



IS-242.B:

Effective Communication

Student Manual

February 2014



FEMA

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

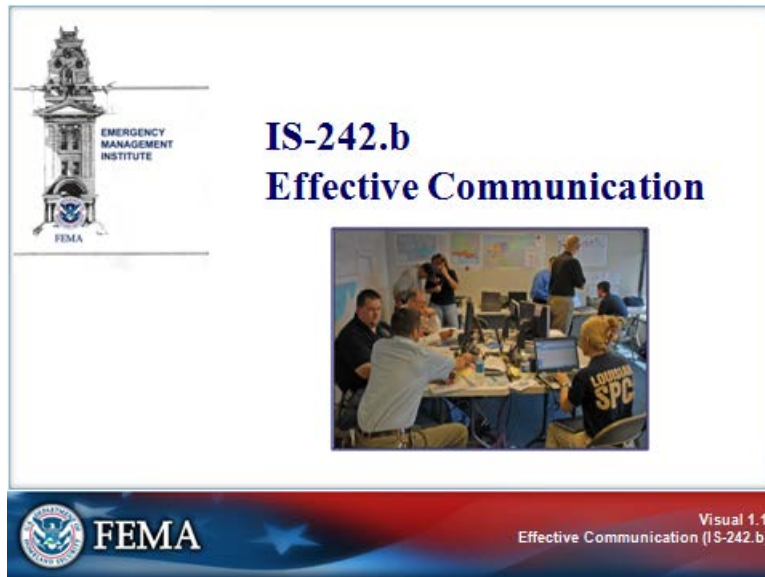
This page intentionally left blank.

LESSON 1. UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION BASICS

This page intentionally left blank.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Visual 1.1



Key Points


Welcome to IS-242.b: Effective Communication.



COURSE OVERVIEW

Visual 1.2

Course Administration

- Sign-in sheet
- Course evaluation forms
- Site logistics
 - Emergency procedures
 - Breaks
 - Restrooms
 - Cell phones and other electronic devices—silent



 **FEMA** 

Visual 1.2
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

- Sign-in sheet
- Course evaluation forms
- Site logistics
 - Emergency procedures
 - Breaks
 - Restrooms
 - Cell phones and other electronic devices—silent


COURSE OVERVIEW


Visual 1.3

Introductions

Working in pairs, introduce your partner by:

- Name
- Prior emergency food and shelter experience



 **FEMA**

Visual 1.3
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

COURSE OVERVIEW

Visual 1.4

About This Course

Being able to communicate effectively is a necessary and vital part of every emergency management professional's job.

The goal of this course is to improve your communication skills.

Course Goal

FEMA

Visual 1.4
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

The slide features a woman in a grey suit pointing to a whiteboard with the words 'Course Goal' written on it. The slide has a blue and red gradient background at the bottom with the FEMA logo and text.

Key Points

Being able to communicate effectively is a necessary and vital part of every emergency management professional's job. This course is designed to improve your communication skills.

During an emergency, it is especially challenging and important to communicate accurate information clearly to the target audience. Disaster survivors generally look for someone who can communicate valuable guidance, provide leadership, and lead them in problem solving. When you successfully fill that role, you act to reassure survivors that their government and private organizations are working toward community recovery.


Finely tuned communication skills are also important tools during the emergency planning phase when educating the public about preparedness. In addition, being able to communicate effectively with other emergency management personnel facilitates collaborative working relationships and partnerships.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Visual 1.5

Course Objectives

- Identify factors that contribute to and detract from effective communication.
- Develop a strategy for ensuring that emergency communications meet the needs of the whole community, including those with access and functional needs.
- Identify strategies for communicating effectively in emergency situations.
- Identify strategies for improving your oral presentation skills.



The slide features a decorative banner at the bottom with the FEMA logo on the left, the text 'FEMA' in the center, and 'Visual 1.5 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)' on the right.

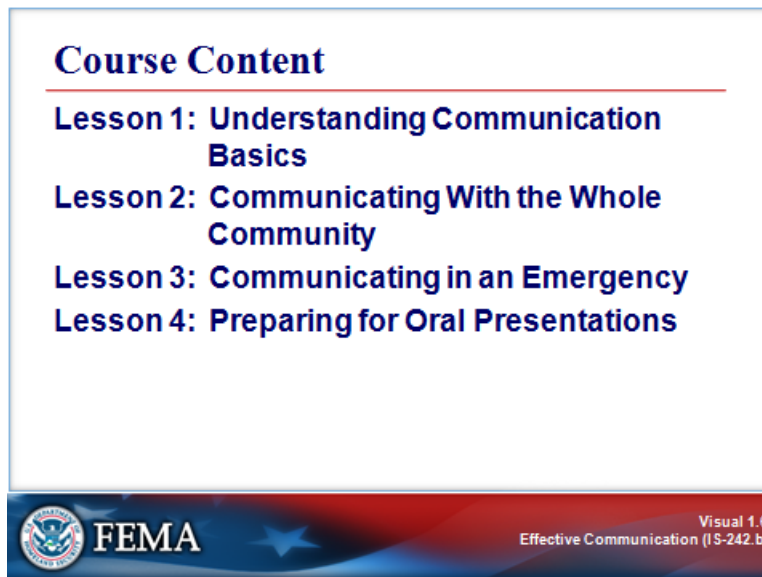
Key Points

At the conclusion of this course, you should be able to:

- Identify factors that contribute to and detract from effective communication.
- Develop a strategy for ensuring that emergency communications meet the needs of the whole community, including those with access and functional needs.
- Identify strategies for communicating effectively in emergency situations.
- Identify strategies for improving your oral presentation skills.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Visual 1.6



Key Points

This course is comprised of four lessons:

- Lesson 1 offers an overview of communication basics.
- Lesson 2 addresses the importance of communicating with the whole community.
- Lesson 3 presents strategies for communicating effectively in emergency situations.
- Lesson 4 focuses on improving your oral presentation skills.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Visual 1.7

Lesson 1 Objectives

- Indicate the value of empathic listening and effective feedback.
- Indicate how speakers' and listeners' nonverbal cues impact communication.
- Identify vocal factors that contribute to effective communication.
- Indicate how actively engaging the audience contributes to effective communication.
- Assess your current communication skills.



Visual 1.7
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)



Key Points

The remainder of this lesson presents information about basic factors that contribute to effective communication.

At the completion of this lesson, you should be able to:

- Indicate the value of empathic listening and effective feedback.
- Indicate how speakers' and listeners' nonverbal cues impact communication.
- Identify vocal factors that contribute to effective communication.
- Indicate how actively engaging the audience contributes to effective communication.
- Assess your current communication skills.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Visual 1.8



Key Points

Transcript:

Effective communication is essential in the workplace. The average worker spends 50 percent of the day communicating, and one-fourth of all workplace mistakes are the result of poor communication.

As an emergency management professional, you need to be a skillful communicator to achieve your objectives. Your role may involve communicating one-on-one or in small-group discussions; making public presentations at briefings, community meetings, and press conferences; taking part in media interviews; and issuing announcements and warnings.

You must be able to reach a broad audience that includes response partners and other colleagues, private sector and nonprofit organizations, the media, and a very diverse public.

Effective communication is essential before, during, and after an incident. During routine operations, strong communication skills enable you to engage in collaborative planning and promote safety awareness in the community.

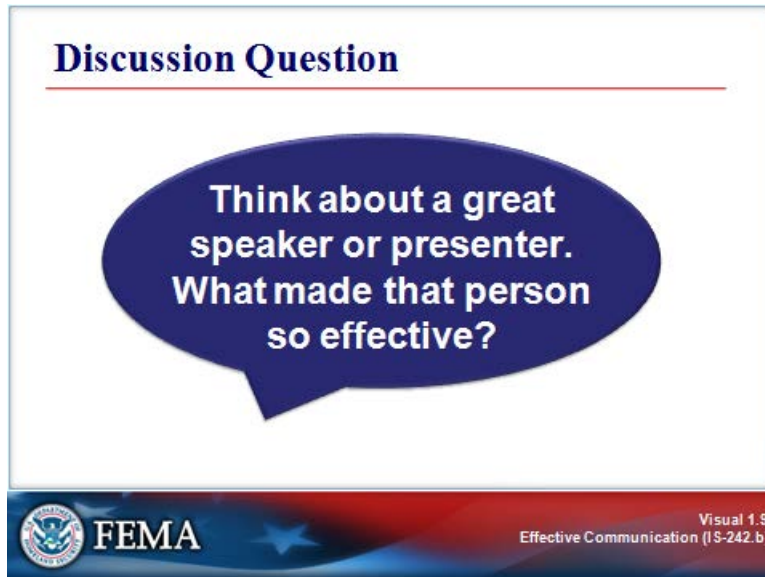
During an incident, communicating clearly and accurately can help to reassure survivors and assist them in making responsible choices.

Following an incident, effective communication helps create a common understanding of the situation so the whole community can work together toward recovery.

This course will help you understand what effective communication entails and identify ways to improve your communication skills.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Visual 1.9



Key Points

Discussion Question: Think about a great current or historical orator, speaker, or presenter. What characteristics made that person so effective?


THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS



Visual 1.10

The Communication Process

Communication is a two-way process where:

- You send a message using your voice and nonverbal cues.
- The other person listens, interpreting and personalizing the message, and gives feedback verbally and nonverbally.
- Meanwhile, you are listening to the verbal feedback and attending to the nonverbal cues in order to gauge how your message was received and to understand the other person's response.



 **FEMA** 

Visual 1.10
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Being an effective communicator involves establishing a personal connection with the audience and using basic communication tools to reach that audience.

To communicate effectively—whether your audience is a single individual or a large group—it is helpful to understand the basic skills that form the building blocks of effective communication.

Oral communication is fluid and dynamic, and is shaped by both the speaker and the audience. Even in its simplest form, communication is a two-way process in which several things typically happen:

- You send a message using your voice and nonverbal cues.
- The other person listens, interpreting and personalizing the message, and gives feedback verbally and nonverbally.
- Meanwhile, you are listening to the verbal feedback and attending to the nonverbal cues in order to gauge how your message was received and to understand the other person's response.

The process is then repeated in the typical flow of conversation.

COMMUNICATION BASICS

Visual 1.11

Communication Basics

- **Listening**
- **Communicating Nonverbally**
- **Using Your Voice**
- **Engaging the Audience**

FEMA

Visual 1.11
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

This part of the lesson will focus on four basic communication skills:

- Listening.
- Communicating nonverbally.
- Using your voice.
- Engaging the audience.

LISTENING

Visual 1.12



Key Points

Attending, or listening, is critical for successful communication. In fact, almost half of our communication time is spent listening. Listening entails much more than just hearing sound.


- **Hearing** is a sensory experience that gathers sound waves indiscriminately. We can hear something without choosing to listen.
- **Listening** is a voluntary activity that includes interpreting or processing that sound.


LISTENING

Visual 1.13

Barriers to Effective Listening

- Emotional responses.
- Hearing facts and not feelings.
- Hearing what is expected and not what is said.
- Not seeking clarification.
- Stereotyping.
- The halo effect.
- Resistance to change.



 **FEMA**

Visual 1.13
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Barriers to effective listening can be external or internal. External roadblocks can include distracters such as noise, an uncomfortable temperature or seating, or an inappropriate location. Try to be aware of external roadblocks and offset them if possible.

Internal roadblocks include conditions or reactions within the speaker or audience, such as:

- Emotional interference or defensiveness.
- Hearing only facts and not feelings.
- Hearing what is expected instead of what is said.
- Not seeking clarification.
- Stereotyping.
- The halo effect (letting a loosely associated factor influence one's perception).
- Resistance to change or automatic dismissal (e.g., "We've never done it that way before.").

When listening, always:

- Keep an open mind.
- Maintain eye contact and show interest.
- Listen for the central themes.
- Consider the speaker's nonverbal behaviors and tone of voice.

While listening, you should avoid:

- Being judgmental.
- Interrupting the speaker.
- Formulating a rebuttal.
- Distorting the message based on your own beliefs.

LISTENING

Visual 1.14



Key Points

Active listening involves listening with empathy and paraphrasing. When you listen empathically, you don't just hear words. You attend to thoughts, beliefs, and feelings. Empathic listening is highly active and takes practice.

When you paraphrase, you ensure clear understanding by restating main points in your own words. Paraphrasing also provides important feedback that helps speakers gauge how well they are getting their message across as intended.

Using the following active listening techniques will help you to improve your listening skills.

- **Decide to listen and concentrate** on the speaker.
- Use your imagination and **enter the speaker's situation**. Concentrate and try to imagine his or her frame of reference and point of view.
- **Observe** the speaker's vocal inflection, enthusiasm or lack of it, and style of delivery. These are essential components of the message. If you are speaking face-to-face, pay attention to the speaker's facial expressions and other nonverbal cues for more insight into the message.
- **Listen without interruption**. Note key phrases or use word associations to remember the speaker's content.
- **Use paraphrasing or clarifying questions to confirm** that you received the intended message. Paraphrasing demonstrates that you listened by:
 - Summarizing—restating the speaker's statement and feelings.
 - Using your own words—not parroting back what was said.
 - Remaining neutral—expressing neither your agreement nor disagreement (verbally or nonverbally).
- **Provide feedback**. Check your perceptions of how the speaker is feeling—are you putting the text of the message in the appropriate emotional context?

ACTIVITY: LISTENING SELF-ASSESSMENT

Visual 1.15

Activity: Listening Self-Assessment

Instructions: Working individually:

- Read each item and then check the box indicating how frequently you actually use this skill.
- Remember, this is a self-assessment, so be honest.

FEMA

Visual 1.15
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to assess your listening skills

Time: 10 minutes

Instructions:

- Fill out the assessment on the following page.
- Read each item and then check the box indicating how frequently you actually use this skill.
- Remember, this is a self-assessment, so be honest.

Lesson 1. Understanding Communication Basics

ACTIVITY: LISTENING SELF-ASSESSMENT

Visual 1.15 (Continued)

Listening Self-Assessment

Instructions: Read each item and then check the box indicating how frequently you actually use this skill when talking with others. Remember, this is a self-assessment, so be honest!


Listening Skills	Usually Do	Should Do More Often
I make others feel at ease when I am talking with them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I try not to think about other things when listening to others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I listen, I can separate my own ideas and thoughts from the speaker's.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can listen to others with whom I disagree.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I try not to form a rebuttal in my head while others are talking.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I observe others' verbal and nonverbal behaviors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I let others finish speaking before I begin talking.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I listen to what others say rather than assume that I know what they are going to say.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As I listen, I figure out how others are feeling.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I ask others to clarify or repeat information when I am unsure what was meant.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can remember the important details of what others tell me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I paraphrase (by stating in my own words) main points to make sure that I understand them correctly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If I find I'm losing track of what others are saying, I concentrate harder.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



COMMUNICATING NONVERBALLY

Visual 1.16

Understanding Nonverbal Cues

- **Nonverbal clusters are several related nonverbal signals that work in concert.**
- **They are more significant than a single signal and reflects a change in attitude and state of mind.**



 **FEMA**  Visual 1.16
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Your nonverbal gestures speak volumes.

Body language alone—including facial expressions, gestures, eye contact, and tone of voice—accounts for more than 90 percent of the message we send to others. Our words account for only 7 percent of the message.

As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “Your actions speak so loud I cannot hear what you are saying.”

Nonverbal clusters are several related nonverbal signals that work in concert. Generally, the presence of a nonverbal cluster is more significant than a single signal because it reflects changes in attitude and state of mind.

For example, yawning by itself could mean a listener is unreceptive to your message, is sleep-deprived, or simply has been sitting still for too long.

Yawning in combination with fidgeting and lack of eye contact, on the other hand, could mean much more, including that your message is not getting across and the person is bored.

If you understand nonverbal cues, you can use them to reinforce your message.

You can also use nonverbal understanding to “read” your audience and gather real-time feedback about whether you are communicating successfully.

The job aid on the next page summarizes nonverbal cues and their meanings.

Job Aid: Nonverbal Cues

Speaker's Nonverbal Cues

The speaker's nonverbal language reflects attitudes, emotions, state of mind, and related messages. Nonverbal cues include:

- Vocal intonation:
 - Pitch, tone, inflection, volume
 - Rhythm, timing
- Silence
- Personal space
- Body language:
 - Posture, body position
 - Head movements
 - Eye movement, eye contact
 - Facial expressions
 - Fidgeting, yawning

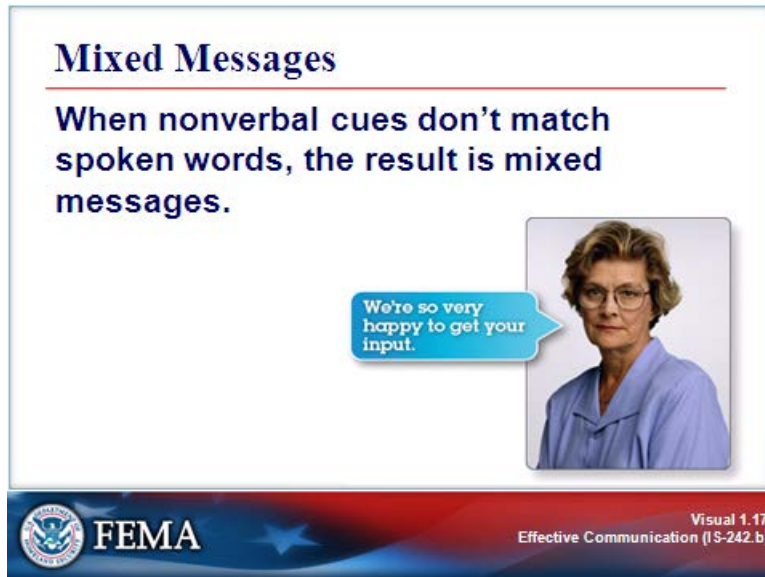
Listener's Nonverbal Cues

Indicators of . . .

