Building Success – Communication

In this handout

1. Why we should care about communication.

2. Know 5 steps for better communication.

3. Find resources to support communication

This handout goes with the online presentation.

Note: The ASK ME approach is not new. It is simply a way of taking known factors and making them easy to remember so you can effectively communicate with a wide variety of audiences. The elements represent a distillation of conversations with literally hundreds of farmers, extension and development co-workers.

Communication is another skill key to being successful and having impact.

ASK ME

There is nothing sacred in the terms we use for each of the ASK ME elements – You can use whatever terms you want. We just use words that give us a simple Mnemonic for easy recall.

How would you rate your (mis)communicaton skills?

5. --------- 4 --------- 3 --------- 2 --------- 1
Great   So so   Can improve a lot

If you feel you can improve, then read on!

1. Why we should care about communication

Poor communication means …

Less impact; less trust; frustration; misunderstandings; missed chances, and more...!

2. Five Steps for better Communication

Audience (their needs and wants) – Who?

Who are you trying to communicate with?

What do they need and/or want?

Note 1: there could be many different audiences.

Note 2: Determining needs involves strong communication skills. You need to work with and listen to the "audience" to understand their ideas, their interests, concerns and ideas.

Solution – Why?

Why should they care?

What do you have that will effectively address their need or interest?

If you have good communication with your audience, then you will know if the solution(s) are of real interest, relevant, practical and easily implemented.

Key message

What's the essential part of the "solution" to communicate? What do they need to know so they want to take action and can take action both easily and correctly?

Getting this bit right helps make the solution compelling?

Message - (form and format)

How can you package and best communicate the key information?

How do they prefer to get their information? Where do they get their information now?

Evaluation

How can you make each step better?

Reflect to see how each step can be improved.

Now devise your approach

Want an easy way to remember the steps?

ASK ME

Audience, Solution(s), Key message, Message, Evaluation

Who (which clients or audiences) is this framework relevant to?

Can you think of an audience you have not covered here:

1. Clientele
2. Collaborators
3. Colleagues
4. Elected members
5. Partners
6. Students
7. Supervisors
8. Other _____

While the actual message and method of delivery might be different, you can use this structure to plan your communication strategy with any audience.

Communication tips - review

Five tips - Fill in the missing words[1]

Tips	Words choices
1. **Audience** - Who are they and what do they need and/or _____?	1. care
2. **Solution** - Why would they_____? What do you have that will effectively address their need or interest?	2. correctly
3. **Key message** - What's the key elements of the "solution" that they need to know so they can take action - easily and_____?	3. prefer
4. **Message** - How can you best communicate with them? How do they _____to get their information? Who do they trust?	4. step
5. **Evaluation** - How can you make each _____ better? How do we improve each step?	5. want

3. Resources

Obviously, we have only just scratched the surface. There is much more to cover in terms of communication – be it internal or external. You can find many more resources at:

UC ANR Learning & Development

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[1] Word choices 1) want, 2) care; 3) correctly, 4) prefer, 5) step

4. **Activity**.

Use this sheet to identify your communication strategy for an audience of your choice.

	Stage and key questions
☐	1. **Audience.** Who are they? Pick an audience, what are their primary interests and needs?
☐	2. **Solutions.** What do you have that will effectively address their specific interests and needs? (Can you articulate and quantify the clear benefit to the "audience"?)
☐	3. **Key message.** Break down the "solution" into clear easily understood steps that will ensure clarity of process and correctness of implementation. Use extra paper for this step.
☐	4. **Message.** How do they prefer to get their information? Where do they get their information now?
☐	5. **Evaluation**