

Developing Communication Strategies that Work

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Biographical Sketch of Author

Ms. Markowitz has worked in the arena of public education, community-based environmental protection, community organizing, training, workshop coordination and facilitation, technology transfer/ communications, and program development for over 15 years. Ms. Markowitz is an experienced speaker, writer, facilitator and trainer on a wide variety of environmental, organizational and programmatic issues such as stakeholder involvement, capacity building, community-based environmental protection, environmental stewardship, grassroots fundraising, strategic planning, community leadership development, nonpoint source pollution prevention, fostering partnerships/collaboration, and volunteer environmental monitoring. Currently she manages the Outreach and Communications group in Tetra Tech's Owings Mills (Baltimore) office.

Abstract

The ability to express an idea is as important as the idea itself. Communication to a wide audience (from elected officials to scientists to managers, and to the local citizen) is an integral part of successful environmental protection. However, just because we know it is important doesn't mean we know HOW to communicate. Developing communication strategies involves setting goals and figuring out how to reach them. When determining how to communicate monitoring results, we need to ask and answer a series of questions, which, taken together, comprise the building blocks of effective outreach:

- What are our *objectives*?
- Who are our targeted *partners and audiences*?
- What is the overall *message* we want to convey?
- What *formats* are we going to use to convey the message?
- How will we *distribute* the product?
- How will we *evaluate* the success of the strategy(s)?

This presentation will provide an overview of these basic building blocks and set the stage for the presentations to follow in this session, *Communication with Public Audiences*, and the session on *Communication Among Monitoring Entities*.