Boredom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slouching in one's seat • Yawning • Staring out the window • Lack of eye contact • Neutral expression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fidgeting • Closed posture • Drifting attention • Slowness to respond • Neutral or "flat" speech
Frustration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubbing forehead with hand • Tense, worried expression • Throwing hands up in the air 	
Agreement, Enthusiasm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaning toward the speaker • Making eye contact • Nodding head • Relaxed, open posture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smiling or laughing • Faster speech • Higher pitch
Disagreement, Confusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frowning • Shaking head • Leaning back or away • Pursing lips • Tightened jaw and closed posture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staring elsewhere • Shallow, rapid breathing • Limited facial expression and hand gestures • Slower speech • Lower pitch
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chewing on eyeglass frames • Wearing a thoughtful, intense expression 	

COMMUNICATING NONVERBALLY

Visual 1.17



Key Points

When nonverbal cues don't match the spoken words, the result is mixed messages.

Often, nonverbal cues contradict or supersede verbal messages, and listeners instinctively react with mistrust and caution. Mixed messages can indicate that the speaker:

- Is experiencing conflict.
- Is not sincere.
- Is not committed to the message.


OPTIONAL ACTIVITY #1: COMMUNICATING NONVERBALLY

Visual 1.18

Optional Activity #1: Communicating Nonverbally

Instructions: Work in partners as follows:

- Choose one partner to do a one-minute self-introduction as described in the Student Manual.
- Have the other partner use a smartphone or video-capable cell phone to record a video of the speaker.
- Play back the tape with the sound off, so only the speaker can see it. The speaker will then evaluate his/her nonverbal language using the questions in the Student Manual.
- Repeat the process for the other partner.
- Be prepared to share any insights you learn.



FEMA

Visual 1.18
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to become aware of your own nonverbal language.

Time: 15 minutes

Instructions: Work in pairs as follows:

- Your instructor will pair up all participants so that each one can work with a partner. (If there is an uneven number of participants in the class, there will be one group of three.)
- Using a smartphone (or a cell phone capable of recording video), one partner will record a video of the other person doing a one-minute self-introduction, as described on the following page of the Student Manual.
- If there are pairs in which neither person has a video-capable phone, the instructor will divide those individuals among the groups that have such a phone.
- Each partner will have a turn being recorded while introducing himself or herself.
- Decide which person will go first.
- Play back the first video with the sound off so that you alone can see it, and consider the questions about your nonverbal communication that appear in the Student Manual.
- Repeat the process with the other person doing a self-introduction while the first partner records a video.
- Again, play back the video with the sound off so that only the second speaker can see, and consider the questions in the Student Manual.
- The instructor will ask for volunteers to share any insights they learned about their own nonverbal communication through this activity.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY #1: COMMUNICATING NONVERBALLY

Visual 1.18 (Continued)

Optional Activity: Communicating Nonverbally

The Setting: Find a private space in the training room. Imagine you are in a public meeting room, where you are mingling informally with community members who have arrived early for an information session on how to apply for disaster assistance.

Instructions for Your Self-Introduction: Take just a minute to think about your particular information as suggested in the prompts below, and jot down a few notes if you wish. Then, while your partner uses a cell phone/smartphone to record a video of you, introduce yourself to an imaginary group of 3 community members whose homes have been impacted by severe flooding.

- Your name
 - Where you're from
 - How long you've been doing emergency management work
 - Any personal experience with flooding
 - Your commitment to help people here deal with the flood damage
-

Instructions for Evaluating Your Nonverbal Communication: Now watch the brief video with the sound turned off. Consider the following questions:


- Does my body language reinforce my message?
- Are there any mannerisms of which I wasn't aware?
- Does my facial expression, posture, or use of hands send any unintended message?
- How could I improve my nonverbal language to communicate more effectively?


USING YOUR VOICE

Visual 1.19

Using Your Voice Effectively

- Use clear, concise language.
- Speak loud enough to be heard.
- Vary the pace.
- Slow down for important points.
- Use the pause.
- Avoid speaking with a monotone voice.



 **FEMA** Visual 1.19
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Public speaking doesn't come naturally to everyone, but it is a skill that can be learned. Understanding the basics and practicing will make most of us better speakers. It's also helpful to begin small (e.g., a small group and informal setting) and work up to greater challenges.


When presenting to an audience, be sure to:

- Use clear and concise language.
- Speak loud enough to be heard.
- Vary the pace of your presentation.
- Slow down for important points.
- Use the pause.
- Avoid speaking with a monotone voice.


USING YOUR VOICE

Visual 1.20

Projecting Your Voice



- **If the room is large, use a microphone.**
- **Use short phrases and slow your pace.**
- **Lower your pitch.**
- **Don't try to talk over noise and side conversations.**
- **Rest your voice and drink water.**

 **FEMA** Visual 1.20
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

To make yourself heard, imagine that you are talking directly to the person who is farthest away, not the person in the front row. Standing up makes it easier to create volume. The following techniques can help you project your voice:

- If the room is large, use a microphone.
- Use short phrases and slow your pace.
- Lower your pitch to reduce stress and to make your voice carry.
- Don't try to talk over noise or side conversations.
- Rest your voice between presentations and take a drink of water.


USING YOUR VOICE

Visual 1.21

Avoiding Fillers

At transition points, or when you hear yourself adding a filler:

- **Pause.**
- **Take a breath.**
- **Gather your thoughts.**



 **FEMA** Visual 1.21
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

At transition points, or when you hear yourself adding a filler:

- Pause. (Remember: Pauses will feel longer to you than to your audience!)
- Take a breath.
- Gather your thoughts.

The job aid on the next page summarizes strategies to use your voice effectively.

Job Aid: Using Your Voice Effectively

Do's and Don'ts

DO . . .

- Use clear and concise language.
- Speak loud enough to be heard.
- Vary the pace of your presentation.
- Slow down for important points.
- Use the pause.

DON'T . . .

- Speak with a monotone voice.
- Be afraid of pauses.

Projecting Your Voice

- Have plenty of water to drink. Avoid tea and coffee to prevent dehydrating your vocal area.
- Stand when presenting (if possible).
- If the room is large, use a microphone.
- Take a deep breath.
- Use short phrases and slow your pace.
- Lower your pitch to reduce stress and to make your voice carry.
- Don't try to talk over noise or side conversations.
- Rest your voice between presentations and take a drink of water.

Avoiding Fillers (um's and ah's)

At transition points, or when you hear yourself adding a filler:

- Pause.
- Take a breath.
- Gather your thoughts.

Remember: Pauses will feel longer to you than to your audience!

VIDEO: USING YOUR VOICE

Visual 1.22



Key Points

This video summarizes important guidance about using your voice.

Transcript:

Think of your voice as an instrument. When used effectively, it can convey your message and engage your listeners. This is especially true when presenting to a group—for example, at a briefing or in a community meeting.

When making presentations, you need to control the volume, pace, tone, inflection, and enunciation. Always speak loudly and clearly, even when using a microphone. Standing rather than sitting helps you project your voice.

Be sure to vary the pace of your presentation while not going too fast or slow. People who speak in a monotone should not be surprised when audience members begin nodding off.

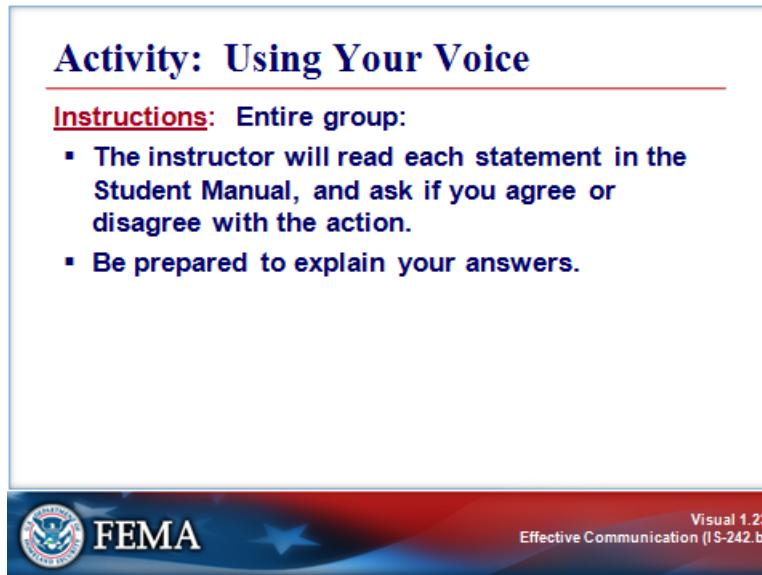
Sound confident by using a downward inflection to end a sentence. For example, don't say, "More and more people are concerned about community preparedness than ever before?" You're telling, not asking.

Pauses are important. [Pause] Pausing before and after you make an important point causes people to listen more carefully. In addition, pausing makes your presentation sound more conversational and helps you avoid using fillers such as: . . . like, . . . um, or . . . ya know.

While you are presenting, make sure to take care of your voice. Have plenty of water to drink and avoid caffeine, since it can dehydrate your vocal area. And remember: breathe deeply.

ACTIVITY: USING YOUR VOICE

Visual 1.23



The slide features a title 'Activity: Using Your Voice' in blue text with a red underline. Below the title, the word 'Instructions:' is underlined in red, followed by 'Entire group:'. Two bullet points in blue text follow: 'The instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual, and ask if you agree or disagree with the action.' and 'Be prepared to explain your answers.' The slide has a blue and red gradient footer with the FEMA logo on the left and the text 'Visual 1.23 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)' on the right.

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to identify actions you can take to use your voice effectively.

Time: 5 minutes

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each of the statements in the Student Manual, and ask if you agree or disagree with the action.
- Be prepared to follow up the answers with a group discussion.

Statements:

- Pat is participating in a panel discussion. His throat is sore and he is hoarse. To get an extra lift, he chooses to drink coffee during the presentation.
- Tanya knows she has a tendency to say “right” at the end of sentences. She decides that it is better to pause to collect her thoughts.
- Maria, an inexperienced presenter, is addressing a large group in a room with poor acoustics. She decides not to use the microphone, thinking that it will make her more nervous.
- At a presentation before the town council, the program is running a little behind schedule. Rather than rush the pace of the presentation, Pete decides to eliminate some unnecessary content.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY #2: USING YOUR VOICE

Visual 1.24

Optional Activity #2: Using Your Voice

Instructions:

- Use the presentation video you created in Optional Activity #1.
- Listen to your voice without looking at the video screen.
- Evaluate your performance using the questions in the Student Manual.

FEMA

Visual 1.24
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to become aware of your own nonverbal language.

Time: 5 minutes

Instructions:

- Use the presentation video you created with your partner in Optional Activity #1.
- Listen to your voice without looking at the video screen.
- Evaluate your performance using the following questions.

Consider these questions:

- Does my voice project well enough to be heard clearly at the back of the room?
- How are my pitch, tone, and pace? Would lowering the pitch help me project better and sound more confident? Are the tone and pace varied enough to sustain interest?
- Overall, does my vocal demeanor match the message I am trying to convey?
- What improvements could I work on to communicate more effectively?

ENGAGING YOUR AUDIENCE

Visual 1.25



Engaging Your Audience

- Understand your audience.
- “Read” your audience and be sensitive to nonverbal cues.
- Listen carefully and paraphrase.
- Use questions and allow time for response.

Visual 1.25
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

FEMA

Key Points

To summarize, the ability to engage your audience—whether an individual or a group—is a key element of effective communication. Basic strategies for engaging an audience include the following:

- Understand your audience, and use that understanding to tailor your communication.
- “Read” your audience and be sensitive to nonverbal cues.
- Listen carefully, using paraphrasing to confirm your understanding.
- Use questions to encourage interaction and allow time for audience response—even if it means remaining silent.


Additional ways to get your audience involved include:

- Clear your mind of all distractions.
- Try not to place a barrier, such as a lectern or podium, between you and the audience.
- Avoid standing in a fixed position, slouching, fidgeting, or shifting your weight.
- Use natural and spontaneous gestures and positive facial expressions.
- Avoid nonverbal behaviors that could be seen as negative or judgmental.
- Don’t be afraid to let your conviction and passion for the subject matter show.
- Demonstrate enthusiasm through your voice, facial expressions, and body movements.
- Draw people in by walking toward them.
- Avoid distracting behavior such as looking at your watch, or jingling change.

ENGAGING YOUR AUDIENCE


Visual 1.26

Asking Questions




Open-Ended Questions:

- Require more than a “yes” or “no” answer.
- Begin with “what,” “how,” “when,” or “why.”



Direct Questions:

- Require a simple “yes” or “no” answer or statement of fact.
- Begin with “is,” “can,” “how many,” or “do.”



FEMA

Visual 1.26
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Asking questions can help you evaluate what listeners are thinking and how they are receiving information. For encouraging interaction, open-ended questions are more effective than direction questions.

Type	Description	Uses
Open-Ended Question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires more than a “yes” or “no” answer. • Usually begins with “what,” “how,” “when,” or “why.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To stimulate thinking and decisionmaking. • To encourage discussion.
Direct Question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires a simple “yes” or “no” answer or statement of fact. • Often begins with “is,” “can,” “how many,” or “does.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To confirm facts. • To stop a discussion.

Questions should be clear, simple, and concise. Focus each question on a single issue.

Avoid Confusing Questions That Require More Than One Answer

“When presenting information is it more important to use verbal or nonverbal information, and what is the best way of reinforcing verbal points with visuals?”

Better Question

“What is an example of how you’ve used both verbal and nonverbal information to reinforce an important learning point?”


ACTIVITY: OPEN-ENDED VS. DIRECT QUESTIONS

Visual 1.27

Activity: Open-Ended vs. Direct Questions

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual, and ask if it is an open-ended or a direct question.
- The instructor will then ask for volunteers to reword each question so that it is now the other type of question.



The slide features a red and blue footer with the FEMA logo on the left, the text 'Visual 1.27 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)' on the right, and a stylized American flag graphic in the background.

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to identify open-ended and direct questions.

Time: 5 minutes

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual, and ask if it is an open-ended or a direct question.
- The instructor will then ask for volunteers to reword each question so that it is now the other type of question. So for instance, if a statement is a direct question, the instructor will ask the volunteer to rephrase that direct question into an open-ended question.


Statements:

- Is it important to involve stakeholders when developing plans?
- Why do community members react this way?
- How many of you have prior experience with sheltering and mass care?
- How would you respond to such a statement?
- Do you agree with this approach?


ENGAGING YOUR AUDIENCE

Visual 1.28

Handling Responses



- **Acknowledge the response in a positive manner.**
- **Avoid answering your own question.**
- **If a response is unclear, ask clarifying questions.**

 **FEMA** Visual 1.28
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

When you ask open-ended questions, you hope to receive lots of answers and comments. To encourage participant responses:

- Acknowledge all responses in a positive manner. Never ignore a response or comment, and never judge a person's response or declare that an answer is wrong.
- Avoid the tendency to answer your own question. Instead, wait a few seconds, so that someone can respond. If too much time passes, then rephrase the question.
- If a response is unclear, ask a clarifying question and allow sufficient time for the person to rephrase or clarify the response.


ACTIVITY: ANALYZE YOUR BASIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Visual 1.29

Activity: Analyze Your Basic Communication Skills

Instructions: Working individually:

- Review the job aid on basic communication skills.
- Analyze your own strengths and areas for improvement in each basic skill area.



The slide footer features the FEMA logo on the left, a blue star in the center, and the text 'Visual 1.29 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)' on the right, all set against a red and blue background.

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to analyze your basic communication skills.

Time: 10 minutes

Instructions:

- Review the job aid on basic communication skills, located on the following pages.
- Analyze your own strengths and areas for improvement in each basic skill area.

Lesson 1. Understanding Communication Basics

Job Aid: Summary of Basic Communication Skills

Do's . . .	Don'ts . . .
Listening	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Keep an open mind. ✓ Maintain eye contact and show interest. ✓ Listen for the central themes. ✓ Consider the speaker's nonverbal behaviors and tone of voice. ✓ Ask for clarification. ✓ Paraphrase the meaning and feelings being expressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Be judgmental. ✗ Fake attention. ✗ Interrupt the speaker. ✗ Begin formulating a rebuttal. ✗ Distort the message based on your own beliefs or thoughts.
Nonverbal Communication	
<p>Eye Contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Look at people's eyes. ✓ Continually scan the group with your eyes. ✓ Look at the whole group. 	<p>Eye Contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Avoid eye contact. ✗ Scan the group too rapidly or infrequently. ✗ Only look at one or two people or at only one side of the room.
<p>Body Movement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Position your body so you face the majority of the people. ✓ Vary your position in the room. ✓ Stand with good posture. ✓ Walk toward people when they speak. 	<p>Body Movement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Talk to your notes, easel, or board. ✗ Turn your back to part of the group. ✗ Stand in fixed positions. ✗ Slouch. ✗ Distance yourself from people.
<p>Gestures and Facial Expressions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use natural and spontaneous gestures. ✓ Smile and be animated. ✓ Convey emotion affirmatively. 	<p>Gestures and Facial Expressions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Engage in distracting behavior such as looking at your watch, or jingling change. ✗ Look disinterested. ✗ Use gestures or expressions that could be seen as negative or judgmental.
Using Your Voice	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Speak loud enough to be heard. ✓ Vary the pace of your presentation. ✓ Slow down for important points. ✓ Use the pause. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Mumble. ✗ Use "fillers" such as "like" or "um." ✗ Speak with a monotone voice. ✗ Be afraid of pauses.

Lesson 1. Understanding Communication Basics

Job Aid: Summary of Basic Communication Skills (Continued)

Do's . . .	Don'ts . . .
Engaging Your Audience	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Ask clear, concise questions.✓ Ask open-ended questions.✓ Focus each question on a single issue.✓ Acknowledge responses in a positive manner.✓ Allow time for the audience to answer.✓ Let your conviction and passion for the subject matter show.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ Ask questions that require two distinct answers.✗ Answer your own question! Rephrase your question if you don't get an answer.✗ Ignore comments or questions.✗ Declare an answer is wrong.✗ Be afraid to remain silent while waiting for responses.

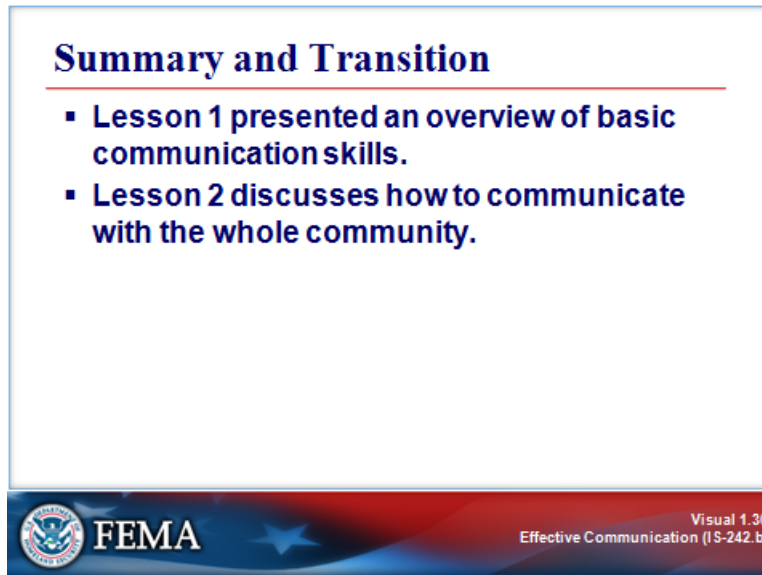
Lesson 1. Understanding Communication Basics

Basic Skills Analysis Worksheet

Listening	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What I do well:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What I could improve:
Managing Your Own Nonverbal Communication	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What I do well:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What I could improve:
Observing and “Reading” Nonverbal Communication in Others	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What I do well:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What I could improve:
Using Your Voice	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What I do well:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What I could improve:
Engaging Your Audience	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What I do well:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What I could improve:

SUMMARY AND TRANSITION

Visual 1.30



Key Points

This lesson presented an overview of basic communication skills. You should now be able to:

- Indicate the value of empathic listening and effective feedback.
- Indicate how speakers' and listeners' nonverbal cues impact communication.
- Identify vocal factors that contribute to effective communication.
- Indicate how actively engaging the audience contributes to effective communication.
- Assess your current communication skills.

The next lesson will discuss communicating with the whole community.

This page intentionally left blank.

LESSON 2. COMMUNICATING WITH THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

This page intentionally left blank.

LESSON OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Visual 2.1



Key Points


This lesson presents strategies for ensuring that you communicate effectively with the whole community, including those with access and functional needs.


LESSON OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Visual 2.2

Lesson 2 Objectives

- Analyze your community to identify groups requiring consideration when preparing and delivering communications.
- Identify factors that impact communication requirements.
- Identify strategies for communicating effectively with the whole community.
- Identify aspects of communicating with respect.



 **FEMA**

Visual 2.2
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

At the completion of this lesson, you should be able to:

- Analyze your community to identify groups requiring consideration when preparing and delivering communications.
- Identify factors that impact communication requirements.
- Identify strategies for communicating effectively with the whole community.
- Identify aspects of communicating with respect.

VIDEO: COMMUNICATING WITH THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

Visual 2.3



Key Points

Transcript:

Communicating effectively with your community means communicating with the *whole* community. Communities are diverse. They include people of all ages and varied cultural backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, and people with other access and functional needs such as limited English proficiency or literacy limitations.

How can you successfully communicate with such a diverse audience? The first step is to know your audience, including any factors that may impact how you communicate with them. Once you understand your audience, you will be better able to communicate in a way that takes advantage of their communication strengths.

Be sure your messages are clear and understandable. This benefits your entire audience.

Next, tailor your message delivery to the needs of the community, especially those with sensory disabilities or language limitations. One way to tailor your message is to provide information in multiple formats so that accessing it does not depend on a single sense or ability of the user. Another approach is to translate materials into multiple languages at appropriate reading levels.

It is important to be sensitive to cultural differences in the way we communicate, including nonverbal cues, and to communicate in a way that bridges those differences.

Next, consider ways to get your message out that will enhance the likelihood of its being received by specific populations. Teaming up with organizations in the community can help.

And finally, communicating with respect will improve your ability to reach the whole community, including those with disabilities and other access and functional needs.

THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

Visual 2.4

The Whole Community Audience

**Your target audience =
Everyone who can benefit from your
information.**



 **FEMA**

Visual 2.4
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

In emergency management, communication responsibilities are typically quite varied. Your responsibilities may include:

- Educating the community on emergency preparedness.
- Keeping people informed about emergency plans, issues, and events.
- Issuing alerts and warnings.
- Providing accurate information during incidents.
- Sharing information with response partners.
- Engaging the community in dialogues about disaster recovery.

Your target audience can be described generally as “everyone who can benefit from the information.”

Although up to this point we have focused primarily on oral communication skills, you have a wide variety of communication tools at your disposal, including, among others:

- Print-based materials.
- Web-based content.
- Broadcast media (television and radio).
- Telephone and face-to-face interaction with individuals.
- Large-group forums such as public meetings.
- Social media.

We'll look more closely at the various communication media in the next lesson. For now, let's consider ways to ensure that your message—regardless of the medium—is appropriate for the whole community.

COMMUNITY DIVERSITY

Visual 2.5

Cultural Diversity

Communities are diverse. The whole community includes:

- **People of different ages and cultural groups, and**
- **People with access and functional needs.**



 **FEMA**

Visual 2.5
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Communities include people of all ages, diverse cultural groups, and individuals with access and functional needs. Access and functional needs are factors that impact an individual's access to information and needed programs and services. These factors include, but are not limited to:

- Disabilities that impact hearing, vision, speech, cognitive processing, and mobility.
- Limited English proficiency.
- Literacy limitations.

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that over half the population has some type of access or functional need, and almost 20 percent have disabilities. Further, they project a rapid increase in diversity. Many factors are contributing to the increasing diversity of communities. Examples of these factors include:

- The growing population of people with disabilities living in communities instead of institutional settings.
- The Baby Boom generation reaching their seniority, resulting in a growing senior population.
- Greater international migration contributing to more ethnic and linguistic diversity of the population.

It is important to know the composition of your community and to understand what that composition means for the way you communicate.


Understanding the community is not a one-time event or analysis. Because communities are constantly changing, the process must be an ongoing effort to stay in tune with the capabilities and needs of the population.



UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF YOUR COMMUNITY

Visual 2.6

Understanding the Needs of Your Community

- Understand community complexity.
- Know the languages and communication methods and traditions in your community.
- Find out where the real conversations happen and decision are made.
- Implement outreach interventions.



 **FEMA**  Visual 2.6
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

To better understand the communication needs of your community, you should:

- **Understand community complexity** so you will know who your audience is. For example, learn about your community's demographics, and educate your emergency management staff. Potential sources of information include:
 - Census information.
 - Jurisdiction profiles compiled by emergency planning teams.
 - Social service agencies and organizations.
 - Faith-based organizations and houses of worship.
 - Advocacy groups.
 - Chamber of commerce and business leaders.
 - English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) programs.
- **Know the languages and communication methods/traditions in the community.** Consider not only what languages people speak and understand, but how they actually exchange new information and which information sources they trust. Be aware of myths and stereotypes.
- **Find out where the real conversations happen and decisions are made.** Decisions are not always made at the council level, but often at venues such as the community center, neighborhood block parties, social clubs, or places of worship. Tap into these opportunities to listen and learn more about the community. Develop strategies to reach community members and engage them in issues that are important to them.
- **Implement outreach interventions**, such as establishing relationships with multi-lingual volunteers to help interact with the various groups, and forming alliances with disability advocacy groups.

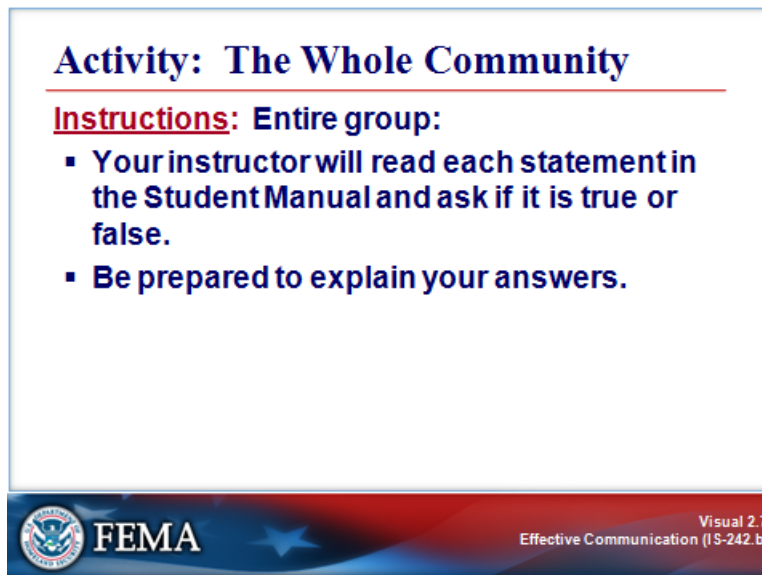
UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF YOUR COMMUNITY

Visual 2.6 (Continued)

Formal and informal community leaders such as community organizers, local council members and other government leaders, nonprofit or business leaders, volunteer or faith leaders, and long-term residents have valuable knowledge and can provide a comprehensive understanding of the communities in which they live.

ACTIVITY: THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

Visual 2.7



Activity: The Whole Community

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if it is true or false.
- Be prepared to explain your answers.

FEMA Effective Communication (IS-242.b) Visual 2.7

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to review the importance of the whole community.

Time: 5 minutes

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if it is true or false.
- Be prepared to explain your answers.

Statements:

- In emergency management communication, the target audience is those people who form the majority in the community.
- Access and functional needs are factors that impact an individual's access to information and needed programs and services.
- Understanding the community can be accomplished through a one-time analysis of the jurisdiction's demographics.

COMMUNICATING WITH THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

Visual 2.8

Communicating With the Whole Community



- **Ensure message content is clear and understandable.**
- **Tailor message delivery to specific needs.**
- **Identify alternate avenues for communication.**
- **Communicate with respect.**

 **FEMA**  Visual 2.8
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

There are four key actions that will help you communicate effectively with the whole community:

- Action #1: Ensure message content is clear and understandable.
- Action #2: Tailor message delivery to specific needs.
- Action #3: Identify alternate avenues for communication.
- Action #4: Communicate with respect.

We will look at each action in more detail.

ACTION #1: ENSURE MESSAGE CONTENT IS CLEAR AND UNDERSTANDABLE

Visual 2.9

#1: Message Content Is Understandable

- Use plain language.
- When speaking, use the basic communication skills.
- Make sure your presentation is age and education appropriate.
- Create user-friendly formats.



The image shows a person's hand pointing at a tablet screen. The screen displays a communication document with a clear layout, including text, images, and a checklist. The document is titled 'COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN' and lists several items with checkboxes. The person is holding a pen over a yellow notepad.

 **FEMA** 

Visual 2.9
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

As a baseline, all communications should be clear, user-friendly, and age appropriate.

- Be clear. Using plain language benefits most people. Avoid jargon and acronyms, passive voice, and complex structures.
- When presenting information orally, apply the basic communication skills related to listening, nonverbal cues, voice, and engaging the audience.
- Identify your audience, and make sure your presentation is age and education appropriate. Materials and presentations for children will not be the same as those for adults.
- Make sure the format is user-friendly, with an easy-to-follow format. Using symbols and graphics can add clarity and eliminate extra verbiage.

ACTION #2: TAILOR MESSAGE DELIVERY TO SPECIFIC NEEDS

Visual 2.10

#2: Tailor Message Delivery

Use methods that address communication needs, such as:

- Sensory disabilities.
- Language or literacy requirements.
- Cultural factors.



 **FEMA**

Visual 2.10
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Segments of the population often have specific needs that, when met, enable them to participate fully in the exchange of information.

Look, for example, at communicating with people who have:

- Sensory disabilities.
- Language or literacy requirements.
- Cultural factors that affect communication.

ACTION #2: TAILOR MESSAGE DELIVERY TO SPECIFIC NEEDS

Visual 2.11



Sensory Disabilities

Sensory disabilities include:

- Hearing,
- Vision,
- Speech, and
- Cognitive functioning disabilities.

The slide includes an image of a white tele-regist phone with a small screen and a keypad. In the background, a sign with a large 'C' and the text 'TELE-REGIST' is visible. The slide footer features the FEMA logo on the left and the text 'Visual 2.11 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)' on the right.

Key Points

Sensory disabilities include hearing, vision, speech, and cognitive disabilities, each of which can impact the process of communication.

Every individual is different. For example, a person with a vision disability may be blind or have low vision; the vision loss may have been present at birth, progressive, or caused by trauma, or might be happening gradually with aging.

Individuals with sensory disabilities may not be able to communicate their needs or ask for information, hear verbal announcements or alerts, see directional signs, communicate their circumstances to emergency responders, or understand how to get assistance due to their disability.

They may require auxiliary aids and services or language access services (such as interpreters and adapted materials) to participate effectively in communication.

ACTION #2: TAILOR MESSAGE DELIVERY TO SPECIFIC NEEDS

Visual 2.12

Communicating With People Who Have Disabilities



- **People with disabilities must be provided the same information that is provided to the general population.**
- **Communication with people with disabilities must be as effective as communication with others.**

 **FEMA** 

Visual 2.12
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

A guiding principle for serving individuals with disabilities is access to effective communication.

- People with disabilities must be given the same information provided to the general population.
- Communication with people with disabilities must be as effective as communication with others.

The job aid on the next page provides information about laws protecting the communication rights of individuals with disabilities.

Lesson 2. Communicating With the Whole Community

Job Aid: Laws Related to Accessible Communication

A number of laws have been enacted to protect the rights of people with access and functional needs. Below are examples of laws that specifically address accessible communication.

Law	Provisions
Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (as amended)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prohibits discrimination during disaster relief and assistance activities and extends those protections to include race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency, and economic status.
Rehabilitation Act of 1973	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities.• All entities that receive Federal financial assistance are required to effectively communicate with people who have communication disabilities including hearing, vision, or cognitive disabilities.• Federal electronic and information technology must be accessible to people with disabilities. An accessible information technology system is one that can be operated in a variety of ways and does not rely on a single sense or ability of the user.
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and ADA Amendments Act of 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State and local governments must give people with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from all of their programs, services, and activities. Requirements include ensuring effective communication with people who have hearing, vision, or speech disabilities.• Telecommunications Relay Services must be made available to individuals with speech and hearing impairments to the fullest extent possible and in the most efficient manner.• Any television public announcement that is produced or funded in whole or in part by the Federal Government must be closed captioned.

ACTION #2: TAILOR MESSAGE DELIVERY TO SPECIFIC NEEDS

Visual 2.13

Alternate Formats

- Sign language interpretation
- Video captioning
- Downloadable large-print materials
- Braille materials
- Web content with screen reader capability
- Recorded narrations of visual materials

Visual 2.13
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Whether information is print-based, Web-based, or presented orally, appropriate media should be used to ensure information is communicated in alternate formats. Examples include:

- Sign language interpretation of spoken presentations.
- Video captioning.
- Downloadable large-print versions of materials.
- Braille versions of materials.
- Web content with screen reader capability.
- Recorded narrations describing visual materials.


ACTIVITY: DO'S AND DON'TS

Visual 2.14

Activity: Do's and Don'ts

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if it is something you should do or should avoid.
- Be prepared to explain your answers.



The slide footer features the FEMA logo on the left, a blue and red decorative banner with a white star in the center, and the text 'Visual 2.14 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)' on the right.

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to identify communication practices you should use (and those you should avoid using) when communicating with the whole community.

Time: 5 minutes

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if it is something you should do or should avoid doing.
- Be prepared to follow up the answers with a group discussion.

Statements:

- Use abbreviations and acronyms as much as possible to eliminate extra verbiage.
- Provide information in a single format to ensure that everyone has equal access to the same information.
- Recognize that not everyone with a given disability has the same communication needs.
- Use symbols and graphics to make materials more user-friendly and easy to follow.


ACTION #2: TAILOR MESSAGE DELIVERY TO SPECIFIC NEEDS

Visual 2.15

Language and Literacy Factors

Language and literacy factors impact the success of communication in a disaster. Make sure your materials are:

- Written at appropriate reading levels.
- Provided in the languages spoken in your community.



 **FEMA**

Visual 2.15
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Language and literacy factors impact the disaster experience because communication is vital to effective response activities.

Immigrants, migrant workers, undocumented workers, tourists, and exchange students may have language barriers. In addition, many individuals may have literacy barriers, including those with limited English proficiency, hearing or learning disabilities, older adults, and others. An estimated 20 percent of American adults read at or below the 5th grade level.

A 2013 study of print- and Web-based emergency preparedness materials collected from local and national sources found that half of the materials tested in the 10th grade to college range, and nearly all were above the 5th grade level.

Be sure your disaster-related materials are written at appropriate reading levels and provided in languages spoken in your community.

ACTION #2: TAILOR MESSAGE DELIVERY TO SPECIFIC NEEDS

Visual 2.16

Cultural Factors in Oral Communication

Cultural heritage may affect how individuals:

- Transmit and interpret nonverbal cues.
- Respond to different styles of communication.
- Interact during communication.

FEMA

Visual 2.16
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Individuals' cultural heritage may affect not only language, but also how they:

- Transmit and interpret nonverbal cues.
- Respond to different styles of communication.
- Interact during communication.

Such impacts may be even more pronounced in older generations. Failure to discern attitudes, beliefs, values, and rules implicit in different groups could disenfranchise some citizens and work against the community's goal of whole community preparedness.

The job aid on the next page highlights some of the cross-cultural meanings of nonverbal cues.

Job Aid: Cross-Cultural Meanings of Nonverbal Cues

Often, when misunderstandings occur between people from different cultures, it has little to do with what they said—it's how they said it, what they did when they said it, or even whom they said it to. Nonverbal language can have meaning that is culture-specific. Consider the following examples:

Eye Contact

Eye contact has different meanings among different cultures. In the United States, maintaining strong eye contact indicates that the listener is attentive and interested in the message. In some Asian cultures, looking directly into a speaker's eyes indicates disrespect, while lowering the eyes is considered polite manners.

Gestures

Gestures considered as good gestures in one country may be seen as offensive in others. Examples include “thumbs up,” pointing, open-palm “stop” gesture, curling the index finger in a “come here” motion, a-OK (index finger and thumb forming a circle), finger snapping, and looking at one's watch or wrist.

Touching

When, where, and how often we touch each other has cultural significance. Americans tend to touch each other less than members of many other cultures. We need to be especially sensitive to cultural differences regarding contact.

Timing

The timing of verbal exchanges—the pause between the conclusion of one person speaking and the other replying—is also culturally influenced. Some people interpret a long wait before a reply as lack of attention. However, in some cultures, a pause before replying indicates a polite and considered response.

Personal Space

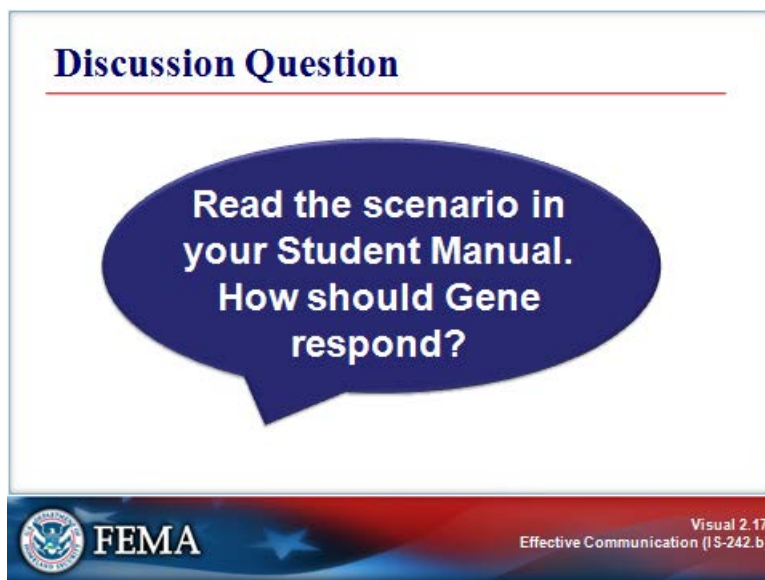
Within each culture, there are expected personal distances for different types of relationships. For example, studies indicate that Americans prefer these proximities:

- Personal distance (between friends and intimates): 1.5 to 4 feet.
- Social distance (for social and business transactions): 4 to 12 feet.
- Public distance (among strangers in public): 12 feet or more.

In other cultures, these distances may be different. Nonverbal communication can be confusing when comfort zones are violated.

ACTION #2: TAILOR MESSAGE DELIVERY TO SPECIFIC NEEDS

Visual 2.17



Key Points

Scenario: Gene has been asked to speak at a town meeting about how to be prepared for extreme temperatures. When he arrives, he notices that many in the audience are people whose families immigrated from India. During his talk, people of Indian heritage are slowly shaking their heads back and forth, whereas others in the audience are obviously engaged with the message.

How should Gene respond?


ACTION #2: TAILOR MESSAGE DELIVERY TO SPECIFIC NEEDS

Visual 2.18

Bridging Generational & Cultural Communications

Strategies include:

- Approach others with interest and openness.
- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Ask for clarification.
- Check your understanding.
- Avoid generational or cultural idioms.
- Be careful of jargon.
- Be patient.
- Be sensitive to whether you are understood.



The slide features the FEMA logo on the left and the text 'Visual 2.18 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)' on the right, set against a red and blue background with a white star.

Key Points

Using the strategies below, you can demonstrate that you respect generational and cultural differences among community members—and build powerful relationships as a result.

Approach others with interest and openness. Approach generational and cultural differences with interest, not fear or negativity. Take interest in the interests of others. You can learn fascinating things about other people if you choose to do so.

Speak slowly and clearly. Focus on slowing down your speech. Try not to rush your communication. Remember, it takes more time to correct miscommunication and misunderstanding.

Ask for clarification. If you are not sure you understand the meaning being communicated, politely ask for clarification. Avoid assuming you've understood what's been said.

Check your understanding frequently. Check both that you've understood what's been said and that others have fully understood you. Use active listening to check your own understanding (e.g., "So what you are saying is . . ."), and use open-ended questions to check other people's understanding.

Avoid generational or cultural idioms. Language is contextual and has cultural implications. Examples of idioms include sports or other expressions, such as: "ace in the hole" and "a long row to hoe." As a good general rule, if the phrase requires knowledge of other information—be it a game, generational event, a metaphor, or current social media—recognize that this reference may make your communication more difficult to understand, or even worse, offensive.

Be careful of jargon. Watch the use of TLAs (Three-Letter Abbreviations) and other language or jargon that may not be understood by others.

ACTION #2: TAILOR MESSAGE DELIVERY TO SPECIFIC NEEDS

Visual 2.18 (Continued)

Be patient. Cross-cultural communication may take more time.

Be sensitive to whether you are understood. Watch for “puzzled” looks from your audience. Most people show it on their faces when they don’t understand. Look for changes in body language.

The job aid on the next page provides some tips about learning about your community’s cultures.

Job Aid: Learning About Your Community's Cultures

It's not realistic to become an expert on every culture that you may encounter. However, it **is** reasonable for you to learn about the populations that make up major parts of your community.

Take the time to learn the basic customs of the ethnic groups in your community.

- **Tune in.** Making yourself aware of key cultural and other differences that you will need to address during an emergency will help you learn what to expect of the groups and whether your message is being communicated.
- **Research.** Read news articles about the groups represented in your community. Frequently, these articles can provide good insight into the people and the behaviors that are part of their cultures. (This strategy is especially helpful when you are new to a community or are from a different part of the country.)
- **Network.** Talk to the leaders of the cultural groups in your community. You will find that most will be pleased that you care enough to make the effort and will be very willing to share key attributes of their culture with you.
- **Participate.** Many communities sponsor special days on which the various cultures represented in the community can share their food, artwork, and other entertainment with their neighbors. Take the time to attend these events. Pay careful attention to what you see and hear.


ACTIVITY: COMMUNICATING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Visual 2.19

Activity: Communicating With the Community

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if the action is recommended or not recommended.
- Be prepared to explain your answers.



The slide footer features the FEMA logo on the left, a blue star in the center, and the text 'Visual 2.19 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)' on the right.

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is identify whether a communication practice is recommended or not recommended when communicating with members of the whole community

Time: 5 minutes

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if the practice is recommended or not recommended.
- Be prepared to follow up the answers with a group discussion.

Statements:

- Ensure that all materials are written at approximately the 10th grade level.
- Be sensitive to cultural differences in interpreting gestures, eye contact, and personal space.
- When you don't understand someone who has difficulty communicating, pretend that you understand so as to avoid giving offense.
- Avoid cultural idioms and metaphors that depend on familiarity with unrelated activities such as sports or social trends.

ACTION #3: IDENTIFY ALTERNATE AVENUES FOR COMMUNICATION

Visual 2.20

#3: Identify Alternate Avenues for Communication

Use multiple formats and media and include:

- **Social, cultural, and religious groups.**
- **Advocacy groups.**
- **Ethnic radio and television stations.**
- **Children, to educate their parents.**



 **FEMA** 

Visual 2.20
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

When selecting how to communicate with and educate your community, it is wise to use multiple formats and media to reach the widest possible audience.

You should also identify distribution methods that will ensure everyone in the community gets the message. When conducting communication and education activities, include:

- Social, cultural, and religious groups.
- Advocacy groups.
- Ethnic radio and television stations that broadcast in their native languages.
- Children, to educate their parents.

And when disseminating information through public forums, be sure the facilities are accessible by those who use wheelchairs or other assistive devices.

ACTION #4: COMMUNICATE WITH RESPECT

Visual 2.21

#4: Communicate With Respect

For example:

- Do not shout at a person with a hearing disability.
- Identify yourself to people with visual disabilities.
- If speech is unclear, politely ask the person to repeat what he/she said.
- Position yourself at eye level.



 **FEMA**

Visual 2.21
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Practice basic etiquette when meeting people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs. For example:

- Do not shout at a person with a hearing disability unless asked to do so. Speak in a normal tone but make sure your lips are visible. The same holds true for people with limited English proficiency.
- When meeting someone with a visual disability, identify yourself and others with you (e.g., “Jane is on my left and Jack is on my right.”). Continue to identify the person with whom you are speaking.
- If the person’s speech is difficult to understand, do not hesitate to ask him or her to repeat what was said. Never pretend to understand when you do not.
- Place yourself at eye level with the person when conversing. Some ways to accomplish this without drawing attention to yourself are sitting on a chair or standing a little farther away to reduce the steep angle of the sightline. This is effective when interacting with all people who are sitting as well as persons with short stature.

Additional etiquette guidelines include the following:

- Find a place to sit and talk if a person has decreased physical stamina and endurance, which is preferable to standing during the entire interaction.
- Talk directly to the person with the disability, not to a person who accompanies them. Doing otherwise implies that you doubt the person’s ability to understand, which is disrespectful.

The job aid on the following pages will help you to communicate with respect.

Lesson 2. Communicating With the Whole Community

Job Aid: Using Inclusive Language

Language influences behavior. Inclusive language is a powerful ingredient for achieving successful outcomes that are beneficial for the whole community. Consider the following language guidelines when referring to people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use people-first language. Place the emphasis on the individual instead of the disability. Use language that is respectful and straightforward. Refer to a person's disability only if it is relevant. Remember that individuals are unique and have diverse abilities and characteristics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid terms that lead to exclusion (e.g., "special" is associated with "separate" and "segregated" services). Avoid judgmental, negative, or sensational terms (e.g., brave, courageous, dumb, super-human). Avoid making assumptions or generalizations about the level of functioning of an individual based on diagnosis or disability.

Guidelines for Inclusive Language

The table below offers language guidelines for referring to people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.

Preferred	Avoid
People with disabilities	The handicapped, the disabled, the impaired
An individual or person with a disability	Disabled person
Access and functional needs	Special needs, vulnerable
Deaf, hard of hearing, hearing loss, sensory disability	Deaf and dumb, the deaf, mute
Accessible communication, effective communication	Special communication
He has a speech disability	He has a speech impairment, speech impediment
He is blind, he has low vision	The blind, sight impaired
She has a mobility disability	She's mobility impaired, physically challenged, crippled, an invalid, lame, differently-abled, bedridden, house-bound, a shut-in
She has... (multiple sclerosis, cancer, etc.)	She suffers from, is afflicted with, is stricken with, is impaired by
He uses a wheelchair, a scooter, a mobility device	Wheelchair bound, confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair person

Lesson 2. Communicating With the Whole Community

Job Aid: Using Inclusive Language (Continued)

Guidelines for Inclusive Language (Continued)

Preferred	Avoid
Assistive devices, assistive technology, durable medical equipment	Handicapped equipment, special devices
Power chair, motorized wheelchair	Electric wheelchair
She sustained a spinal cord injury, has paralysis, is a spinal cord injury survivor, has paraplegia, has quadriplegia	She's paralyzed, she's a cripple, she's trapped in her body, her body is lifeless, crippled, useless
Prosthesis, prosthetic limb	Fake leg, wooden leg, peg leg
He has cerebral palsy	He's spastic, palsied
He has epilepsy, has seizures	He has spells, fits
She is a little person, she has dwarfism, he is of short stature	She's a dwarf, he's a midget
She has Down syndrome	She's Downs, a Down's kid, mongoloid, retarded
He has a learning disability	He is learning disabled, slow, slow learner, dumb
A person with an intellectual disability, developmental disability	The mentally retarded, retard, retarded, mental retardation, mentally impaired
A woman with a cognitive disability, a person with dementia or Alzheimer's Disease	Senile, demented
A child with a traumatic brain injury, a person who sustained a head injury	Brain damaged, slow
He has autism, he is autistic (this term is preferred by some people with autism)	Mental, mentally impaired, retarded, dumb
She has a mental illness, a mental health disability, psychiatric disability; he has a diagnosis of schizophrenia or bipolar disorder, uses behavioral health services	Emotionally disturbed, disturbed, crazy, psycho, schizo, insane, manic, manic depression, mental, mental patient; she has a behavior problem, he needs behavior management, she's a problem child, he is crazy, she is out of control
Congenital disability, sustained a birth injury, an injury acquired at birth	Birth defect, defective
Children who receive special education services, children with Individual Education Plans	Special education kid, special needs child, rides the short bus, SPED, he's special ed, he is special

Job Aid: Using Inclusive Language (Continued)

Guidelines for Inclusive Language (Continued)

Preferred	Avoid
Senior, older person, older adult, elder with a disability	The frail elderly, the elderly
Accessible bathroom, accessible parking, accessible housing, accessible transportation	Handicapped bathrooms, handicapped parking, special needs housing, special housing, special transportation
Medical needs, acute medical needs, health care needs	Special medical needs
She requires support or assistance with...	She has a problem with...
Planning with people with disabilities	Planning for the disabled
Whole community planning, inclusive planning, integrated planning	Special needs planning, special plans, special needs annex
Universal cot, accessible cot	ADA cot, special needs cot, special medical cot
Personal assistance services, personal care assistance for children, youth and adults, caregiver (more appropriate with children)	Patient care, caregiver (for an adult), carer, takes care of
Functional needs support services in a general population shelter, accessible shelter, universal shelter	Special needs shelter, special shelter, special functional needs shelter
Person who receives disability services	Client, patient (unless referring to the acute care services of a nurse or doctor), burden, welfare case
Disaster survivor	Disaster victim (when used to describe an individual who survived the disaster)

The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.

-Mark Twain


ACTIVITY: COMMUNICATING WITH RESPECT

Visual 2.22

Activity: Communicating With Respect

Instructions: Working individually:

- Read the descriptions in the Student Manual of how people may behave when they communicate.
- Decide whether each behavior demonstrates communicating with respect.
- Be prepared to explain your answers.

The slide features a blue and red footer with the FEMA logo on the left, the text 'FEMA' in the center, and 'Visual 2.22 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)' on the right.

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to identify behaviors that demonstrate communicating with respect.

Time: 5 minutes

Instructions: Working individually:

- Read the following descriptions of how people may behave when they communicate.
- Determine whether each behavior demonstrates communicating with respect.
- Be prepared to explain your answers.

Lesson 2. Communicating With the Whole Community

ACTIVITY: COMMUNICATING WITH RESPECT

Visual 2.22 (Continued)

Instructions: Indicate whether each behavior is effective or not effective at demonstrating respect in communication.

Communication Behavior	Effective	Not Effective
When talking to a person with a hearing disability, speak louder than you normally would.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If a deaf person is assisted by a sign language interpreter, direct your comments to the interpreter.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When meeting someone with a visual disability, identify yourself and others with you.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When talking to a person in a wheelchair, remain standing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When referring to people with disabilities, refer to the disability only if relevant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assume that each individual with a disability has unique abilities and characteristics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When talking to a person with a hearing disability, make sure your lips are visible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speak with exaggerated enunciation, slowness, and volume when talking to an older adult.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When talking to a person with limited English proficiency, make sure your lips are visible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>


ACTIVITY: COMMUNITY AWARENESS ASSESSMENT

Visual 2.23

Activity: Community Awareness Assessment

Instructions:

- Use the worksheet in your Student Manual to analyze your community's cultural communication needs.
- Continue completing and updating the worksheet after you return to the office.



Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to analyze your community's cultural communication needs.

Time: 10 minutes

Instructions:

- Use the worksheet in your Student Manual to begin to analyze your community's cultural communication needs.
- Continue completing and updating the worksheet after you return to the workplace.

Lesson 2. Communicating With the Whole Community

Community Awareness Assessment

Ethnic Communities/Cultural Groups: What ethnic communities/cultural groups are represented in your community? (List below.)			
Groups:			
Where is this community/group located?			
What languages are spoken by this community/group?			
Is there a large proportion of people with limited English proficiency in this community/group?			
Does this community/group have community gathering places or hold cultural events?			
Are there radio or TV stations that broadcast in their native language?			
What are the implications for communicating with this community/group?			
Where can you find additional information to help you plan your communication with this community/group?			

SUMMARY AND TRANSITION

Visual 2.24

Summary and Transition

- Lesson 2 presented strategies for ensuring that your communication meets the needs of the whole community.
- Lesson 3 will address effective communication in emergency situations.

FEMA

Visual 2.24
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

This lesson presented strategies for ensuring that your communication meets the needs of the whole community. You should now be able to:

- Analyze your community to identify groups requiring consideration when preparing and delivering communications.
- Identify factors that impact communication requirements.
- Identify strategies for communicating effectively with the whole community.
- Identify aspects of communicating with respect.

Lesson 3 will address effective communication in emergency situations.

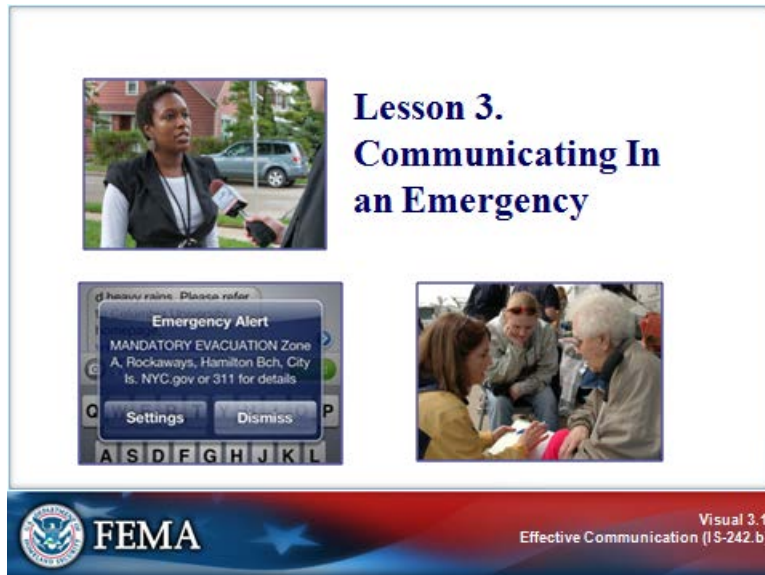
LESSON 3. COMMUNICATING IN AN EMERGENCY

This page intentionally left blank.

Lesson 3. Communicating in an Emergency

INTRODUCTION

Visual 3.1



Key Points

This lesson presents strategies for communicating effectively in emergency situations.

INTRODUCTION

Visual 3.2



Key Points

Transcript:

During an incident, communication with the community becomes especially critical. Emergency communications may include alerts and warnings; directives about evacuation, curfews, and other self-protective actions; and information about response status, family members, available assistance, and other matters that impact response and recovery.

Well-conceived and effectively delivered emergency messages can help ensure public safety, protect property, facilitate response efforts, elicit cooperation, instill public confidence, and help families reunite.

The extent to which people respond to a warning message is influenced by many factors, including individual characteristics and perceptions, whether the message comes from a credible source, how the message is delivered, and the message itself.

You have many communication tools to choose from, including in-person events, print and broadcast media, and Internet and social media. Each has advantages and limitations depending on your communication objective and the intended audience.

Whatever communication tools you use, be sure your emergency communications are clear, contain specific and adequate information, are in sync with other information being disseminated, and are accessible to the whole community.

INTRODUCTION

Visual 3.3

Lesson 3 Objectives

- Indicate how day-to-day communication differs from communication during an incident.
- Identify strategies for communicating effectively in an emergency situation.
- Select the most appropriate form of communication for a given situation.
- Indicate how social media and other communications technology can be used to communicate with members of the community.



Visual 3.3
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)



Key Points

At the completion of this lesson, you should be able to:


- Indicate how day-to-day communication differs from communication during an incident.
- Identify strategies for communicating effectively in an emergency situation.
- Select the most appropriate form of communication for a given situation.
- Indicate how social media and other communications technology can be used to communicate with members of the community.

DELIVERING EFFECTIVE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS


Visual 3.4

Delivering Effective Emergency Communications

This lesson presents information about three aspects of communicating in an emergency:



Emergency Communication Challenges **Emergency Communication Tools** **Creating Effective Emergency Communications**

 **FEMA** Visual 3.4
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Delivering effective emergency communications is an essential part of emergency management. This lesson presents information about three aspects of communicating in an emergency:

- Emergency Communication Challenges
- Emergency Communication Tools
- Creating Effective Emergency Communications

Let's begin with the importance of emergency communication and the challenges it presents.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

Visual 3.5

Importance of Emergency Communication

In an emergency, information is as critical to people as food and water.



The visual consists of a white rectangular box with a blue border. At the top, the title 'Importance of Emergency Communication' is written in a bold, dark blue font. Below the title, the main text reads 'In an emergency, information is as critical to people as food and water.' in the same bold, dark blue font. In the center of the box, there are two square images separated by a blue equals sign. The left image shows a close-up of a hand holding a silver mobile phone, with the hand's thumb touching the screen. The right image shows a person in a blue jacket eating a banana. Below the white box is a red and blue banner. On the left side of the banner is the FEMA logo, which includes the text 'FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY' around a circular emblem and the word 'FEMA' in large white letters. On the right side of the banner, the text 'Visual 3.5 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)' is written in a small white font.

FEMA

Visual 3.5
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points


Studies show that during an incident, information is as critically important to people as food or water. Not only can accurate information mean the difference between life and death, it can provide reassurance that response and recovery are truly underway.


EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

Visual 3.6

Key Functions of Emergency Information

- Save lives and reduce injury.
- Protect property and the environment.
- Facilitate the tactical response.
- Educate, inform, and change behavior and attitudes.
- Seek the public's cooperation.
- Instill public confidence.
- Provide information to help families reunite.



 **FEMA**

Visual 3.6
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Public information during an incident serves many important functions. It can:

- **Save lives and reduce injury.** Knowing the proper protective actions to take enables people to reduce their risk.
- **Protect property and the environment.** Understanding how to mitigate risk to property and the environment may lessen the damage inflicted by disasters.
- **Facilitate the tactical response** by calming fears and managing expectations. People who know what to expect are more likely to follow instructions and allow responders to do their jobs.
- **Educate, inform, and change behavior and attitudes.** An educated public is more likely to prepare for emergencies and be ready when they occur.
- **Seek the public's cooperation.** Whether the need is for volunteers to help with sandbagging, citizens to cooperate with investigators, or residents to evacuate their homes, public information is an instrument that can help make it happen.
- **Instill public confidence.** Providing timely, accurate, and understandable information builds confidence in emergency management's competence.
- **Provide information to help families reunite.** Public information about shelter message boards, hotlines, survivor registries, and other linkages can help reunite families and enable them to move forward with their recovery.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

Visual 3.7

Characteristics of Emergency Communications

Emergency communications differ from routine communications in several ways:

- Barriers
- Timeliness
- Required response



FEMA

Visual 3.7
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Emergency communications differ from routine communications in several ways:

- **Barriers:** It is more difficult for people to hear messages during an emergency. Stress, change of routine, and lack of sleep all can be hurdles to overcome when communicating during emergencies.
- **Timeliness:** If official answers are not available, rumor and speculation quickly fill the information vacuum. Then, not only must you disseminate correct information, but you also need to counter any misinformation that circulated. To use media in a timely fashion, learn local media news cycles and deadlines.

For example, if a news event occurs at 4:00 p.m., you can most likely get it on the radio immediately, on television in time for the evening report, and into the next morning's edition of the local paper. Online news outlets can be updated at any time.


- **Required Response:** Emergency warnings differ from other kinds of messages because their purpose is to elicit a specific response from the public, rather than merely raise awareness or provide knowledge.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

Visual 3.8

Factors That Affect Response

- Individual characteristics
- Perceptions
- Message source
- The message itself



FEMA

Visual 3.8
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Successful warnings are those that are taken seriously and responded to in a timely and effective manner. Multiple factors may have an impact on whether people respond to a warning, including:

- **Individual characteristics**—Age, education, language, access and functional needs, family composition, and length of residency, among others.
- **Perceptions**—Previous experience with a hazard and perceptions of proximity and risk.
- **Message source**—Who issues the warning, credibility of the warning source, and the level of trust in that source.
- **The message itself**—Accuracy, clarity, timeliness, consistency, and specificity of the message; and its focus on immediate needs.

The job aid on the next page provides additional information about factors that influence message response.

Lesson 3. Communicating in an Emergency

Job Aid: Factors That Affect Response

Research has identified a number of community, experiential, and individual factors that influence the extent to which alerts and warnings are received, comprehended, and heeded.

Community Factors

- **Type of community:** Residents of rural communities may have more difficulty receiving warnings than those living in urban areas.
- **Level of community interaction:** People who have more contacts in the community will receive more warnings and are more likely to act; also, they are more likely to trust officials.
- **Family composition:** Families, more than individuals, tend to heed evacuation warnings. Research indicates that people tend to confer with family, extended family, and friends prior to making a decision. They do this to ensure that their loved ones are safe and also to determine whether they may need to provide protection for their loved ones. Their decisions are based on the following factors related to family composition:
 - **Family network:** People are more likely to act if they have relatives nearby who may warn them and offer them short-term shelter.
 - **Presence of children:** Concern for children's safety will elicit quicker response from parents.
 - **Presence of pets:** People often view their pets as they would their children and will take action to protect them. However, whereas families with children usually act more quickly to take precautions, in emergencies requiring evacuation, people with pets may endanger their own lives by refusing to evacuate, because many public shelters do not allow pets.

Experiential Factors

- **Interpretation of message:** When different people listen to the same message, there may be a variation in what they hear, leading to different interpretation and response.
- **Previous experiences:** Often people will rely on their previous experiences with the hazard to determine what actions they initially take (or don't take).
- **Observations:** Individual responses to warnings vary, but most people will seek some form of confirmation. For example, some people will look for more information through environmental cues, while others will seek to contact other trusted sources. Optimism bias (thinking that "disasters happen to other people") is overcome with confirmation.
- **Perception of risk/proximity:** People tend to make a rapid assessment of the relative safety of their location, producing an emergent perception of risk. If their perception of personal risk is high, people will act quickly. When the perception is low, they will delay acting.

Job Aid: Factors That Affect Response (Continued)

Individual Factors

- **Age:** Children and older adults may not be able to receive and/or respond appropriately to alerts and warnings. Many in this group may also need assistance.
- **Language:** Non-English-speaking persons may not understand warnings that are provided in English. Communities with high percentages of non-English-speaking people should issue warnings in the primary language(s) of the population as well as in English.
- **Length of residency:** Transients, tourists, and newcomers to the area lack knowledge of local hazards and the history of local disasters, so they may react differently.
- **Access and functional needs:** Individuals with access and functional needs may need alerts in accessible formats and additional time and assistance for evacuating. Accessibility of alert and warning messages refers to whether individuals hear and understand them. Alternative alert and warning methods are needed for individuals with access and functional needs such as those who are blind or deaf or have low vision or hearing. Both audio and equivalent text messages should be available.
- **Level of individual preparedness:** People who have taken the time to prepare for hazards (i.e., they have a plan and disaster supply kit, and have exercised the plan) are more likely to heed warnings and act appropriately. Getting the preparedness buy-in is often the challenge.


EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES



Visual 3.9

The Medium and the Message

How you will get the message to the audience is influenced by:

- The audience itself.
- Urgency of the message.
- Reliability of the medium.
- Appropriateness of the medium.
- Resources.



 **FEMA** 

Visual 3.9
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

A key decision in planning emergency communications is how you will get the message to the audience. This decision is influenced by several factors, including:

- The audience—Whom are you trying to reach?
- Urgency of the message—How quickly do they need the information?
- Reliability of the medium—How reliable are the available media?
- Appropriateness of the medium—Which media best communicate the message in these circumstances?
- Resources—What resources may be required?

The job aid on the next page provides additional details on these factors.

Job Aid: Factors Affecting Communication Strategies

The Audience: Select media that have the greatest likelihood of reaching the intended audience:

- Are you sending your message to the general public?
- How many people does the information need to reach?
- Does your message apply only to people living in a specific geographic area?
- Is your message intended for emergency management personnel only?
- What is the primary language of the intended audience? Are there other languages that must also be accommodated?
- Where does this audience usually obtain news—TV? Radio? Newspapers? Community venues? Online? Social media?

Urgency: Match the speed and frequency of the media to how quickly and for how long your audience needs to know:

- Is this information related to immediate safety?
- Is this referral information for future recovery?
- Should urgency take priority over style and format?
- When do various media air, publish, or broadcast information?
- How long will this information be useful to the audience?
- How many times do you think your audience needs to see or hear your information before they act on it?

Reliability: Ensure that your choice of media is reliable during the emergency:

- During *this emergency situation*, which media are functional?
- Are the radio, television, and newspaper companies functioning normally?
- Are residents currently located at their normal mailing addresses?
- Is mail delivery interrupted?
- Are there widespread power outages that affect some or all media outlets?
- Can you identify public places where your audience can assemble?

Appropriateness: Choose appropriate media to enhance comprehension:

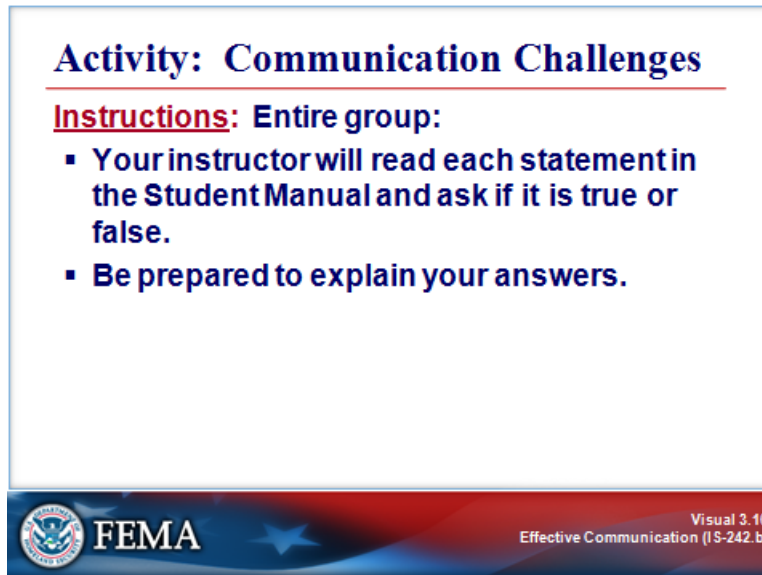
- Is your message too sensitive to send via fax?
- Is your audience geographically concentrated enough to make a public meeting possible?
- Can you make your point on a billboard?

Resources: Consider your resources in your media choice:

- Which staff will you need to implement this media approach?
- Can your budget afford a televised public service announcement?
- Can you deliver an effective public speech?

ACTIVITY: EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

Visual 3.10



The slide features a white background with a blue border. At the top, the title "Activity: Communication Challenges" is written in a blue serif font. Below the title, the word "Instructions:" is written in a red serif font, followed by "Entire group:" in a blue serif font. Two bullet points in a blue serif font follow: "Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if it is true or false." and "Be prepared to explain your answers." At the bottom of the slide, there is a red and blue banner with the FEMA logo on the left and the text "Visual 3.10 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)" on the right.

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to identify emergency communication challenges.

Time: 5 minutes

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if it is true or false.
- Be prepared to explain your answers.

Statements:

- Public information during an incident can facilitate the tactical response by calming people's fears and managing their expectations.
- Most people respond to emergency messages in the same way regardless of experience or individual characteristics.
- Stress, change of routine, and lack of sleep can affect the way people process information during an incident.
- It is important to match the speed and frequency of the communication medium to how quickly and for how long the audience needs the information.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Visual 3.11

Emergency Communication Tools

The most effective communication tool is the one that:

- Reaches the target audience.
- Gets information to the audience when they need it, for as long as they need it.
- Can be expected to deliver the message reliably.
- Enhances comprehension of the message content.
- Can be accessed within resource limitations.

FEMA

Visual 3.11
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

During an incident, a wide variety of communication tools are available to provide vital information to the community.

This section of the lesson will focus on the various tools available and factors to consider in choosing among them.

Choosing the right communication tool is a matter of getting the right information to the right people at the right time so they can make the right decisions. Remember, the most effective communication tool is one that:

- Reaches the target audience.
- Gets information to the audience when they need it, for as long as they need it.
- Can be expected to deliver the message reliably.
- Enhances comprehension of the message content.
- Can be accessed within resource limitations.

Most often, you will use a combination of methods to deliver a consistent message to the whole community.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Visual 3.12



Key Points

Tools and methods for emergency communications include:

- In-person events—briefings and public meetings.
- Print media—newspapers and magazines.
- Broadcast media—television and radio.
- Internet and social media.

The following pages present information about advantages, limitations, and requirements of each.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Visual 3.13

In-Person Events

Advantages:

- Interactive.
- Can target specific populations.

Limitations:

- Must have ability to stay on message.
- May expose you to difficult questions.



 **FEMA** 

Visual 3.13
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

In-person events such as media briefings and public meetings can be used to get information to the media and the public. When properly planned and executed, these events can be a powerful tool to aid you in communicating the messages you want disseminated to the public while guiding the news media to important information for the public.

Advantages:

- Interactive, allowing participants to voice their questions and concerns and giving you the opportunity to respond.
- Can be targeted to specific populations.

Limitations:

- Require the ability to stay on message when the audience becomes vocal.
- May expose you to difficult questions.

Requirements:

- An appropriate, accessible venue.
- Public address equipment.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Visual 3.14

Print Media



Advantages:

- Allow for detail.
- Can use a variety of approaches.

Limitations:

- Take longer to get the message out.
- May be filtered through another spokesperson.

 **FEMA** 

Visual 3.14
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Print media such as newspapers and magazines can be used to disseminate information that is not time-critical. These media are especially effective for presenting indepth analysis of developing situations and for educating the public about preparedness. Most newspapers and magazines have Web sites where they will also post your story.

Advantages:

- Allow for more detail and indepth treatment of the subject.
- Permit a variety of approaches—e.g., news story, interview, background piece.

Limitations:

- Take longer to get the message out.
- May be filtered through another spokesperson.

Requirements:

- Details and background information.
- Access to subject-matter experts.
- Access to photo opportunities.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Visual 3.15

Broadcast Media

Advantages:

- Immediate broadcast.
- Varied programming.
- Reaches a wide audience.

Disadvantages:

- May be less detailed.
- Messages may be filtered or edited.
- Listeners/viewers must turn on the device.



 **FEMA**

Visual 3.15
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Television and radio can be used to disseminate information quickly, through the Emergency Alert System (EAS), Public Service Announcements (PSAs), and news programs. More indepth features can also be presented. Stations that broadcast in other languages can be used as an avenue to reach specific populations within the community.

Advantages:

- Immediate broadcasting of urgent messages.
- Varied programming.
- Can reach a wide audience and be tailored to specific populations.

Limitations:

- Reporting may be less detailed, especially on television.
- Messages may be filtered through a reporter or other spokesperson, and may be edited or cut to fit available time.
- Listener/viewer must choose to turn on the TV or radio in order to receive the message.

Requirements:

- Television—visuals, sound bites, staging area.
- Radio—audio sound clips, recorded interviews, recorded PSAs.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Visual 3.16

Internet and Social Media



Advantages:

- Can be updated quickly.
- Can incorporate varied media.
- Flexible.

Limitations:

- Updates may only be at certain times.
- Limited message control after sending.

 **FEMA** 

Visual 3.16
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

The Internet and social media can provide immediate message dissemination and a wide variety of formats. A Web site can incorporate many different types of media and accessibility features, but the recipient must choose to access the site or have signed up for automated message feeds. Social media provides almost instantaneous messaging to those who have access.

Advantages:

- Internet—Updated quickly, can incorporate varied media (e.g., print, photos, graphics, audio, video, live streaming).
- Social media—Very flexible; messages can be short and quick.
- Individuals can opt into notification systems that push messages to the recipient.

Limitations:

- Internet—Updates may only be at certain times.
- Social media—Limited control once the message goes out.

Requirements: Vary according to the medium and type of message.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Visual 3.17

Coming to Terms With New Media

“New media” include:

- Blogs
- Photo sharing
- Podcasts
- RSS feeds
- Social networking
- Webcasts
- Wikis



 **FEMA**

Visual 3.17
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

The key to using emerging technology is staying on top of what is out there, because “new” media is a relative term and technology doesn’t slow down for anyone.

Ultimately, new communication technology is all about speed. People have an expectation of being engaged and involved and they don’t want to wait for it. They expect that their government agencies will not only be transparent and responsive, but that the response will be customized to the incident and as rapid as the flow of electrons.

The job aids on the following pages summarize various types of social media and provide a comparison of different media tools.

Job Aid: Social Media Descriptions

Social Media	Description
Blog	<p>A blog (a contraction of the term Weblog) is a Web site, usually maintained by an individual, with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order. “Blog” can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog.</p> <p>Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject; others function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, Web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs.</p>
Citizen Journalism	<p>Citizen journalism is based upon public citizens playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing, and disseminating news and information. The availability of technology such as smartphones with cameras and video capability makes it possible for individuals to report breaking news often more quickly than traditional media reporters.</p>
Micro-blog	<p>A micro-blog is a form of multimedia blogging that allows users to send brief text updates (say, 140 characters or fewer) or micromedia (such as photos or audio clips) and publish them, either to be viewed by anyone or by a restricted group that can be chosen by the user. These messages can be submitted by a variety of means, including text messaging, instant messaging, email, digital audio, or the Web.</p>
Photo Sharing	<p>Photo sharing is the publishing or transfer of a user’s digital photos online through both Web sites and applications that facilitate the upload and display of images. The term can also be loosely applied to the use of online photo galleries that are set up and managed by individual users, including photoblogs.</p>
Podcast	<p>A podcast is a series of visual or sound files that are distributed over the computer by syndicated download, through Web feeds, to portable media players and personal computers. Though the same content may also be made available by direct download or streaming, a podcast is distinguished from most other digital media formats by its ability to be syndicated, subscribed to, and downloaded automatically when new content is added. Like the term broadcast, podcast can refer either to the series of content itself or to the method by which it is syndicated; the latter is also called podcasting. The host or author of a podcast is often called a podcaster.</p>

Job Aid: Social Media Descriptions (Continued)

Social Media	Description
Really Simple Syndication (RSS) Feed	<p>RSS (abbreviation for Really Simple Syndication) is a family of Web feed formats used to publish frequently updated works—such as blog entries, news headlines, audio, and video—in a standardized format. An RSS document (which is called a “feed,” “Web feed,” or “channel”) includes full or summarized text, plus metadata such as publishing dates and authorship. Web feeds benefit publishers by letting them syndicate content automatically. They benefit readers who want to subscribe to timely updates from favored Web sites or to aggregate feeds from many sites into one place. The user subscribes to a feed by clicking an RSS icon in a browser that initiates the subscription process. The RSS reader checks the user’s subscribed feeds regularly for new work, downloads any updates that it finds, and provides a user interface to monitor and read the feeds.</p>
Smartphone	(See Citizen Journalism.)
Social Networking	<p>Social networking sites are online communities that connect people who share interests and/or activities, or who are interested in exploring the interests and activities of others.</p> <p>The most popular social networking sites have groups, which offer chat boards for members. There are also professional social networking sites with sections for jobs. All social networking sites allow users to find people they know among the members, or look for other members with similar interests or affiliations. These sites make it easy to establish networks of contacts.</p>
Video Blog	<p>A video blog, sometimes shortened to a vlog or vidblog, is a form of blog for which the medium is video. Entries are made regularly and often combine embedded video or a video link with supporting text, images, and other metadata. Vlogs also often take advantage of Web syndication to allow for the distribution of video over the Internet using either the RSS or Atom syndication formats, for automatic aggregation and playback on mobile devices and personal computers.</p>
Video Sharing	<p>Videos can be used to communicate information on Web sites or on video hosting sites. Video is a good choice for sharing information because of its audio and visual components.</p>
Web 2.0, Webcast	<p>A Web 2.0 site allows users to interact and collaborate with each other in a social media dialogue as creators of user-generated content in a virtual community.</p> <p>A webcast is a media presentation distributed over the Internet using streaming media technology.</p>

Job Aid: Social Media Descriptions (Continued)

Social Media	Description
Wiki	<p>A wiki is a page or collection of Web pages designed to enable anyone who accesses it to contribute or modify content, using a simplified markup language. Wikis are often used to create collaborative Web sites and to power community Web sites.</p> <p>A defining characteristic of wiki technology is the ease with which pages can be created and updated. Generally, there is no review before modifications are accepted. Many wikis are open to alteration by the general public without requiring them to register user accounts. Sometimes logging in for a session is recommended, to create a “wiki-signature” cookie for signing edits automatically. Many edits, however, can be made in real-time and appear almost instantly online. This feature can facilitate abuse of the system. Private wiki servers require user authentication to edit pages, and sometimes even to read them.</p>

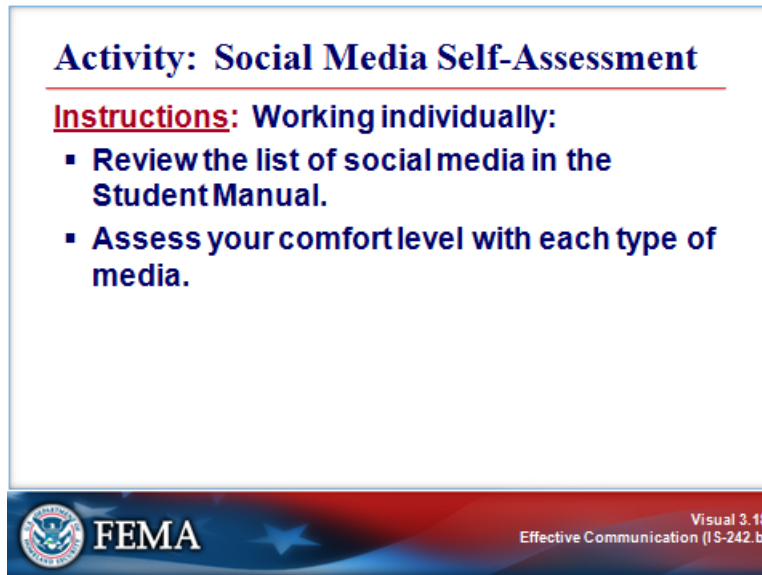
Lesson 3. Communicating in an Emergency

Job Aid: Communication Tool Comparison

Types of Media	Advantages	Limitations	What They Require
Briefings, public meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interactive. ▪ Allow response to specific concerns. ▪ Can be targeted at specific populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Require ability to stay on message. ▪ Exposure to difficult questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appropriate venue accessible to whole community. ▪ Public address equipment.
Newspapers, magazines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More detail. ▪ Available on Web site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Longer to get information out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Details. ▪ Background information. ▪ Access to subject-matter experts. ▪ Access to photo opportunities.
Television	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Immediate. ▪ Varied programming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Less detailed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visuals! ▪ Sound bites. ▪ Staging area.
Radio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Immediate. ▪ Can reach special populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Few field reporters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Audio (sound clips or telephone interviews). ▪ Sound bites. ▪ Recorded public service announcements (PSAs).
Internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updated quickly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updates may only be at certain times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Needs can vary and may be a combination of print, television, and radio needs because Web sites are capable of having videos, pictures, and text.
Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very flexible. ▪ Messages can be short and quick. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited control once the message goes out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can accommodate short, informal, quick messages ("Tweets," blogs, postings, texting, etc.).

ACTIVITY: SOCIAL MEDIA SELF-ASSESSMENT

Visual 3.18



Activity: Social Media Self-Assessment

Instructions: Working individually:

- Review the list of social media in the Student Manual.
- Assess your comfort level with each type of media.

FEMA

Visual 3.18
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to identify how comfortable you are with different types of social media.

Time: 5 minutes

Instructions: Review the list of social media in the Student Manual. Assess how comfortable you are with each type of media.

Lesson 3. Communicating in an Emergency

ACTIVITY: SOCIAL MEDIA SELF-ASSESSMENT

Visual 3.18 (Continued)

Social Media Self-Assessment

	I am familiar with it.	I know how to use it.	I should learn more about it.
Blog	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Citizen journalism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Micro-blog	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Photo sharing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Podcast	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Really Simple Syndication (RSS)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smartphone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Video blog	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Video sharing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Web 2.0, Webcast	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wiki	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ACTIVITY: COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Visual 3.19

Activity: Communication Tools

Instructions:

- Review the list of communication tools/methods in the Student Manual.
- Match each communication tool/method by entering the number beside the description.

FEMA logo and text: Visual 3.19 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to match the communication tool/method with the description.

Time: 5 minutes

Instructions: Entire group:

- Review the list of communication tools/methods below.
- Match each communication tool/method by entering the number beside the description.

1 – In-Person Events

2 – Print Media

3 – Broadcast Media

4 – Internet and Social Media

_____ Provide a vehicle for quick, short messages but can be difficult to control once the message goes out.

_____ Are better for indepth coverage and analysis than for issuing time-critical information such as alerts and warnings.

_____ Can be used to distribute information quickly to a broad general audience; may be limited by programming schedules.

_____ Allow you to interactively learn about and address the questions and concerns of a specific audience.


CREATING EFFECTIVE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Visual 3.20

Creating Effective Emergency Communications

Successful emergency communications should:

- **Present the information in sequence.**
- **Be worded precisely.**
- **Avoid jargon, code, and acronyms.**
- **Use common terminology.**
- **Omit unnecessary details.**
- **Speak in sync with other related authorities.**
- **Keep messages consistent across various media.**



The slide features the FEMA logo on the left, which includes the text 'FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY' and 'FEMA'. On the right, the text reads 'Visual 3.20 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)'. The background of the slide is a red and blue gradient with a white star.

Key Points

All emergency communications—regardless of the medium—should conform to general principles of effective communication.

In a crisis, clarity, specificity, and consistency are vitally important. Be sure to:

- Present the information in sequence. Present the reason for the message, the supporting information, and the conclusion.
- Word the message precisely, making every word count.
- Avoid jargon, codes, and acronyms.
- Use common terminology for all personnel and facilities.
- Omit unnecessary details.
- Speak in sync with other related authorities.
- Keep messages consistent across various media.

CREATING EFFECTIVE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Visual 3.21

Creating Alerts and Warnings

- Alerts and warnings are products or messages intended to get the attention of the public and to prompt some type of action.
- In practical usage, there is little distinction between the two.

FEMA Visual 3.21 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Alerts and warnings are products or messages intended to get the attention of the public and to prompt some type of action—whether protective actions or a continued state of alertness.

Terminology related to warnings can be confusing. Below are some basic distinctions.

- **Watch vs. Warning:** The National Weather Service distinguishes between these two types of messages based on degree of certainty:
 - **Watch**—A watch is used when the risk of a hazardous event has increased significantly, but its occurrence, location, and/or timing is still uncertain. It is intended to provide enough lead time so that those who need to set their plans in motion can do so. From the listener’s perspective, a watch lets you know that weather conditions are favorable for a hazard to occur. It literally means “be on guard!” During a weather watch, gather awareness of the specific threat and prepare for action.
 - **Warning**—A warning is issued when a hazardous event that poses a threat to life or property is occurring, is imminent, or has a very high probability of occurring. During a weather warning, it is important to take action: grab the emergency kit and head to safety immediately. Both watches and warnings are important, but warnings are more urgent.
- **Emergency Message vs. Warning Message:** The message encoding protocol used to trigger alerts over the Emergency Alert System (EAS) designates these message types based on the significance and directness of the threat. We’ll return to this distinction later in this lesson.

In practical usage, there is little distinction between the two. In this course, “alert” and “warning” are used interchangeably when referring to messages issued to the public.

CREATING EFFECTIVE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Visual 3.22

The slide is titled "Alert and Warning Message Content" in a blue serif font. Below the title, it lists "Successful messages should include:" followed by seven bullet points: Specific hazard, Location, Timeframes, Warning source, Magnitude, Likelihood, and Protective behavior. To the right of the list is a photograph of a lightning bolt striking a field. At the bottom of the slide, there is a red and blue banner with the FEMA logo on the left and the text "Visual 3.22 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)" on the right.

Key Points

Effective alerts and warnings are those that result in members of the public taking recommended actions to protect themselves. To help ensure that messages are effective, they must be issued in a timely manner and should include the following components:

- **Specific hazard:** What hazard is threatening? What are the potential risks for the community?
- **Location:** Where will the impacts occur? Describe the location so those without local knowledge can understand their risk.
- **Timeframes:** When will it arrive at various locations? How long will the impacts last?
- **Warning source:** Who is issuing the warning? Identify an official source with public credibility.
- **Magnitude:** What impact is expected and how bad is it likely to get?
- **Likelihood:** How probable is occurrence of the impact?
- **Protective behavior:** What protective actions should people take and when? If evacuation is called for, where should people go and what should they take with them?

An example warning:


A dangerous wildfire is moving toward North Haverbrook and is expected to reach the north edge of town by 2 p.m. All persons remaining within the hazard area must evacuate now to a safe location to the west or east. A shelter is now open at Waverly Hills High School gym. Pets are permitted.

CREATING EFFECTIVE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Visual 3.23

Accessible Alert and Warning Systems

- **Ensure messages are accessible to all audiences by using clear and simple language.**
- **Provide information in multiple languages.**
- **Be aware of text-to-speech technology requirements.**
- **Ensure audio is consistent with text.**
- **Explain images and maps.**
- **Use multiple delivery channels.**

The slide footer features the FEMA logo on the left, which includes the text 'FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY' around a central emblem. To the right of the logo is the text 'FEMA'. Further right is a blue star graphic. On the far right of the footer, the text reads 'Visual 3.23 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)'.

Visual 3.23
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Ensure that alert and warning messages are accessible to all audiences by:

- Using clear and simple language.
- Providing information in multiple languages.
- Taking care with text-to-speech conversion. Avoid nonstandard language formats and terminology when using conversion and translation technologies.
- Ensuring that the audio is consistent with the text.
- Providing ample text and audio to explain images and maps.
- Delivering the message through multiple channels to reach all recipients.

The job aid on the following pages provides additional information about accessible alert and warning messages.

Job Aid: Accessible Alert and Warning Messages

Style Elements

How you write an alert/warning message is nearly as important as what you write. Poorly written warnings can undermine both understanding and credibility.

“Style” refers to how you write. Here are some style elements to consider when writing accessible and usable alert and warning messages. Be:

- **Specific:** If the message is not specific enough about the “Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?” the public will spend more time seeking specific information to confirm the risk. If necessary, be specific about what is or is not known about the hazard.
- **Consistent:** An alert/warning should be internally consistent—that is, one part of the message should not contradict another part. It should be consistent with messages that are distributed via other channels. To the extent possible, alerts/warnings should be consistent from event to event, to the degree that the hazard is similar.
- **Certain:** Avoid conveying a sense of uncertainty, either in content or in tone. Confine the message to what is known, or if necessary, describe what is unknown in certain terms. Do not guess or speculate.
- **Clear:** Use common words that can easily be understood. Do not use technical terminology or jargon. If protective instructions are precautionary, state so clearly. If the probability of occurrence of the hazard event is less than 100%, try to convey in simple terms what the likelihood of occurrence is.
- **Accurate:** Do not overstate or understate the facts. Do not omit important information. Convey respect for the intelligence and judgment of your public.

Accessible Alert and Warning Messages for Persons With Access and Functional Needs

As the message originator, you should keep in mind the needs of persons with access and functional needs by using:

- **Clear and simple language:** A general guideline to follow is to use clear and simple language whenever possible, with minimal use of abbreviations. The most important information should be presented first.
- **Care with text-to-speech conversion:** Care must be taken in composing text that is converted to audio by text-to-speech equipment. When considering these and other translation technologies, craft messages that avoid nonstandard language formats and terminology. Consult your NWS Weather Forecast Office for local guidance regarding NOAA Weather Radio requirements.
- **Consistent audio:** The audio should be as consistent as possible with the text and should ensure that any abbreviations are spoken as full words.
- **Ample text and audio to explain images/maps:** Ample text and audio should be provided to explain images or maps, so that message recipients can understand the meaning of what is being conveyed graphically.

Job Aid: Accessible Alert and Warning Messages (Continued)

Accessible Alert and Warning Messages for People for Whom English Is a Second Language

Non-English-speaking people may not understand warnings that are provided in English. Communities with high percentages of non-English-speaking people should issue warnings in the primary language(s) of the population as well as in English.

Your alert authoring or other software programs may provide automated translation, but you should validate any automatically translated text with a speaker of the language to avoid errors.

The use of pre-translated templates may serve to minimize the amount of information requiring translation for actual alerts.

Features of modern communication devices owned by end users can also provide translation of alerts to the targeted language supported by the device.

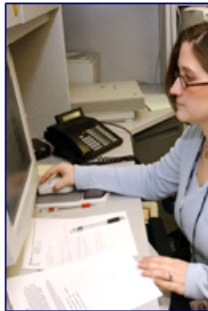
CREATING EFFECTIVE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS


Visual 3.24

Using Warning Message Templates

Using templates tailored to threats and hazards likely in your warning area, that incorporate pre-approved language, can:

- Help prevent errors or omissions.
- Reduce delays in issuing alerts and warnings.
- Allow for language translation in advance.



 **FEMA**

Visual 3.24
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

One way to help prevent errors or omissions that can occur in moments of urgency is to use templates that are tailored to threats and hazards likely in your warning area.

Using a template that incorporates pre-approved language can reduce delays in issuing alerts and warnings. Another advantage is that, if you need to use a language in addition to English, your templates can be translated in advance.

An example template for a warning message is provided on the next page.

Sample Immediate Evacuation Order (EVI) Template

Replace all bracketed text below:

(Headline field)

Immediate Evacuation Ordered for [geographic description of area to be evacuated]

(Description field)

Effective immediately, and extending until [further notice or expiration time], the Mayor of Disasterville has issued an evacuation order for all persons living, working, or traveling in the vicinity of [geographic description of area to be evacuated]. This area is at immediate risk from [brief description of the hazardous conditions].

(Instruction field)

To protect yourself and your family from this dangerous situation, the following actions are strongly urged:

*Leave your home or workplace immediately for a safe destination outside the hazard area via [specify recommended route(s) of travel].

*Take only pets and essential items such as medications with you.

[*Instruction related to school children if applicable, e.g., Do not pick up your children from school. They are being evacuated by school officials.]

A shelter operated by [organization, e.g., the Red Cross] is available at [address of public shelter]. If you need evacuation assistance, call 555-9999. Do not call 9-1-1 unless you have a serious personal emergency. For further information, tune to radio station WXYZ.

ACTIVITY: DEVELOPING A WARNING MESSAGE

Visual 3.25

Activity: Developing a Warning Message

Instructions: Working in your table group:

- Review the scenario in the Student Manual.
- Imagine this scenario occurring in your jurisdiction. You may add additional facts and details not contained in the scenario.
- Develop a warning message to address the scenario.
- Be prepared to follow up with a group discussion.

FEMA

Visual 3.25
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to practice creating a warning message.

Time: 10 minutes

Instructions: Working in your table group:

- Review the scenario in the Student Manual.
- Imagine this scenario occurring in your jurisdiction. You may add additional facts and details not contained in the scenario.
- Develop a warning message to address the scenario.
- Be prepared to follow up with a group discussion.

Scenario:

A hazardous materials accident has just occurred, shutting a major roadway. Evacuations are being ordered for the homes within a 1-mile radius of Highway 1. A shelter at the high school is opening that allows pets.

Lesson 3. Communicating in an Emergency

ACTIVITY: DEVELOPING A WARNING MESSAGE

Visual 3.25 (Continued)


Write your message below:



CREATING EFFECTIVE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Visual 3.26

Preparing for Briefings and Public Meetings

- **Identify objectives.**
- **Prepare officials and experts in advance.**
- **Prepare a statement and handout materials.**
- **Anticipate difficult or sensitive questions.**
- **Make provisions to comply with all legal requirements.**



 **FEMA** 

Visual 3.26
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Briefings and public meetings enable you to bring a carefully developed message to the media and the public and to build important community relationships in the process. When planning these public events, remember:

- Use news briefings for important events or significant new information—not just to say there is nothing new to report.
- Don't delay the release of important information for a scheduled briefing—especially if it impacts life and safety. Release it as soon as possible.

When preparing for and conducting a media briefing or public meeting:

- **Identify objectives.** Know what you want to accomplish.
- **Prepare officials and experts in advance.** Ensure that they have all the information and are prepared to address the media.
- **Prepare a statement and handout materials.** Materials should be focused, concise, informative, and cover the basics: who, what, when, where, how, and possibly why.
- **Anticipate difficult or sensitive questions.** Address rumors and incorrect news statements. Prepare brief, honest responses.
- **Make provisions to comply with all legal requirements.** Ensure physical and communication access by all.

The job aid on the next page provides descriptions of materials that may be used to support media events.

Lesson 3. Communicating in an Emergency

Job Aid: Information Materials for Media Events

This table presents examples of materials you can use to get information to the media.

Material	Description
News release	Used when there is a factual report of an activity or incident of news value.
Statement	Used in lieu of a news release. Issued in print; less detailed than a press release. Good to use when you've received multiple media calls on the same topic.
Fact sheet	Used when you need to provide more detail than is possible in a news release.
Media advisory	Used to invite the media to an event or news conference. Provides basic information (what, where, when, and why); provides directions.
Talking points	Used to prepare yourself or someone else for a telephone or broadcast interview. Written as sound bites: concise, simple to understand. For internal use only—not for distribution to the news media.
Web product	An increasingly important avenue; includes Web pages, blogs, and tweets.
Newsletter article	Used to communicate within the organization or may be a feature in a newsletter that reaches another audience.
Public service announcement (PSA)	Used when you want to enlist the cooperation of the electronic media in promoting an important message.
Brochure, flier, or other handout	Used to provide background information to supplement a news release, provide photos or graphics, etc. Remember not to overwhelm the reporter with too much or extraneous information. Sometimes "less is more."


ACTIVITY: CREATING EFFECTIVE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Visual 3.27

Activity: Creating Effective Emergency Communications

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if that action is recommended or not recommended.
- Be prepared to explain your answers.



The image shows a slide with a blue and red background. On the left is the FEMA logo. On the right, it says "Visual 3.27 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)".

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to identify whether each emergency communication action is recommended or not recommended.

Time: 5 minutes

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if the action is recommended or not recommended.
- Be prepared to follow up the answers with a group discussion.

Statements:

- Coordinate emergency messages with those of other authorities and across the various media.
- Include in warning messages the protective behavior expected of the public.
- To keep media informed, hold a media briefing to announce that there is no new information to report.
- Create message templates based on your local threats and hazards that you can use when an emergency arises.
- When preparing for a media briefing, prepare a written statement and handout materials for the audience.

ACTIVITY: CREATING EFFECTIVE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

Visual 3.27 (Continued)

Statements (Continued):


- When issuing an urgent warning message, include as much detailed background information as possible.
- When preparing for a public meeting, prepare brief, honest responses to anticipated questions.

SUMMARY AND TRANSITION

Visual 3.28

Summary and Transition

- **Lesson 3 presented strategies for communicating effectively in an emergency situation.**
- **Lesson 4 will present strategies for improving your oral presentation skills.**

 **FEMA** Visual 3.28
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

This lesson presented strategies for communicating effectively in an emergency situation. You should now be able to:

- Indicate how day-to-day communication differs from communication during an incident.
- Identify strategies for communicating effectively in an emergency situation.
- Select the most appropriate form of communication for a given situation.
- Indicate how social media and other communications technology can be used to communicate with members of the community.

Lesson 4 will present strategies for improving your oral presentation skills.

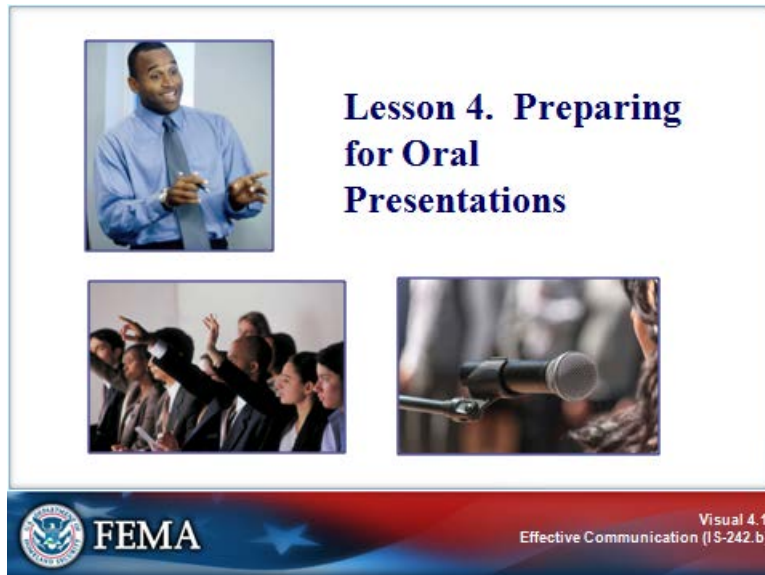
LESSON 4. PREPARING FOR ORAL PRESENTATIONS

This page intentionally left blank.

Lesson 4. Preparing for Oral Presentations

LESSON OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Visual 4.1



Key Points

This lesson presents strategies for improving your oral presentation skills.

VIDEO: PREPARING FOR ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Visual 4.2



Key Points

Transcript:

Effective presentation is much more than just presenting your ideas or delivering a speech. It is about skillful communication and relating to the audience—whether the audience is a few people or a large gathering.

An effective presentation is one that matches the message to the audience, matches the content and delivery to the purpose, and is delivered in a clear and engaging manner.

To create that kind of presentation requires preparation. You need to learn about your audience and any logistical factors so that you can tailor your message accordingly. With your audience in mind you can outline the presentation to clarify your key messages and establish a logical sequence.

Next comes the writing. Informational and motivational speeches will differ somewhat in structure, but most speeches have an introduction, a discussion, and a conclusion.

Getting ready to deliver your presentation involves practicing until you are comfortable with your performance. Practice is one of the best ways to dispel any pre-speech jitters that you may feel.


When you present, be sure to face the audience and maintain an attentive stance. Don't stand in a fixed position. Instead, move around, make eye contact, and relax so you can connect with the audience.

LESSON OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES


Visual 4.3

Lesson 4 Objectives

- Identify strategies for conducting effective oral presentations.
- Identify your own anxiety about public speaking and take steps to reduce your anxiety.
- Prepare and deliver an oral presentation in a manner that effectively delivers the message and meets the needs of the target audience.
- Identify personal action steps to improve your oral presentation skills.



Visual 4.3
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)



FEMA

Key Points

At the completion of this lesson, you should be able to:

- Identify strategies for conducting effective oral presentations.
- Identify your own anxiety about public speaking and take steps to reduce your anxiety.
- Prepare and deliver an oral presentation in a manner that effectively delivers the message and meets the needs of the target audience.
- Identify personal action steps to improve your oral presentation skills.

INTRODUCTION

Visual 4.4

What Makes a Good Oral Presentation?

Great speeches:

- Match the message to the audience.
- Match the content and the delivery to the purpose.
- Are delivered in a clear and engaging manner.



 **FEMA** 

Visual 4.4
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

At the beginning of this course you considered great speeches you have heard and what made them strong and effective. Typically, great speeches:

- Match the message to the audience.
- Match the content and delivery to the purpose.
- Are delivered in a clear and engaging manner.

Matching the message to the audience begins with analyzing the needs of the audience. The more you know about your audience, the better you can connect with them.


PRESENTATION PURPOSE



Visual 4.5

Understanding the Presentation Purpose

You will likely make two types of presentations:

- Informational
- Motivational



 **FEMA** 

Visual 4.5
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

What you say and how you say it also need to be consistent with the purpose of the presentation. It is likely that you will make two types of presentations:

- Informational
- Motivational

Often, presentations will have elements of both types but will be primarily aimed at one purpose or the other. The quickest way to determine which type is appropriate is to ask yourself this question: Am I relaying facts or shaping opinions?

Informational presentations:

- Transmit specific knowledge.
- Present information directly or through explanation.
- Feature statistics or supporting research.
- Present ideas in logical sequence.

For example, if asked to provide fire evacuation guidance to the occupants of a residential complex, you would make an informational presentation.

Motivational presentations:

- Create awareness, change attitudes, or garner support.
- Use concrete language to communicate abstract points.
- Use vivid and interesting language.

For example, if you want to gain community support for a preparedness initiative, you would make a motivational presentation, or one with both informational and motivational elements.


PRESENTATION PURPOSE


Visual 4.6

Informational Presentations

The information is usually delivered in this order:

- Introduce the topic.
- Provide explanation, directions, or descriptions.
- Restate or conclude the topic.



 **FEMA**

Visual 4.6
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Often, informational messages are delivered in the following order:

1. Introduce the topic.
2. Provide explanation, directions, or descriptions.
3. Restate or conclude the topic.


Example: Fire Evacuation Presentation

1. **Introduce** the importance of fire safety awareness.
2. **Discuss:**
 - Exit signs and locations
 - The importance of knowing where the closest exit is
 - Heeding fire alarms
 - The location of fire boxes or use of 911 to notify the fire department
 - Quick, calm, and orderly evacuation
 - Smoke inhalation and safety techniques
 - Caution in opening hot or closed doors
 - Caution against elevator use
3. **Restate** the importance of pre-identifying exits and being prepared to vacate quickly.

PRESENTATION PURPOSE


Visual 4.7

Motivational Presentations



Typically:

- Open with an attention-getting introduction.
- Create a tension or need for the message.
- Demonstrate the message can satisfy the need.
- Use visualization.
- Provide an action step.

 **FEMA** Visual 4.7
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Motivational presentations are delivered in a different manner than informational presentations. A common approach is to:

1. Open with an attention-getting introduction.
2. Create tension or a need for the message in the audience.
3. Demonstrate that your message can satisfy the need you identified.
4. Use visualization to magnify the appeal.
5. Provide the action step that you want the audience to take.

Tips for motivational presentations:

- Use the introduction to establish your credibility by demonstrating your familiarity with the topic.
- Use a vivid illustration to highlight the importance of the need or problem to the listeners.
- Create a need for your solution or idea by highlighting one or two benefits, rather than providing a laundry list.
- Show how your specific ideas will resolve the problem or meet the need you've identified.
- Tell the audience how, when, why, and what it can do to carry out your proposal.


ACTIVITY: INFORMATIONAL OR MOTIVATIONAL?

Visual 4.8

Activity: Informational or Motivational?

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if it is more informational or motivational.
- Be prepared to explain your answers.



The slide footer features the FEMA logo on the left, a blue and red decorative banner with a star in the center, and the text 'Visual 4.8 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)' on the right.

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to identify whether each presentation is more informational or motivational.

Time: 5 minutes

Instructions: Entire group:

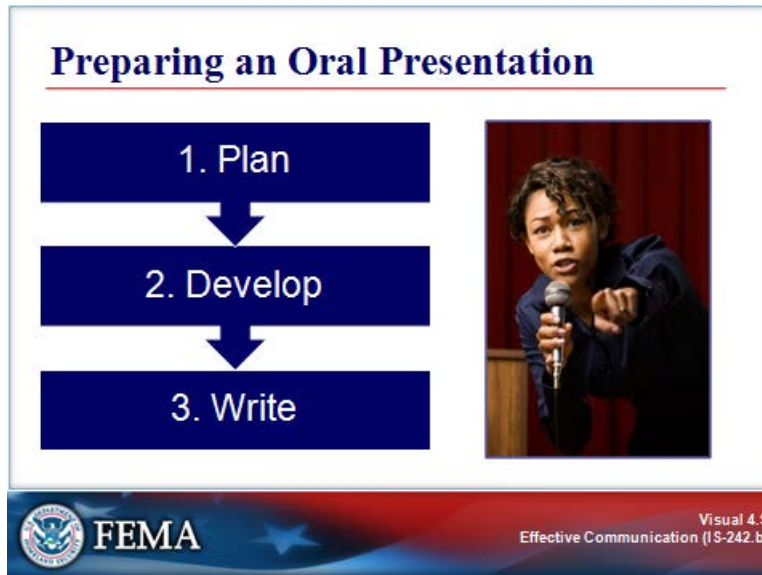
- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if it is more informational or motivational.
- Be prepared to explain your answers.

Statements:

- Tell the community about new traffic patterns during reconstruction of a ruptured main water line.
- Persuade community officials that mitigation is cost effective.
- Urge residents to prepare for emergencies by assembling an emergency kit and developing a family reunification plan.
- Congratulate emergency responders for their dedicated work during a disaster.
- Review flood mitigation techniques with county officials.

PREPARING AN ORAL PRESENTATION

Visual 4.9



Key Points

Preparing an oral presentation involves planning, development, and writing, as described below.

Planning the Presentation

- Determine the occasion and the goal of the presentation.
- Learn about the audience so that you can tailor your message accordingly. Consider group size, age range, gender ratio, common interests, and hot issues.
- Determine any specific needs of the audience, such as sensory disabilities, language proficiency, and cultural factors that may affect how they receive your message.
- Investigate the logistics:
 - Room size
 - Available equipment
 - Number of other speakers
 - Time constraints

Developing the Presentation

- Decide the type of speech that is appropriate—informational, motivational, or a combination.
- Outline the presentation:
 - Introduce the topic.
 - Clarify your opinion.
 - Identify key messages.
 - Establish a logical sequence.
- Be succinct. Plan to speak briefly and clearly.
- Identify any information or research required to support key points.

PREPARING AN ORAL PRESENTATION

Visual 4.9 (Continued)

Writing the Presentation

- **Introduction:** Establish your relationship with the audience and let them know what to expect. For example, one approach is to:
 - Introduce yourself and establish credibility.
 - Capture the essence of your message in a single topic sentence. Make your personal stance clear.
 - Get your audience's attention through relevant humor, provocative statements, startling facts, or rhetorical questions.

- **Discussion:** This section illustrates or proves your viewpoint.
 - Present your main points using statistics, details, and analogies.
 - To stir emotion in the audience, let your enthusiasm and sincerity show.
 - Use vivid language.
 - Personalize your message through anecdotes or examples.

- **Conclusion:** The end of a presentation should be as carefully orchestrated as the other sections. For example:
 - Tell the audience you are about to bring your remarks to a close.
 - Briefly summarize your main points.
 - Make a memorable parting statement.

It is a good idea to prepare notes with key points in advance so you can avoid reading text in front of the audience.

PREPARING AN ORAL PRESENTATION

Visual 4.10

Getting Ready To Deliver Your Speech

Develop a delivery strategy:

- How do you wish to appear?
- What tone is appropriate for the subject matter and audience?
- How can you use body language effectively?
- How long should you speak?

FEMA

Visual 4.10
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

The first step toward effective delivery is to develop a delivery strategy:

- How do you wish to appear?
- What tone is appropriate for the subject matter and audience?
- How can you use body language effectively?
- How long should you speak?

Effective communication requires practice to get it right. Practice your presentation repeatedly until you are completely familiar with the content. Rehearse the opening until you have it memorized. (This strategy will help you to relax.)

- Become comfortable with the pronunciation and enunciation of your material.
- Present your speech in front of a mirror to check your nonverbal behavior and identify any unconscious mannerisms.
 - Stand upright and relaxed.
 - Make eye contact with people in various parts of the room.
 - Try to gesture an average of twice in each sentence.
 - Turn your torso to face various parts of the audience.
 - Use volume, pitch, and emphasis to maximize your message.
 - Use pauses for impact before you begin and during speech transitions.
- Practice with a watch to check your pacing. Ensure that your message fits the allotted time.
- Get feedback as you practice:
 - Ask an observer to provide feedback to refine your delivery.
 - If possible, videotape or tape record your practice session.

PREPARING AN ORAL PRESENTATION

Visual 4.11

Preparing for Small-Group Presentations

Small-group presentations can be enhanced by the use of presentation media, such as:

- Charts,
- Whiteboards, and/or
- PowerPoint visuals.



 **FEMA**

Visual 4.11
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

There may be times when you will prepare an oral presentation for a small audience in a small meeting space—for example, in a room instead of an auditorium. In these circumstances, you may be able to use charts, PowerPoint visuals, or other media to enhance your presentation.

Use of presentation media may be especially effective for audience members who have access and functional needs because it allows them to use multiple senses to take in the information.

It is important to use presentation media effectively so they enhance rather than detract from your presentation.

The job aid on the next page provides tips for using presentation media.

Job Aid: Tips for Using Presentation Media

Preparing and Using Charts or Whiteboards

- **Use dark colors for text.** Black, blue, green, brown, and purple stand out and are easier to read than pastels. Alternate colors from line to line to separate ideas or topics. Water-based markers will not bleed through to the next page.
- **Highlight key points.** Use color, shapes, graphics, boxing, underlining, and pictures to focus attention on key points.
- **Use bold printing, at least 1 inch tall.** Smaller letters are hard to read.
- **Leave space between lines.** Lines of text that are too close together are hard to read.
- **Use the top 2/3 of the pad.** It can be hard to read text near the bottom of the page, especially for those in the back of the room.
- **Use as few words as possible.** Too much text can be distracting.
- **Check readability.** Walk to various parts of the room to see if people will be able to see and read the chart.
- **Don't block the audience's view.** Stand to one side so that you don't block people's view of what is being written.
- **When capturing audience ideas, record key words quickly and write exactly what they say.** This technique keeps the audience interested. Do not edit the content of what was said.


Using PowerPoint Visuals

- **Test the equipment.** Arrive early and test the equipment. Check the readability of your visuals for different locations within the room.
- **Have backups.** If you are using a projector, have an extra bulb on hand. Have a second set of PowerPoint files. Recognize that equipment can fail so also prepare to give your presentation without the hardware!
- **Dim lights as little as possible.** Dim the lights in the room (but don't make it too dark). If you can, darken the lights in the front of the room where the screen is located. Bring the lights back up to complete exercises or during discussions.
- **Position yourself.** Stand to either side (rather than in front) of the equipment and screen. Talk to the audience, not to the projected image or your computer.
- **Use motion.** Motion attracts people's eyes. Gesture to the screen when appropriate. Stand still when you want people to read the screen.
- **Pace yourself.** During the presentation, hold the image on the screen only until the audience has had time to grasp the meaning.
- **Control attention.** Turn the projector off or make the screen black when it is not being used.
- **Be confident of the technology.** Learn the keyboard "shortcuts" for the program you are using.

PREPARING AN ORAL PRESENTATION


Visual 4.12

Preparing for Interactive Presentations



Interactive presentations:

- Give you less control of content.
- Are more difficult to pre-script.
- Require planning responses for anticipated questions.

 **FEMA**

Visual 4.12
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Interactive presentations, such as media interviews and news conferences, differ from static presentations in that you are less in control of the content and flow, and it is difficult to pre-script them.

On the other hand, these very qualities can add interest and energize both you and the audience. You need to stay on your toes and be ready to respond in a calm, confident, and clear manner.

It is important to plan ahead by anticipating the types of questions that will be asked and practicing how you will respond.

The job aids on the next pages provide tips for media interviews and news conferences.

Job Aid: Tips for Media Interviews

General Tips for Radio, Podcasting, and TV Interviews

Radio/Podcasting

- Use your voice to create variety and interest—no monotones.
- Feel free to have notes of key points, facts, etc.
- Paint a word picture. Remember that old adage, “see it on the radio.” Use examples and stories to “illustrate” your point.
- Call-Ins: Don’t let angry or hostile callers fluster you. Always take the high road.
- Avoid ums, ahs, and “verbal nodding”—it sounds silly on radio.

Television

- Dress appropriately. Mostly that means dress conservatively, but there are exceptions. Avoid short skirts, white shirts, loud ties, and complicated patterns if you are trying to come across as credible. Solid, dark colors work well.
- For Digital and HD television, watch for imperfections in clothing and avoid bright colors. For Web broadcasts, brighter colors may make the image more appealing.
- Men—button coats if standing, unbutton if sitting.
- Studios are cold with the lights off, ovens when the lights are on. Dress in mid-weight clothing.
- Avoid shiny or dangly jewelry. Watch for jewelry banging against lavalier microphones.
- If you have the choice, choose contacts over glasses.
- If offered makeup, accept it. Men—5 o'clock shadows show on camera. Women—makeup should be only slightly heavier than normally worn.

Preparation

- Develop two or three key messages that you want to include in some way in your overall responses.
- Be sure your messages:
 - Are simple and easy to remember and say.
 - Emphasize the important point.
 - Tell people something new, something they had not thought about.
 - Articulate the need to take action, and provide a solution.
- Anticipate questions and prepare answers ahead of time. It’s important to stay on message during the entire interview.

Lesson 4. Preparing for Oral Presentations

Job Aid: Tips for Media Interviews (Continued)

Nonverbal Communication

- Eye contact:** Look at the reporter, not the camera. Avoid looking down. Avoid rolling your eyes or looking up.
- Voice:** Speak clearly and modulate your voice by varying tone and volume. Slow down for emphasis when making important points.
- Expression:** Appear attentive. Show emotion as appropriate (sincerity). Remember that the camera is always on. Make sure your facial expression is conveying the right message.
- Body position:** Stand straight and align your body with the interviewer.
- Gestures:** Use natural, but not “big” gestures. Keep your hands away from your face; do not cross your arms, raise your eyebrows, or shrug your shoulders. Avoid jerky or sudden movements.
- Movement:** If standing, do not lock your knees, sway, bounce, or jingle jewelry or change in pockets. If sitting, don’t jiggle legs, or spin or rock in the chair. Sit on your coat tail to keep your jacket from riding up.

Forming Your Responses

DO:

- Listen before you respond.
- Know what you want to say and repeat your key message at every opportunity.
- Use language that everyone will understand. Use examples and analogies to help explain difficult concepts.
- Keep your answers short.
- Be positive, yet realistic. Turn a negative question around and answer it in the positive.
- Show compassion and empathy, as appropriate.
- Use transitional phrases to bring the discussion back to your message, such as “What is most important is,” “What we should focus on is,” “What the public should know is,” or “The point (or goal) is.”
- Whenever possible, summarize your key points at the end of the interview and direct the audience to your Web site or social networking page for updates.

DON'T:

- Don't use jargon or “insider” terms.
- Don't use fillers such as “um,” “er,” or “you know.”
- Don't speculate or discuss hypothetical situations.
- Don't respond for other agencies.
- Don't use glib or negative language.
- Don't say anything “off the record.”
- Don't say anything you wouldn't want to see in the news media.
- Don't say “No Comment.”

Lesson 4. Preparing for Oral Presentations

Job Aid: Tips for News Conferences

Location, Access, and Egress

- Have a backup plan in case weather or other events make the location impractical.
- Provide speakers clear access and egress without having to pass through reporters. (If speakers do not have a clear exit, the media will continue to ask questions.)

“Sound” Issues

- Try to minimize background noise so speakers can be heard clearly.
- If at all possible, select a place for your news conference where external noise can be reduced or eliminated. Sounds from heavy machinery, airplanes, trains, or other sources can be distracting to the public who may need to hear the information you are sending out. Occasionally these noises can be so loud as to entirely drown out what is being said by the speaker.
- If you are inside a building, consider the “echo” factor.
- Have an audio “mult box.” This device allows just one microphone to be placed in front of the speaker, eliminating a microphone “tree” and providing clearer audio.
- Make sure to get your own recording of the news conference for transcription and possible legal issues.

Camera Issues

- Make sure that the cameras have a clear line of sight to the speakers.
- Try to set up in an area where the cameras will be at the same level as the speakers.
 - When the camera is shooting down from a position of higher elevation, the image tends to diminish the speaker and the message being presented.
 - When the camera is shooting up from a position of lower elevation, the image tends to place the speaker in a position of greater authority—which is not recommended.

Security Issues

A location filled with cameras and various officials about to make a statement can be an opportunity for someone who may want to cause a disturbance or promote an “alternative” viewpoint. Also, media satellite/live trucks contain a considerable amount of high-value equipment.


- Security should be provided both for members of the media and for the news conference participants. Often local law enforcement may offer to assist in providing security.
- Security staffing should be visible but not intrusive, and can be stationed near where the news conference will take place or possibly out by the news media satellite/live trucks.



PREPARING AN ORAL PRESENTATION

Visual 4.13

Engaging Your Audience

- **Face the audience and appear attentive.**
- **Avoid reading.**
- **Move out from behind the podium.**
- **Move around the front of the room.**
- **Make eye contact.**



 **FEMA**  Visual 4.13
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Effective presentation is much more than just presenting your ideas or delivering a speech. It is about skillful communication and relating to the audience (whether a few people or a large gathering).

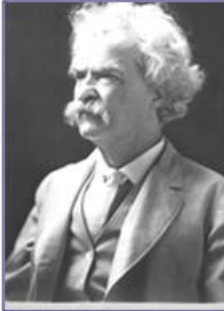
- Face the audience and maintain an attentive stance.
- Avoid reading to the group. Simple notes can help you avoid reading from a prepared script.
- Come out from behind the podium, minimizing barriers between you and the audience.
- Don't stand in a fixed position. Move around to keep the audience engaged and energized. Draw people in by moving toward them. Remember: If you fidget, then everyone will sense your discomfort.
- Make eye contact and avoid talking with your back toward the group.


CONTROLLING YOUR NERVES

Visual 4.14

Controlling Your Nerves

Mark Twain said:
“There are two types of speakers. Those who get nervous and those who are liars.”



 **FEMA**

Visual 4.14
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Mark Twain said, “There are two types of speakers. Those who get nervous and those who are liars.”

Speech anxiety is the single most common social anxiety in the United States. The effect can range from simple nervousness to a degree that makes the speaker physically ill.

How do you feel when you learn that you must present a speech? To analyze your level of speech anxiety, complete the self-assessment activity on the next page.

ACTIVITY: SPEECH ANXIETY SELF-ASSESSMENT

Visual 4.15

Activity: Speech Anxiety Self-Assessment

Instructions: Working individually:

- Review the Speech Anxiety Self-Assessment.
- Identify your own concerns in each area.

FEMA

Visual 4.15
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to analyze how you typically feel when you learn you must present a speech.

Time: 10 minutes

Instructions:

- