through either real stories and/or visual support the changing status and condition of wild lands over the last 50 years, and the post condition of wild lands following prescribed bums.

VII. SPEAKING POINTS: PRESCRIBED FIRE PRESENTATIONS

Note: An effective speech will be enhanced with good visual aids: slide show narrated by the presenter, maps showing the prospective burn site; and, with good personal illustrations or stories of pre- and post-prescribed bum scenarios.

The following are points to be considered by the presenter in preparing the presentation:

A. **Who is the presenter (their credentials) and who is the audience (their vested interests)?**

Establish credibility of presenter and determine specific audience needs, concerns, or fears that must be addressed.

B. **Why was this area selected for a prescribed burn?**

Establish the specific needs for the designated area, and emphasize the consequences of non-action or alternate actions.

C. **What is a "prescribed burn," and why is it important for the area?**

If needed, explain and illustrate the most basic aspects of how a controlled bum is conducted, and what are the conditions that allow it to occur. Strong and repeated emphasis should be placed on the goals of the prescribed bum, rather than the methods.

D. **What should the audience be aware of, alerted to, sensitive to (smoke, aesthetics, safety)?**

Issues dealing with smoke, fire control, aesthetics, safety-and the fact that the prescribed bum may not occur, or will only occur under ideal conditions must be addressed. Allow questions, but attempt to re-focus potentially hostile questions to recognition of the critical importance and the goals of the program.

E. **What can they do?**

The presentation should conclude with concrete and helpful things the audience can do to help the local program of prescribed bums. Examples can include: discussing the issues with their families, completing a feedback form on the presentation and/or the prescribed burn, posting at home a refrigerator note on urban interface safety tips, or local phone numbers for Oregon DEQ, Washington DOE, USES, BLM, and local fire departments.

F. **Questions and Answers**

Developing the Fire Education Action Plan 5.0

This chapter contains instructions relative to the early phases of fire education; for example, target group analysis, ways to communicate with specific publics or individuals and analysis of an emerging issue. Also included is a sample of a fire education plan.

- Fire Education Action Plan
- Fire Education Plan (Outline)
- Sample Fire Education Action Plan
- Fire Education Plan Implementation

Developing the Fire Education Action Plan 5.0

With the knowledge of the previous sections, it is now time to develop the specific action plan to address the issues and focus on implementation of the fire education program.

I. THE FIRE EDUCATION ACTION PLAN

A. The development of a fire education plan will:

1. Focus efforts.
2. Identify audiences - segment the population into more homogenous groups.
3. Identify messages - target different market segments.
4. Identify the appropriate media for the message and audience.
5. Facilitate getting information to appropriate audiences.
6. Ensure appropriate distribution of information and material.
7. Facilitate coordination with other agencies.
8. Serve as a transitional tool for future personnel.
9. Facilitate documentation.

II. FIRE EDUCATION ACTION PLAN *(Use as an outline for your plan.)*

Title:

A. Purpose of the Plan (What is the focus of the communication?)

B. Objective/Goals (What do you want to affect as a result of the communication?)

C. Key Messages (What do you want your audiences to know?

D. Target Audience(s) (Who are the focus of the messages?)

E. Strategies

F. Measurable Accomplishments (How will you measure the effectiveness of your communications?)

III. SAMPLE FIRE EDUCATION ACTION PLAN

A. Title: Buzzard Breath, Wyoming

1. Purpose of the Plan.

   The purpose of this plan is to guide interagency outreach efforts for fire education. To reduce loss from unwanted wildland fires and to educate audiences on the role of fire in nature.

2. Objectives/goals of this plan include:

   a. Emphasize public responsibility to protect their property.

   b. Inform wildland visitors of extreme fire danger and fire prevention measures, etc.

   c. Identify the need for re-introducing fires to the environment using prescribed fire.

3. Key Messages.

   a. Fire danger (when extremely high).

      (1) There have been many fires.

      (2) Drought conditions prevail.

      (3) Large acreages have been burned.

   b. Help prevent unwanted human-caused wildland fires.

      (1) Know and observe fire restrictions.

(2) Use developed campsites.

(3) Use spark arrestors in all power equipment.

(4) Use fire carefully.

c. Make your property fire safe.

(1) Modify burnable vegetation around structures to provide defensible space.

(2) Ensure access for fire vehicles and egress for evacuation.

(3) Store firewood and other flammables away from structures.

d. Fire professionals will plan and introduce fire to the ecosystem.

(1) Under appropriate conditions.

(2) Reduce hazardous fuel conditions.

(3) Maintain natural role of wildland fire.

4. Target Audience(s).

a. Day use; camping, hiking, picnicking, etc.

b. Property owners.

c. Community contacts.

d. Agency personnel.

5. Strategies.

Identify the techniques or tools that will best reach your audience, for example:

a. Day users

(1) Fire education signs; prevention and prescribed fire.

(2) Handouts at checkpoints.

(3) Individual contacts by patrols.

b. Property owners.

(1) Site inspections.

(2) Door-to-door contacts with handout information.

c. Community contacts.

(1) Contact local citizens.

(2) Involve leaders.

d. Agency personnel.

(1) Provide office and field personnel with fire information and messages.

e. All audiences.

(1) Local media (TV, radio and print).

(2) Community bulletin boards.

(3) Internet page and links.

6. Measurable Accomplishments.

a. Made 115 personal contacts at recreational sites.

b. Visited 90 of 100 property owners.

c. Posted flyers at 4 community bulletin boards.

d. Submitted 2 news releases and 1 PSA to local media outlets.

e. Interagency cooperators included: federal, state, local resource conservation districts.

f. Partnerships established: regional cable TV outlets, United Parcel Service, utilities (billing inserts), etc.

IV. FIRE EDUCATION ACTION PLAN - IMPLEMENTATION

A. Day Users

	What	Who	Due Date	When Completed
1.	Design signs	PAO	Apr 6	
2.	Design handouts	PAO	Apr 6	
3.	Signs and handouts printed	PROC	Apr 10	
4.	Contact local areas for distribution of signs and handouts	FMO	Apr 7	
5.	Deliver signs and handouts	FPO	Apr 15	
6.	Follow-up and feedback	FPO	Apr 20	
7.	Assist with posting signs and delivering handouts as needed	FPO	April 15-17	

B. Property Owners

	What	Who	Due Date	When Completed
1.	Identify community associations	FMO	Apr 7	
2.	Design handouts (include contacts)	PAO	Apr 7	
3.	Produce handouts	PAO	Apr 8-9	
4.	Get other material already produced	FPO	Apr 8	
5.	Contact homeowners for site inspections	FPO	Apr 10	
6.	Contact Boy & Girl Scouts to help package and distribute fire education packets	FPO	Apr 9	
7.	Conduct site inspections	FPO	Apr 11-13	
8.	Document accomplishments	FMO	Apr 14	

C. Agency Personnel

	What	Who	Due Date	When Completed
1.	All employees meeting/briefing	FMO	Mar 15	
2.	Provide training/ information on fire management operations (prescribed fire, prevention priorities, suppression strategies, etc.)	FMO & Staff	Mar 30	

D. All Audiences

	What	Who	Due Date	When Completed
1.	Contact local media	PAO	Apr 7	
2.	Prepare press releases, feature stories, PSAs as necessary	PAO	Apr 8	
3.	Deliver materials in person	FMO	Apr 8	
4.	Identify community bulletin boards	FMO	Apr 7	
5.	Post handouts (previously mentioned)	FPO	Apr 8	
6.	Identify camp stores and other outlets to leave handouts	FPO	Apr 8	

PAO = Public Affairs Officer
PROC = Procurement
FMO = Fire Management Officer
FPO = Fire Prevention Officer

Notes

Program Management - Skills, Coordination and Monitoring *6.0*

This chapter will cover:

- Communication Skills
- Coordination
- Monitoring

Program Management - Skills, Coordination and Monitoring 6.0

Fire education may prove to be a full-time job for several people. Consequently, the manager's role will be to coordinate fire education rather than to accomplish it. In the process of delegating the responsibilities for fire education accomplishment, the manager should conduct a skills inventory of available staff members to best match personnel and organizational needs.

