Conveying Scientific Information in an Understandable Way

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But I’m a scientist...

• Presentations to the public and/or decision makers are part of the job - whether we like it or not.
How do you convey science to local decision makers?

- Leaders need to understand the issues so that they can make good policy decisions.
Presenting to City Council

• There are good ways … and not so good ways.
• Emotions may flare and situations may just get out of control.
Steps to Prevent Chaos and Miscommunication

• **Make sure your technology is working**
  - Computer
  - Power Point or other presentation program
  - Microphone
Steps to Prevent Chaos and Miscommunication

• Check out the room for logistical issues
  • Blind spots
  • Hearing or noise issues
  • Lighting issues
Steps to Prevent Chaos and Miscommunication

• Make a simple and relevant presentation
  • Have 5 to 8 slides
  • Control your message and keep it simple, light and tight.
  • Do NOT use jargon or acronyms
  • A good rule of thumb is 10-15 minutes for a presentation.

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Steps to Prevent Chaos and Miscommunication

• How does this issue impact the community they represent?

• Link science to economic, political and social issues as well as public values and concerns.
Steps to Prevent Chaos and Miscommunication

- Convey the information in a way that is clear and not misleading
  - Poorly-understood information leads to bad public policy.
Steps to Prevent Chaos and Miscommunication

• Summarize the main message again at the end of presentation
Some People Come in With a Set Opinion on the Issue

- Be prepared for them.
- Be honest and prepared for questions or additional one-on-one conversations.
- Suggest that it might be appropriate to extend the conversation to a study session.
Good Presentation

- Now, here’s a few examples of more effective presentations.
What Made these Presentations Successful?

• Way #1
• Way #2
• Way #3