

# How to communicating about Nuclear?

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22 June 2015



# Communicating about the nuclear?

- Why should you?
- What's the aim?
- Change the public perception?
  - What is (are) the perception(s)?
  - Are they right? Or wrong?
  - Are you perceived as a trusted source?
  - Do your experts make sense to a predominantly lay audience?
- Does communication change rusted mindsets?

# The issue with communication

- We do not “receive” communication
- We interpret information based on own frame of reference
- E.g.: book versus movie
  - › Why was the book so much better?
  - › Because your “personal movie” was much richer!
  - › People verbally associate, hence visualise in a non-verbal way

# How do people think about the nuclear?

- Communication starts with listening!
- How people think is based on their mindset
- Based on heuristics
  - System 1 & 2 thinking (Kahneman, 2011)
  - Two information processing systems (associative and rule-based) bias our risk perception (Dillon & Tinsley, 2008)
  - The nuclear is too complex to find a reasonable answer, hence we base our answer on the feeling associated to the perceived risk (Kahneman, 2011)
  - Subsequently, we rely on emotions (system 1 / associative information processing system) not on reasoning

# Emotions as a predictor for aversion?

- Risk is not something tangible, but rather a concept that is constructed in the mind, perception and emotion of every individual (Slovic, 2000)
- As non-experts don't understand expert information (System 2), they immediately rely on their emotion (System 1)
- Look at your “opponents’ communication”, is it based on ratio?
- Factors diminishing risk perception: (Slovic, 2001)
  - Trust
  - Control
  - Advantage

# How to communicate?

- Factors predicting perceptions of trust and credibility in risk communication: (Peters et al., 1997)
  - Concern and care (45%)
  - Openness (20%)
  - Honesty (20%)
  - Knowledge and expertise (15%)
- *“Defying a negative stereotype seems to be key to improving perceptions of trust and credibility”* (Peters et al., 1997)

**Finally...**

**How open, honest and empathetic  
are you and/or do you want to be  
in your communication?**

Have fun,  
Be safe,  
CHANGE THE WORLD

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# Expert versus lay people

- Experts have a MACRO-perspective:
  - *“x% of the population has the chance to be involved in an accident”*
  - *“The chance for a catastrophic accident is 1 out of x- million”*
- Laypersons react from a MICRO-perspective:
  - Look for personal consequences,
  - What’s the risk for me, my family, my neighborhood, etc.
- According to experts lay people are suspicious and irrational
- According to laypeople expert information is too complicated and dull
- We simply can’t deal with figures (Slovic, 2010)