The identification of individuals with these skills and knowledge levels will greatly enhance the chances for a successful fire education effort. Individuals selected for this cadre may require additional training in order to be able to accomplish specific fire education techniques, but such training is readily available from a number of sources. The responsibility for identifying available skills and scheduling needed training is part of overall program management.

There are some basic individual skills and knowledge levels which have proved to be valuable in the planning and implementation of a fire education effort. The manager should first identify available staff having these skills:

I. SKILLS

A. Communication

1. Public speaking.

2. Writing.

3. Knowledge of the media processes.

4. Listening.

5. Group processes and dynamics.

B. Other Required Skills

1. Knowledge of local or affected publics and communication networks.

2. Understanding of the subject.

3. Thorough familiarity with the area affected by the subject.

II. COORDINATION

Another aspect of program management assigned to the manager is coordination. There are two major coordination elements which should be of concern to the manager:

A. Coordination of the fire education action plan within the overall program accomplishment.

B. External coordination with other agencies, organizations and individuals.

Coordination should be emphasized in order to avoid wasted effort in the fire education process. Poor coordination can result in duplication of effort, conflicting schedules for public meetings, poor timing and public confusion. It can also significantly increase fire education program costs. The manager cannot afford to overlook this vital phase of fire education planning.

Consequently, the minimum level of necessary coordination should be considered and incorporated into the fire education action plan. Coordination requirements specified in the action plan should include both those required by law or policy and those contacts at the local level necessary to the successful completion of the fire education program.

III. MONITORING

The final, but perhaps the most important area of concern to the fire education program manager is monitoring. The manager should periodically conduct a personal review of the fire education efforts and the results being achieved. Questions that will help the manager make the necessary assessments.

- Purpose and objectives are clear and accurate?
- Strategies are implemented and effective?
- Monitoring and evaluation are functioning?

If the answer to these questions gives reason for concern, the time has probably come for review of the complete fire education process. If improvement is the anticipated result, there is no reason to resist changing yesterday's decision in light of today's experience.

Improving Skills *7.0*

This chapter focuses on what the employee can do to improve personal fire education skills. Suggestions include:

- Formal Training
- Types of Training
- Self Study
- Fire Education Involves Everyone!

Improving Skills *7.0*

Fire education is a planned and structured process. But like so many other aspects of wildland resource management, it relies on the judgment and personal skills of the individuals involved.

An agency's fire education efforts can be enhanced by improving employee skills. If needs have been identified, there are several methods by which new fire education skills may be required.

The first of these is **formal training**. There are many training courses available that will improve effectiveness in fire education and may be helpful in other phases of the job as well. Training officers can provide information on what specific courses are available. Concentrate **formal training** efforts on acquiring or building skills in the following:

- Effective writing.
- Public speaking.
- Planning and conducting meetings.
- Effective listening.
- Planning fire education/prevention.
- Graphic design.
- Group interaction and dynamics.
- Audio/visual techniques.

In addition to formal training, skill levels can be increased by assisting more experienced staff members in the accomplishment of various fire education activities. Serving as an “understudy” will allow learning through personal experience while having the guidance of an experienced teacher. This allows expansion of efforts and involvement at a comfortable pace.

Also, a great deal can be learned through self-study. Attend meetings in the local area sponsored by other organizations, schools, political organizations or organized groups. Read books available at the local library. Monitor the fire education activities occurring in the community. Join a speaking or debating club or society. Learn about the local community—its history, culture and economy.

To Improve Skills

1. **Formal Training**
2. **Assist Experienced Staff**
3. **Self-Study**

Finally, remember that every employee plays a part in the agency’s fire education program. Every time we talk to a member of the public, we represent the agency. Have we done everything we can to present the agency in a positive public service manner?

Remember, **FIRE EDUCATION INVOLVES EVERYONE!**

Notes

Facilitating Fire Education Meetings 8.0

In order to implement an effective fire education program, it may be necessary to conduct public or internal meetings. This chapter will cover:

- Roles
- Facilitation
- Conducting a Meeting, Workshop, Etc.
- Checklists for Meeting

Facilitating Fire Education Meetings 8.0

If the fire education program requires meetings, there are a variety of skills needed to have an effective fire education program. Since projects and publics vary according to location and subject, the techniques used will differ accordingly. However, there are certain skills that are used over and over regardless of the activity. This section of the guide is a review of the skills necessary to effectively interact with the audiences, both internal and external.

I. ROLES

A. The Facilitator's Role

The facilitator proposes, suggests, invites and then consults with the participants to generate a consensus. This individual does not make rulings, determine procedures or rule people out of order, but attempts to remain neutral at all times.

1. The specific function of the facilitator is:

   a. To communicate with everyone at his/her level of understanding (verbal and nonverbal).

   b. To set the stage and let people know what is expected of them.

   c. To act as a neutral figure; one who is most interested in maintaining a positive atmosphere.

   d. To run the meeting and direct questions and comments to appropriate people.

2. Below is a list of things a facilitator has to be concerned about, as well as ways to handle each situation:

a. Keep the meeting focused on the topic.

(1) Point out that the discussion has drifted. Usually the meeting will quickly return to the topic.

(2) Restate the original topic under discussion. (Example: “My understanding is that we were discussing. . .”)

b. Clarify and accept communication.

(1) Summarize the contribution of participants. In particular, summarize the contributions of participants who have not been actively involved. (“Your feeling is that. . .”)

(2) Relate one participant’s idea to another. (“If I understand it correctly, your idea would add to Mr. Smith’s by. . .”) Accept an incomplete idea. (“Could you develop that idea a little more?”)

(3) Point out when a team member’s contribution is cut off and help complete it. (“I’m afraid that we may have cut Mr. Jones off. Did you have more you wanted to contribute, Mr. Jones?”)

c. Accept the feeling as valid data.

(1) Summarize feelings well as content. (“You feel angry when. . .”)

d. State a problem in a constructive way so that the meeting participants can work on it.

(1) State the problem in such a way that it doesn't sound like blame fixing or an accusation of the participants.

(2) Help clarify the areas of decision-making. ("As I understand it, the Wilderness Act does not allow for development of recreation areas; however, it is open to us to recommend the classification of this land.")

e. Suggest a procedure or problem-solving approach.

(1) Point out when it may be useful to move on to the next problem. ("I'm wondering if we're ready to move on to. . .")

(2) Suggest a procedure. ("I'd like to propose that we might break into small discussion groups. . .")

f. Summarize and clarify direction.

(1) Summarize what the meeting has accomplished and indicate what the next steps will be.

g. In a small meeting the facilitator may also play the recorder role. (See recorder role)

3. Behavior the facilitator should avoid.

There is certain behavior the facilitator should avoid because it makes the role impractical. The facilitator who does not remain neutral, becomes a major participant in the content, manipulates the group or uses the role to assert personal ideas will not be effective. Specifically, the facilitator should **avoid**:

a. Judging or criticizing the ideas or values of others.

b. Projecting personal ideas and using the role to argue for them. If the facilitator wants to contribute ideas, it would be better to ask someone else to assume the facilitator role until discussion on those ideas is completed.

c. Making procedural decisions for the meeting without consulting participants.

d. Making lengthy comments.

e. Repeating each response as it is offered.

f. Giving verbal rewards for the best answers.

g. Using a "know-it-all," sarcastic tone of voice.

h. Asking leading questions.

i. Asking loaded questions.

j. Asking questions in rapid succession, not allowing time to think.

B. The Recorder's Role

The recorder's role may be played by the facilitator in a small meeting, but in a larger meeting should be handled by another individual.

The recorder's role is:

1. To display contributions of the participants in a highly visible manner such as a flipchart. A whiteboard is okay if someone is keeping a permanent record from it. Displaying comments in this fashion helps people keep track of what has or hasn't been said.

2. To record each participant's idea and feelings so entire group can see the summary.

3. To record statements as intended by the participants, but participants may ask the recorder to modify if needed.

4. To record agenda items or agreed upon procedures. This serves as a visible record of the meeting.

5. To provide a service to the group. The recorder tries carefully to record what the participants say and avoids modifying it with personal feelings. The recorder must display all the ideas without bias.

C. The Manager's Role

1. To be seen at the meeting. The audience may not feel that they're "getting through" if the responsible official or designate is not there.

2. To give a presentation at some appropriate point in the meeting and then maintain a listening role. This is influenced, though, by the size of the meeting and the manager's skills.

D. The Staff Expert's Role

The expert should not get involved in arguing a position, defensively justifying a policy or regulations or building a case.

The staff expert's role is:

1. To present facts on technical questions about regulations, fire preparedness, budgets, etc., in a clear, concise manner so that the audience can understand the issues.

2. To go to a meeting prepared with sufficient references to answer the range of questions likely to occur.

II. CONDUCTING A MEETING, WORKSHOP, FIELD TRIP, ETC.

A. Setting the Stage

One of the most important parts of a session is to let people know what is going to happen and to establish a higher level of expectation and learning motivation.

This may be done by displaying the following on a chart.

1. State the rationale for the session.

2. Describe what will happen.

   a. Topic.

   b. Tasks.

   c. Schedule.

3. Describe how participants will be involved.

   a. Small group exercise.

   b. Large group discussion.

B. Giving Instructions

1. Clear concise instructions increase motivation, team work and produce better results. People know what is expected, thereby avoiding duplication, confusion and frustration. Instructions need to be repeated enough times (usually three) for clear understanding.

   a. The first time—people listen ritualistically.

   b. The second time—some hear, but may have anxieties about doing.

   c. The third time—most hear, understand and do.

2. Give instructions in a way that **avoids** being redundant or seems to talk down to people. Write out the instructions completely and read them if you want to avoid confusion. In giving instructions, consider these steps:

   a. Rationale for the task.

   b. Description of the task.

      (1) How it will be done.

      (2) Under what conditions.

      (3) Time constraints.

      (4) Grouping.

   c. Give a recap or repeat of the instructions or conditions. Example: "In the next five minutes get into groups of three and using the information on the chart, construct a statement that summarizes the function of. . .”

C. Discussion Skills

1. A good facilitator will possess the following discussion skills to promote group interaction and involvement:

   a. Acceptance. Accepts all responses in a nonjudgemental manner making people feel that all responses are acceptable, thus promoting participation.

   b. Support. Supports persons having trouble expressing themselves or who offer irrelevant information on first attempt.

   c. Encouragement. Encourages those reluctant to speak, to contribute their thoughts and ideas.

   d. Handling errors. Getting wrong answers out in the open in a positive way so they can be corrected.

2. Discussion skills a facilitator will use to contribute to the completeness and relevancy of the subject being discussed:

   a. Extending. Trying to get as much information as possible about the subject being discussed.

   b. Clarifying. Asking for explanations of unfamiliar terms or foggy statements.

   c. Focusing. Zeroing in on specific points of discussion.

d. Refocusing. Drawing people back to the topic of discussion after getting sidetracked.

e. Lifting. Raising the level of discussion by combining thoughts that may lead to inferences, generalizations or conclusions.

f. Giving time to think. Allowing people time to put thoughts together, produce whole sentences, to answer questions.

g. Summarizing. Helping someone state a lengthy observation in fewer words.

D. Summarizing

Each meeting should end with a summary period. This should include a review of the purpose of the meeting, what was accomplished, listing of assignments, commitments and what will happen next.

The following format can be used to plan such a summary:

1. Before we conclude, I would like to summarize.

2. The purpose of the meeting was to. . .

3. The objectives included:

   a.

   b.

   c.

4. We were able to accomplish the following:

5. We made the following assignments and commitments:

Assignment/ Commitment	Responsible Person	Due Date

6. Are there any others to add?

7. Will we need to meet again?

8. We will deal with. . .

9. If your name is on our mailing list, you will receive information in the mail.

10. If you have other comments or concerns, see us after the meeting.

11. Leave your name and address if you wish to be added to the mailing list.

E. Use of Audio/Visual Equipment (slide/overhead/video)

Decide which form of audio/visual will best suit the situation. Consider the time available, skill level, audience, number of times used, and the size of the audience. Write a script or outline for everything to be said.

1. Slides.

   a. Assemble the necessary slides.

   b. Make title slides, if desired.

   c. Use *all* horizontal or *all* vertical pictures.

   d. Keep slide programs to 12-15 minutes.

e. Keep slide and tapes separate so slide editing will be easier.

2. Easel stands and newsprint.

   a. Check the size of the letters to make sure the entire audience can see them.

   b. Use different colors for emphasis.

   c. Write large and legibly.

   d. Highlight key or main points.

3. Overhead projectors.

   a. Know when overhead projector fits into the presentation.

   b. Prepare good quality transparencies.

   c. Follow guidelines for maximum number of lines on a transparency for good visual presentation.

   d. Know how to use an overhead machine properly.

   e. Limit size of group to 60 people when using an overhead projector.

4. Videotape.

   a. Assemble videotape crew (3 minimum).

   b. Have someone else do the editing.

   c. Show movement in video, otherwise use slides.

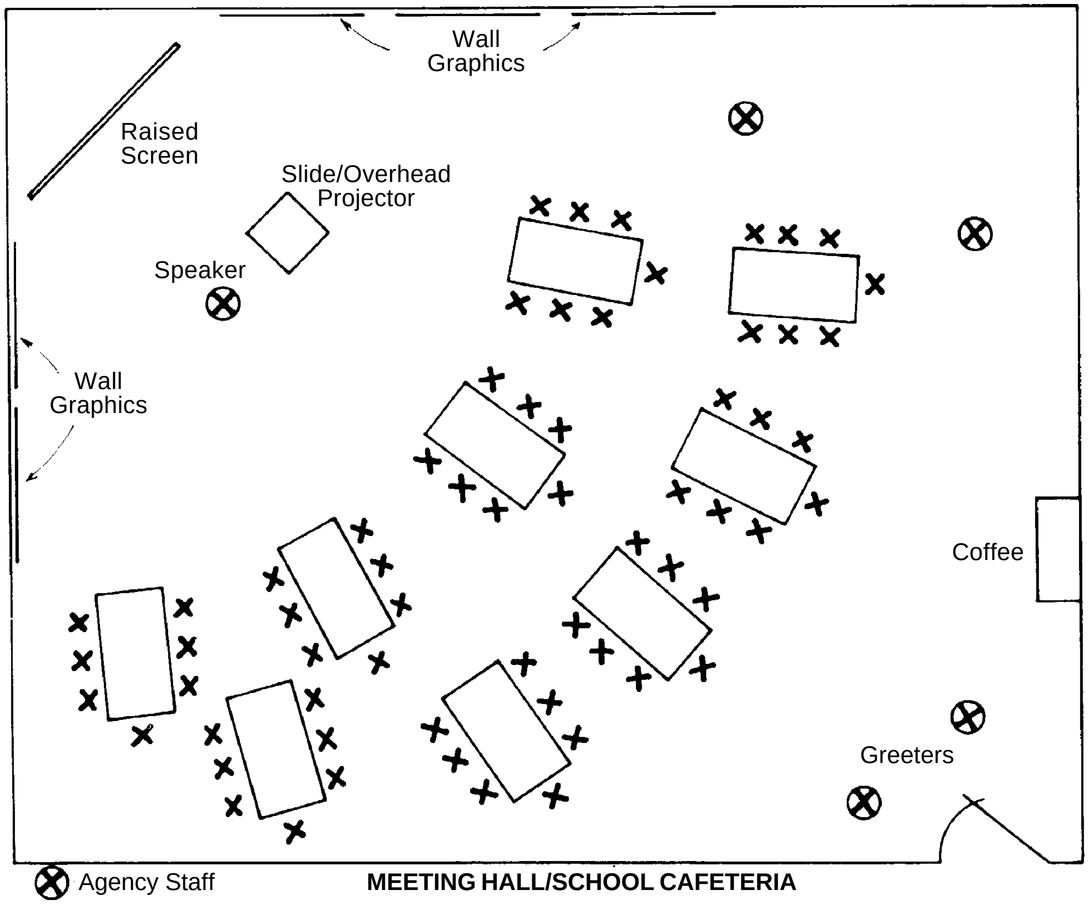
d. Video is exciting, but must be done well. If in doubt, use something else.

e. Limit viewers to a maximum of 25 people per monitor.

5. Computer show projectors.

F. Meeting Room Arrangement

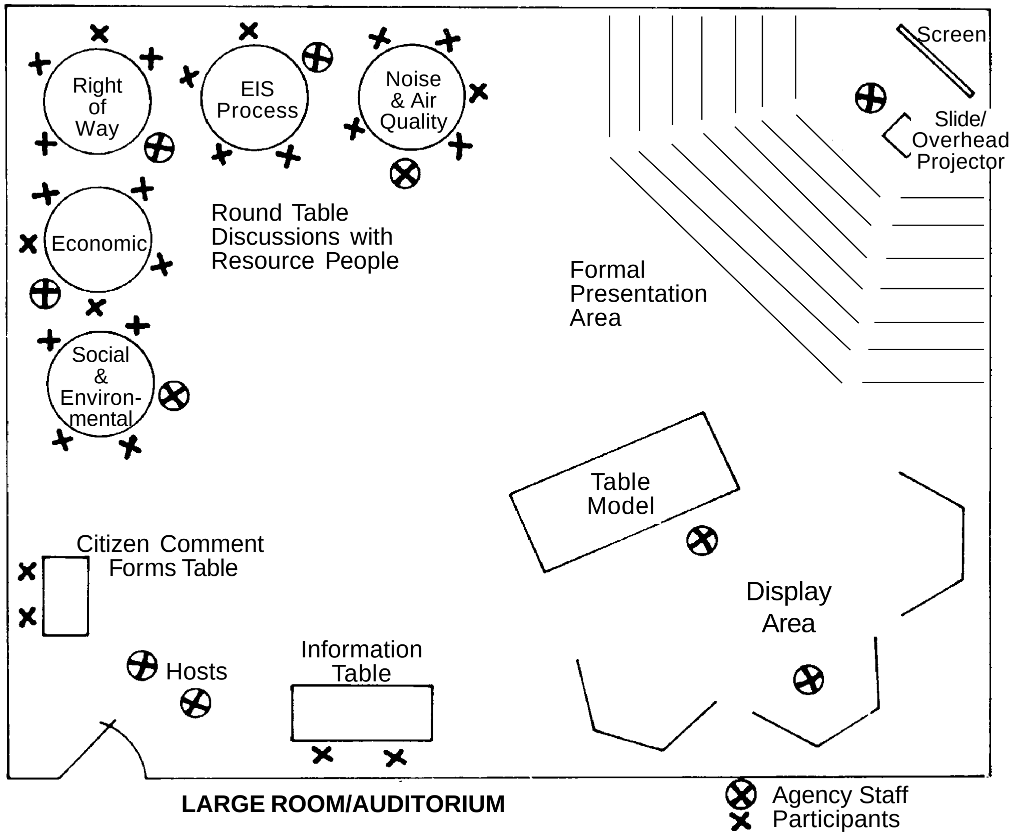
FORMAT 1



Format 1 may be used for workshops, information meetings, moderately-sized public meetings or training sessions. This layout for a meeting room maximizes possibilities for active participation by attendees. It is carefully structured to provide attendees with a clear view of the facilitator and the graphics. It also equalizes the position of attendees in relation to each other rather than lining them up one behind the other as in the traditional "classroom" arrangement.

This format is flexible enough to use for meetings which include both formal presentations and short workshops. It is also useful for a meeting room that is not large enough to accommodate scattered workshop tables (as in format 3) that require more space.

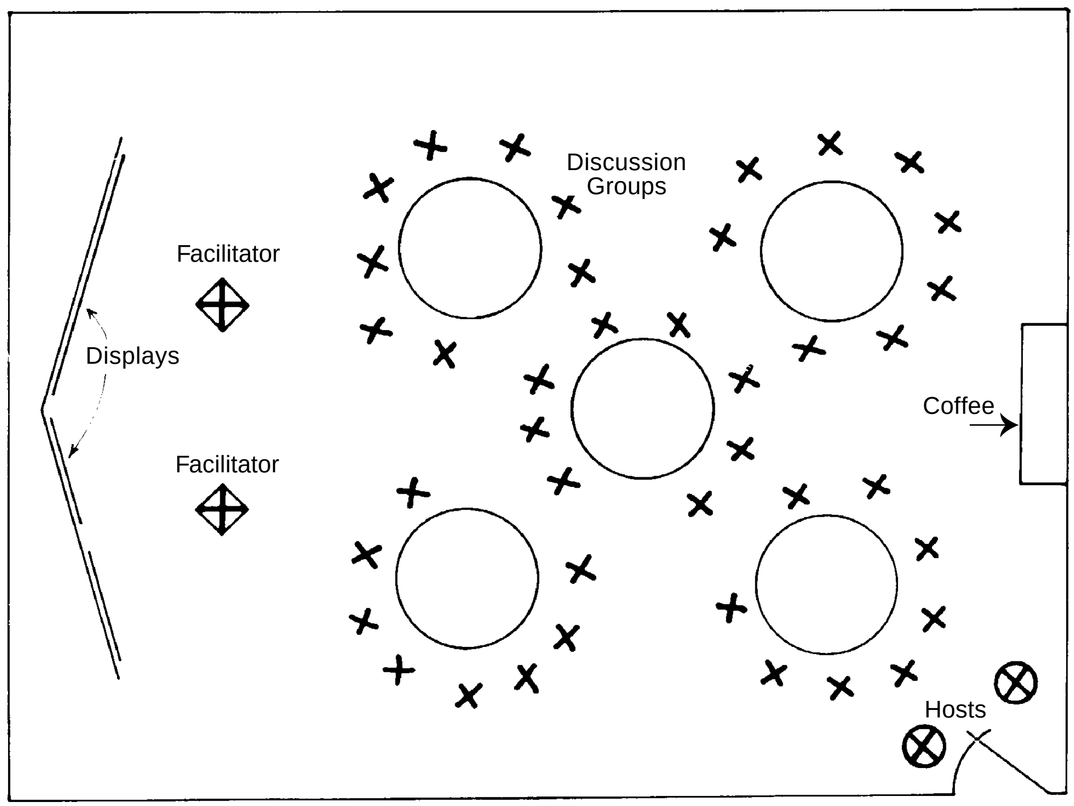
FORMAT 2



Format 2 is a formal structure recommended for large meetings or hearings where roundtable discussions are held. ("Roundtables" may occur during and after the meeting, as well as before the formal presentation.)

This format minimizes formality by dividing the room into separate sections for different purposes. Prior to the meeting, attendees can choose one of four activities: viewing displays, completing comment forms, seeking general information or participating in discussions on specific areas. They may choose one or all of the activities for as long as needed or desired. Format 2 is recommended for meetings (or hearings) where a considerable technical presentation is necessary and/or where technical information is complex.

FORMAT 3



Format 3 creates perhaps *the* most conducive environment for open communications and obtaining information. It eliminates the row structure of seating and puts attendees in informal work groups. This format should always be used in workshops where “brainstorming” (see chapter 5) is used. Workshops where participants work in small groups require an informal atmosphere conducive to uninhibited discussion.

Another advantage to this format is the lack of a central focus. The scattered tables take any “aimed” direction away from the speaker(s) or facilitator(s). This avoids the “us against them” feeling of traditional row seating and gives attendees some responsibility for the conduct and success of the meeting.

Appendix A

ANALYSIS OF IDENTIFIED GROUP (Sample)

Name of group: ____
Type of organization: ____
Major expressed interest: _____________________________________
____
____
Name(s) of contact person(s): _________________________________
Level and type of involvement with agency in past: _____________________
____
Geographic orientation of group (where are they from?): ______________
____
Occupations of majority of members (if known): ____________________
____
Fire Management interests of the majority of members (if known): ________
____
Length of time group has been organized and active in the area: __________
____
Ways in which group will be affected by issue(s): ____________________
____
____
____
Predicted or expressed position on issues: _________________________
____
____
____

ANALYSIS OF IDENTIFIED INDIVIDUAL (Sample)

Name of individual: ____

Profession: ____

Group affiliation(s): ____

Major expressed interests: ____

____

____

Level and type of involvement with agency in past: ______________________

____

Geographic orientation of individual (where is he/she from?): ___________

____

Ways in which individual will be affected by issue(s): ___________________

____

____

____

Predicted or expressed position on issues: ______________________________

____

____

____

CHECKLIST FOR MEETINGS

Reserve Meeting Space

____ Tables Needed
____ Chair Arrangement
____ Podium
____ Public Address Systems
____ ______________________
____ ______________________

Assemble Materials

____ Attendance Roster
____ Agenda Sheets
____ Name Tags
____ Handout Materials (list)
____ ______________________
____ ______________________

Send Out Meeting Notice

____ Mailing List
____ News Media
____ Personal Contacts
____ ______________________
____ ______________________

Make Visuals

____ Displays
____ Directional Signs
____ Slide Program
____ ______________________
____ ______________________

At the Meeting

Physical Arrangements

____ Get there ___hours ahead of time
____ Tables and Chairs
____ Registration
____ Podium
____ P.A. System
____ Signing Up
____ ______________________
____ ______________________

Miscellaneous Supplies

____ Markers
____ Masking Tape
____ Extension Cords
____ P.A. System
____ Projectors (extra bulbs)
____ Money (for facility)
____ Computer
____ ______________________
____ ______________________

Follow Up

____ Document Meeting
____ Add Names to Mailing List
____ ______________________
____ ______________________

Appendix B

This information is excerpted from *"How Do Forest Landowners Learn? A Study of Resource Agency/Landowner Interaction in Northern California"* prepared by Hal Voege and Norbert Wagner, October 1997, for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF & FP).

The report is available in its entirety from the headquarters office of CDF & FP in Sacramento, California.

HOW DO FOREST LANDOWNERS LEARN?
A Study of Resource Agency/Landowner Interaction in Northern California

Prepared for the
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Hal Voege and Norbert Wagner

The Training Source
1410 Ethan Way
Sacramento, CA 95825

October 1997

The opinions and conclusions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection or The Training Source. *Funding provided by the USDA Forest Service.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. BACKGROUND

The Forest Stewardship program in California has lost funding, requiring the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to seek new ways of helping forest landowners practice effective management. In addition, the focus has shifted from promoting individual landowner projects to community watershed level activities. This leads to the questions, “How and why do landowners learn?” and “How can CDF facilitate the learning process?” The answers lie in understanding the four stages of learning and what triggers motivation, building partnerships with local organizations that serve landowners, and overcoming barriers to effective learning and partnership.

II. ADULT LEARNING

Adults have different learning needs than children. Adults have a greater need to know why they should learn something. Adult learning is tied more directly to the perception that knowledge will help them perform better or lead more satisfying lives. Adults have a deep need for self-direction. Thus, effective adult learning takes place when topics are important in their experience, rather than imposed by an external authority.

III. STAGES OF LEARNING

A four-stage model is used to describe the learning process. The model progresses sequentially through the stages of ignorance, confusion, confidence, and mastery. The study of every unfamiliar subject begins with ignorance and may ultimately progress to mastery. When current forest management literature was examined using this model, two common shortcomings were noted. Either documents attempted to address several stages at once, or the earlier stages were left out entirely. These shortcomings can be detrimental to the learning process.

IV. LANGUAGE PATTERNS

Language patterns can profoundly influence motivation to learn. Individual motivation traits determine which language patterns will be most effective in the presentation of ideas and information. The study discusses six types of motivation traits that can facilitate the presentation of information.

V. DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Seven principles of designing text-based material are also presented. The use of these principles can have a significant impact on the acceptance and usability of information.

VI. BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY

Resource agencies increasingly seek the assistance of local partners to encourage landowners to adopt best management practices. A series of workshops and interviews examined agencies, potential local partners, and landowners and their relationships from the landowner perspective. The workshops and interviews provided information regarding information needs, local issues, agency practices, and landowner attitudes.

VII. RESOURCE AGENCIES

Four landowner perspectives regarding resource agencies stood out.

A. Agency goals are confusing to landowners and sometimes appear to be in conflict with each other. This increases landowner suspicion and reduces "buy-in" to agency programs.

B. Agency communication is often difficult to follow because it is highly technical and filled with jargon. Using language that landowners find appealing would reduce this difficulty.

C. Agency practices are perceived as beneficial, or not, depending on the approach of local agency representatives. A number of suggestions for improving agency interaction at the local level were brought out.

D. Regulatory and paper work requirements were seen as excessive burdens that provide no visible benefit.

VIII. LOCAL PARTNERS

Viewpoints regarding Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) and other potential local partners include these:

A. RCDs are seen as viable local partners; however, they need agency assistance to be effective on the ground. Specifically, they need funding and technical assistance.

B. Landowner conservancies often have strong local support and could become effective partners if properly approached.

C. Coordinated Resource Management Plans (CRMPs) can be effective if they are not perceived as agency dominated.

D. Other potential partners include local volunteer fire departments and Registered Professional Foresters.

IX. LANDOWNERS

Landowners' descriptions of their interest in learning management practices closely follow adult learning theory.

A. Landowners have knowledge and experience that must be recognized for effective learning to take place.

B. They have a strong need to control their affairs and their property.

C. They need to understand *why* they should learn. The topic must be relevant.

D. Results must be seen as attainable, physically and financially.

E. They can be intimidated by too much technical detail or too many requirements.

F. They seek specific advice and guidance, not general prescriptions.

X. BUILDING TRUST

Building trust-based relationships is crucial to changing attitudes and practices on the ground. Local partners can play an important role in buffering landowners' inherent distrust of agencies. Local partners need access to agency personnel, clear lines of communication, and a sense of working toward a common goal. They often lack technical data that agencies could supply.

XI. AGENCY RELATIONSHIPS

Excessive regulation is counterproductive to building trust based relationships and to creating positive change. Instead, a cooperative relationship among agencies, local partners, and landowners should be established. Agencies should replace excessive regulation with the following:

A. Agency policy that is responsive to local needs and priorities.

B. Agency staff that perceives itself as advisors to potential local partners.

C. Clear lines of communication between agencies and local partners.

D. Agency assistance in developing watershed databases through technical data and funding.

XII. LANDOWNER RELATIONSHIPS

Landowners saw some agency approaches to problems as short-sighted, not most beneficial, and sometimes harmful to their use of the land. On the other hand, they saw agencies as potentially very valuable when they advise, suggest, educate, and demonstrate, while allowing landowners to reach the final decisions for themselves.

Landowners believed that the time and expense of complying with regulatory requirements have the unintended effects of promoting poor management practices.

XIII. LOCAL PARTNER RELATIONSHIPS

Since local support is essential to making their efforts politically possible, RCDs may have to make community outreach a priority goal. This may involve:

A. Getting local newspaper coverage of their achievements.

B. Making the benefits of their activities clear to local landowner groups such as the Farm Bureau and homeowner's associations.

C. Keeping local legislators informed of the community-wide benefits of their activities.

RCDs should take a more active role in educating urban residents and urban legislators about their conservation efforts and plans, and clearly show the connections between what they are doing and urban needs and values.

CHAPTER 2
LEARNING, MOTIVATION, AND INFORMATION

I. WHAT IS IN THIS CHAPTER?

This chapter is about research that provides a conceptual framework for answering the general question: “How and why do landowners learn?”

There are several related areas of research important to this question. They are:

- What is important to know about adult learning?
- Where does learning start and where does it lead?
- What triggers motivation to learn about a subject?
- How can information best be presented?

This chapter also suggests some application of the research.

This chapter contains the following sections:

- Theory — Section A
- Application—Section B

II. WHAT ELSE IS IMPORTANT?

This study also included a review of literature related to the following “content specific” areas:

- Forest landowner attitudes, motivation, and management practices.
- Landowner demographics
- Agencies involved in resource conservation
- Previous surveys

Information about these topics provided some of the background necessary for the researchers to plan and conduct workshops with landowners.

III. WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

The bibliography contains a list of works consulted.

SECTION A — THEORY

I. HOW DO ADULTS LEARN?

Becoming better stewards of the land involves learning. The best way to learn, however, is not necessarily to be taught. Adults have different learning needs than children do.

A. What are the principles of adult learning?

Malcom Knowles (1987) outlined the following assumptions of the adult learning model:

1. Adults have a need to know why they should learn something.

2. Adults have a deep need to be self-directing.

3. Adults have a greater volume and different quality of experience than youth.

4. Adults become ready to learn when they experience in their life situation a need to know something or a need to be able to do something in order to perform more effectively and satisfyingly.

5. Adults enter into a learning experience with a task-, problem-, or life-centered orientation to learning.

6. Adults are motivated to learn by both extrinsic and intrinsic motivators.

B. In what areas do they apply?

The application of the principles of adult learning has implications for the following areas:

1. Climate setting

2. Creating a mechanism for mutual planning

3. Diagnosing the participant's needs

4. Translating learning needs into objectives

5. Designing and managing a pattern of learning experiences

6. Evaluating the extent to which the objectives have been achieved

C. Why is this important?

Adults cannot be taught effectively in the same way children are taught. In particular, "diagnosing participant's needs" can be done in the context of the four stages of learning described next.

II. WHAT ARE THE FOUR STAGES OF LEARNING?

Because one of the key questions to be addressed by this study is "How and why do landowners learn?" it is important to have a conceptual framework for the learning process. One simple but useful model follows.

Every person who learns goes through four stages of learning. (O'Connor and Seymour, 1993) These stages are described in the following table. Learners at different stages of learning have different needs. These stages provide a conceptual framework for meeting those needs.

	Unconscious	Conscious
Competent	**Stage 4: Mastery** • Unconscious Competence • Skill has been fully integrated and is habitual. • Can do the task without thinking about intermediate steps. • "I can just do it."	**Stage 3: Confidence** • Conscious Competence • Full conscious attention is still needed to carry out an activity. The skill is not yet fully integrated and habitual. • Able to think through a task step-by-step and do it. • "I know that I know."
Incompetent	**Stage 1: Ignorance** • Unconscious Incompetence • We are unaware of a skill. • Unaware that one cannot do a task. • "I don't know that I don't know."	**Stage 2: Confusion** • Conscious Incompetence • Conscious attention is on the task and the results are variable. This is the stage when the learning rate is the greatest. • Aware of the task, but cannot do it. • "I know that I don't know."

A. Why is this important?

This model can be used to address the needs of the various categories of landowners.

1. Stage 1 landowners are unaware of the potential benefits and practices of management. They must be introduced to the concept of forest land management through simple, repeated "marketing" efforts.

2. Stage 2 landowners are aware that they may play a role in managing their land for long-term benefits, but need extensive guidance in fulfilling that role.

3. Stage 3 landowners are able to understand and appreciate good management practices, but need specific, technical support of their activities.

4. Stage 4 landowners have become effective stewards of their land and can serve as role models for both agencies and other landowners.

III. WHAT TRIGGERS MOTIVATION?

Not all people are motivated in the same way. Some schools of thought maintain that it is impossible for one individual to motivate another. Essentially, all motivation comes from within. However, an understanding of what triggers motivation, and how to activate those triggers, could lead to a more effective presentation of the concepts of ecosystem management among landowners.

A. Is it manipulation?

The importance of understanding motivation traits lies *not* in being able to manipulate people into doing things they would not ordinarily want to do. Rather, it lies in being able to present ideas in such a way that *minimum energy* is required on the part of the listener to effectively hear the message. It lies in being able to overcome barriers created by how the ideas are *presented*, rather than barriers created by the ideas themselves. Thus, the listener's energy can then be used to understand and evaluate the ideas being presented instead of being used to overcome barriers created by language that does not match the listener's preferences.

B. What are the motivation traits?

Charvet (1995) describes six categories of motivation traits related to how different people trigger their motivation. These traits are related to what language will best capture the interest of people with different motivation traits. The traits and their patterns are as follows:

Motivation Traits	Motivation Pattern
Level - "Is about what will get you going and make you think."	• Proactive vs. • Reactive
Criteria - "Those words which incite a physical or emotional reaction, Hot Buttons."	• Values
Direction - "Either they move toward a goal, or away from problems."	• Toward vs. • Away From
Source - "Does the person find motivation in external sources, or in internal standards and beliefs."	• Internal vs. • External
Reason - "Is there a continual quest for alternatives, or is there a preference to follow established procedures?"	• Options vs. • Procedures
Decision Factors - "Does the motivation come from a search for 'difference' or 'sameness'?"	• Sameness vs. • Sameness with Exceptions vs. • Difference vs. • Sameness with Exception and Difference

IV. EXAMPLES OF INFLUENCING LANGUAGE

This section gives examples of the types of language that might be most appropriate in presenting information and ideas to forest landowners with various motivation traits. Keep in mind that the purpose of using influencing language is not to “trick” or “persuade” someone to do something; the purpose is, rather, to present ideas in a way that focuses listener’s energy on the content of the message.

A. Level

What language might appeal to a proactive or reactive audience learning about fuels reduction? Since the majority of the audience may be equally proactive and reactive in a given context, both types of language may need to be used to influence them.

1. **Proactive** - Wildfire is a real and present danger in your area. You can take positive steps to protect your home and surroundings. Create a defensible space now; don’t wait for the fire season. We can show you how to take control of the situation.

2. **Reactive** - Have you considered what might happen if a wildfire occurred in your area? Think about this: if a wildfire should burn your property, your buildings could be replaced but how long would it take to replace your trees? Current research indicates that 100 feet of defensible space may be needed on level parcels, and up to 400 feet downslope on steep parcels. This may be the right time to analyze how you can create a defensible space on your property. We can assist you in developing a plan to increase your safety and to preserve the forest setting where you live.

B. Criteria

Criteria are not easy to illustrate because they are very personal. However, Charvet (1995) gives us the following description of influencing language for this motivational trait. “Unskilled sales people just *pitch their product* (usually using their own Criteria) without much regard to what their prospective customer actually wants...Many market researchers investigate people’s Criteria so that the exact phrasing of an advertising campaign can match what is most important to the groups they wish to influence...If you want to get and keep someone’s interest, you will need to link what you are proposing with their Criteria. You will need to be careful to deliver what you promise when you use someone’s Criteria to persuade them. Otherwise their disappointment and anger will likely be directed at you.”

C. Direction

What kinds of Direction triggers would motivate a person to come to a resource agency or RCD for technical advice or financial assistance?

1. **Toward** - New landowners might come because they have a goal, a mental picture, of what they want their property to look like. They may be looking for ways to realize their goal. A rancher might come because he wants to increase the quality of grazing for his cattle, or increase his hay production. A timber owner might want to increase the production and profit of his operation.

   Words and prases that appeal to people with a Toward orientation in a given context include: “attain; obtain; have; get; include; achieve; enable you to; benefits; advantages; here’s what you would accomplish” (Charvet, 1995).

2. **Away From -** A homeowner may seek help with fuels reduction in order to avoid the possibility of having his property burned to ashes. Someone planning a timber harvest might want help in filing the paperwork in order to avoid a fine. A rancher might want to solve the problem of how to get rid of chaparral on his land. A farmer might want to know how to install a fish screen to prevent having his water supply cut off.

   Words and phrases that appeal to people with an Away From orientation in a given context include: "won't have to; solve; prevent; avoid; fix; not have to deal with; get rid of; it's not perfect; let's find out what's wrong; there'll be no problems" (Charvet, 1995).

Sometimes an Away From orientation may initially sound like a Toward orientation. For example, people may want "freedom," which sounds like a toward orientation. However, what they may actually want is freedom *from* something, rather than freedom to do something. That makes the orientation "Away From."

It is crucial to ask Direction questions more than once to get an accurate idea of what direction actually motivates an audience (even a single person). The first response is usually Toward, regardless of their actual pattern.

Agencies often tend to have a Toward orientation. They have a vision of how things could or should be and they have "good science" to back it up. Landowners often tend to have an Away From orientation. They want to avoid obstacles or solve problems that stand in their way. The important thing is not *what* they plan to do but *why* they are motivated to do it. Understanding the Direction of their motivation makes it easier to get and hold their interest.

D. Source

When presenting a new management practice, how could the information be phrased to an Internal or External audience to get their attention?

1. **Internal** - You might consider the advantages of using this practice. If you try it, you can decide for yourself if it will work for you. Here is some information to help you make a decision. If you need more information, contact these people.

2. **External** - Experts at the university have done studies to show that this practice will have quite an impact. Once you try this practice, your neighbors will notice the improvements and you will get good feedback. I strongly recommend you give it a try. These articles will show you what the experts think.

Many long-time landowners have an Internal orientation toward their land and management practices. They want to make up their own minds about which practices to use. They are looking for information and will not be swayed by external pressure (in fact, it may make them resistant). Newer landowners may have a more External orientation, since they may feel less certain about their own knowledge. Since the majority of the audience will be either one or the other orientation in a given context, care in wording is essential in communicating with them.

E. Reason

What language would be most effective in explaining the steps in thinning a stand of timber to an audience composed of Options or Procedures people?

1. **Options** - There are m any ways to go about this. Here is why it is important. Let's look at some of the alternative methods you might use. You may find it a challenge to combine several of them in ways that suit you best. You might come up with new ideas that work well for you. There are no rules for doing this; come up with the ways that work best for you. If you want to try something different, let me know and we m ay be able to make an exception in your case.

2. **Procedures** - The correct three step procedure for thinning a stand to reduce the hazard of wildfire is: First remove fuel by thinning crowded trees to have at least 10 feet between crowns on level ground, and up to 30 feet on steep slopes. Second, prune shrubs, saplings and the lower branches of trees to more than the recommended distance to allow for future growth. Finally, dispose of the shrubs and branches you have cut to reduce the fuel load.

Audiences will be mainly either Options or Procedures in a context. It may be necessary to use both sorts of language to appeal to an unknown audience. Options oriented people will want to know what and why. Procedures oriented people will want to know how.

F. Direction Factors

The following influencing language for each of the four patterns in this trait is quoted from Charvet (1995).

1. **Sameness** - The same as; as you already know; like before; identical.

2. **Sameness with Exception** - More; better; less; the same except; evolving; progress; gradual improvement; upgrade.

3. **Difference** - New; totally different; completely changed; switch; shift; unique; one of a kind; brand new.

4. **Sameness with Exception and Difference** - Use *both* Sameness with Exception *and* Difference language.

Since the majority of the population has a Sameness with Exception orientation toward work, that influencing language may be most appropriate for general audiences. Specific questions may need to be asked to understand the orientation of an individual.

G. Why is this important?

It is possible, as described by Charvet (1995), to introduce ideas with language that appeals to people with each combination of motivation traits and patterns. The use of appropriate language can be effective whether "marketing" an idea or introducing a lesson in a classroom. Matching language makes it more likely that a message will be heard.

V. WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO PRESENT TEXT BASED INFORMATION?

Much of the information available to landowners will be printed material including both text and graphics. The design of this material will have a significant impact on its acceptance and usability. One effective form of presenting text-based information is known as structured writing.

A. What is the purpose of structured writing?

One structured writing approach described by Horn (1993), a pioneer who began studying the field in 1965, was based upon research designed to answer the following question:

"How can we make learning easier and quicker for people in complex, information-rich environments?"

B. What are the principles of sequencing and formatting?

The most visible aspect of structured writing is its sequencing and format. The principles of sequencing and format are as follows:

Principle	Description
Chunking	Group information into manageable chunks.
Relevance	• Place like things together. • Exclude unrelated items from each chunk.
Consistency	Use consistent • terms within each chunk of information; • terms in both the chunk and the label; • organization.
Labeling	Provide the reader with a label for each chunk of information.
Integrated Graphics	Use tables, illustrations, and diagrams as an integral part of the writing.
Accessible Detail	Write at the level of detail that will make the document usable for all readers.
Hierarchy of Chunking and Labeling	• Group small chunks around a single relevant topic. • Provide the group with a label.

C. Why is this important?

Research has shown the following benefits of structured writing, specifically the form of structured writing known as Information Mapping®:

- 83% decrease in first draft development time
- 75% decrease in document revision time
- 54% decrease in number of words in documents
- 10% to 50% decrease in reading time
- 38% increase in use of documentation

SECTION B — APPLICATION

I. STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE ECOSYSTEM LEVEL MANAGEMENT

This section contains recommendations regarding the design and delivery of materials to support landowner learning about forest ecosystem strategies and practices. These strategies are in alignment with the Four Stages of Learning.

Training materials reviewed for this study displayed two shortcomings:

- They tried to address too many stages of learning in one document, or
- They did not address the initial stages of learning.

Therefore, these materials do not appeal to learners who are in the initial stages of learning. Using the following strategies for each stage should help eliminate these shortcomings.

II. STAGE 1 STRATEGIES

A. Goal

Stage 1 strategies are designed to help landowners move from unconscious incompetence to conscious incompetence. The goal is to replace ignorance of management issues with awareness and desire to learn more.

B. Questions To Be Answered

Materials should help the landowner answer the following questions:

1. How does this affect me and my property?

2. Why should I care about this?

C. Format and Content

Materials should:

1. Be attractively formatted.

2. Be brief.

3. Be easy to read.

4. Be free from technical terms and jargon.

5. Be pictorial or graphic (not wordy).

6. Describe issues, problems and implications.

7. Provide pointers to additional, more detailed information.

8. Appeal to all motivational triggers identified in the LAB (language and behavior) Analysis model.

D. Distribution Options

Materials could be distributed:

1. In local newspapers, as articles about:

   a. The importance of management practices and "Success" stories.

2. In a general brochure describing:

   a. Management opportunities;

   b. Landowner responsibilities; and

   c. Threats to the land.

3. In introductory brochures about specific threats, such as:

   a. Wildfire or flooding.

4. As handouts during door-to-door canvassing of neighbors.

5. As videos to be used at local meetings or as part of television presentations.

6. At local government agency offices.

7. In booths at local fairs.

8. In Chamber of Commerce offices.

9. In mailings from RCDs to members or new landowners.

10. Through real estate brokers and title companies.

III. STAGE 2 STRATEGIES

A. Goal

The goal of Stage 2 strategies are designed to help landowners move from conscious incompetence to conscious competence. The goal is to enable landowners to eliminate confusion and take action with help from others.

B. Questions To Be Answered

Materials should help the landowner answer the following questions:

1. What should I be doing?

2. What benefits will doing it bring to me?

C. Format and Content

Materials should:

1. Be comprehensive and accurate, describing each step in just enough detail to make it clear to uniformed owners.

2. Describe what to do and what to avoid, *not* how to do it.

3. Be well illustrated (before - after).

4. Describe the practices and relate them to direct benefits to owner.

5. Indicates the implications for the larger ecosystem/ watershed.

6. Include a glossary of technical terms.

7. Provide an index and pointers to additional information.

8. Relate each practice to specific threats or opportunities.

D. Distribution Options

Materials could be distributed:

1. As a "best practices" manual available to owners.

2. As handouts at field trips or seminars.

3. As pamphlets related to specific threats or opportunities, such as

   a. How to Protect Against Wildfire

   b. Thinking of Doing a Timber Harvest?

   c. So You Want to Build a Road

4. At local agency offices.

5. At RCD offices.

IV. STAGE 3 STRATEGIES

A. Goal

Stage 3 strategies are designed to help landowners move from conscious competence to unconscious competence. The goal is to help landowners build confidence and move toward mastery.

B. Questions To Be Answered

Materials should help the landowner answer the following questions:

1. How do I do a particular practice?

2. What are the specific needs, skills, permits, etc., required for each step of the task?

C. Format and Content

Materials should:

1. Be detailed enough to give landowners confidence that they could accomplish the practice.

2. Be well-illustrated (step-by-step).

3. Contain an index and a glossary of technical terms.

4. Describe alternative ways to perform each step, if appropriate.

5. Include a section on how to get technical assistance.

6. Include references to other sources of information.

D. Distribution Options

Materials could be distributed as:

1. “How to” manuals for each practice, such as popular books on home or yard maintenance.

2. Texts or handouts in University Extension or California Association of RCDs (CARCD) short courses.

3. Something that could be purchased from RCDs.

V. STAGE 4 STRATEGIES

A. Goal

Stage 4 strategies are designed to help landowners maintain mastery of theory and practices while helping others move toward mastery. The goal is to create m ore leaders, trainers, and teachers at the landowner level.

B. Questions To Be Answered

Materials should help the landowner answer the following questions:

1. How can I keep my knowledge up-to-date with new research?

2. How can I share what I know with neighbors and others in order to increase the effectiveness of these practices in the community or ecosystem?

C. Format and Content

Materials should:

1. Provide access to, and information about the latest findings and practices.

2. Describe ways to increase local involvement in management practices.

3. Describe ways to organize cooperative groups of landowners.

4. Include references to successful local efforts in other areas of the state and the world.

5. Show how to make such efforts politically possible, practically possible, and how to implement them.

D. Distribution Options

Materials could be distributed:

1. As technical documents or through technical advisors.

2. In workshops and seminars devoted to training local leaders.

3. As workbooks/references for increasing local involvement.

CHAPTER 5
CLOSING THOUGHTS

I. A SUBSTITUTE FOR MONEY?

Government agencies everywhere are faced with a significant problem—not enough money to accomplish their mission the way they once did. Lack of money has a way of focusing attention on new possibilities. One is reminded of a quote by the famous physicist, Ernest Rutherford (1871-1937), who, when denied funding, said,

"We haven't got the money, so we've got to think."

Perhaps this report will contribute to the reservoir of ideas to think about.

II. IDEAS DON'T SPREAD JUST BECAUSE THEY ARE "GOOD" IDEAS

Promoting effective, sustainable, forest practices is not merely an exercise in teaching good science. It is a social challenge. In his book *Thought Contagion*, Aaron Lynch (1996) examines how beliefs spread through society. He suggests that people do not accumulate ideas; rather, ideas accumulate people. Ideas do not spread just because they are "good" ideas. They spread because there is an effective propagation mechanism.

Regardless of how "good" the idea or practice, forest management will not spread rapidly unless people are willing "hosts" for the idea.

III. "MOMENTS OF TRUTH"

It is important to realize that in each and every contact a citizen has with a government agency, there is a "moment of truth." Paraphrasing Albrecht (1985) and Carlzon (1987), a "moment of truth" is any episode in which a citizen comes into contact with any aspect of an organization, *however remote,* and thereby has an opportunity to form an impression.

A "moment of truth" happens with every telephone call, letter, and face-to-face contact. It happens when a landowner looks for a parking spot when she visits an agency. Moments of truth are as powerful as they are ubiquitous.

IV. SO WHAT?

Combining the idea of a "thought contagion" with the idea of "moments of truth," it seems almost obvious that the way to promote the spread of desirable management practices is by creating favorable moments of truth.

Favorable moments of truth occur in the presence of mutual respect, willingness to listen, and a system designed to be responsive to the needs of the citizen (landowner). The ideas in this report contribute to the creation of favorable "moments of truth."

V. USING THE STAGES OF LEARNING

Using the stages of learning model could be very effective in improving an agency's communication strategies. There seems to be much material suitable for landowners who are ready to engage in forest management practices. There seems to be little material directed toward Stage 1 landowners, who don't understand those practices or the theory behind them. Agencies must embrace a continuous marketing approach to reach the Stage 1 landowners

VI. USING MOTIVATION TRAITS

Understanding an audience's motivation traits will help to represent the material in terms that the audience does not have to struggle to understand. The potential benefits in interactions between agency personnel and landowners are great. These concepts, simple in theory, are difficult to execute and will require training and practice to implement.

VII. REGULATION VS. RESPECT

It seems clear that regulating landowners into compliance with forest practice principles is ineffective and costly. It would be much more effective for them to choose to comply because they see it in their best interest to do so. Bringing them to that point is an education process based on mutual understanding, trust, and respect. Workshop participants clearly indicated that landowners more often feel misunderstood, distrusted, and not respected. That feeling must change if "best management" practices are to make much headway. Agency policy, tactics, and implementation will all have to be reformulated to make that happen.

VIII. LISTENING: AN IMPORTANT TOOL

In the course of this study, we spent many hours listening to landowners. We recommend listening as a tool for changing agency perceptions and, even more, for creating a similar response in the speakers. We heard many negative accounts of agency practices and these will have to be listened to because they carry the seeds of positive change on the agency's part. We also heard a clear desire for help in doing the right practices. Landowners are looking for sustainable practices, cost effective methods, and knowledgeable assistance. The are trying to avoid restrictive regulation and punishment. These desires need to be understood and nurtured, not obstructed.

IX. TAKING THE INITIATIVE

Creating viable partnerships with local groups will require reaching out to them. The current process of waiting until they call or make a proposal is not effective. CDF should work to find out the needs of RCDs and other local groups in woodland areas, and then find ways to meet those needs. A little help of the right sort at the right time is more effective than simply creating another program or handing out money.

X. THE TERMINOLOGY PROBLEM

Agency terminology has become so loosely defined and jargon filled that it caused laughter in several workshops. This will have to be changed to plain English that is understood by non-technical people. Shortcuts and acronyms are useful when dealing with other agency people; they are massive obstructions when dealing with landowners. The people who have to be reached in order to make forest management work on the ground are not in the agencies; they are the landowners.

XI. AGENCIES WORKING TOGETHER

Agency personnel will have to take part in a continuous process of learning to listen. Listening to each other and learning to hear what landowners, who ultimately will do ecosystem management (or not), are saying is crucial. There are several useful suggestions listed in Chapter 4, Section B (pages 52 and 54), regarding policies and practices that agencies could implement to make this happen. If agencies are clear about the need to change the way they address landowners and each other, real progress is possible.

> *The forestry profession is urged "to overcome the presumption that resource management is a technical issue, not a social understanding."*
>
> *—Jones, Luloff, Finley, 1995*
>
> *"Only if NIPF owners are included in the decision-making process and agree that the ecosystem management goals are realistic and attainable will strides be taken."*
>
> *—Kuhns, Brunson, and Roberts, 1997*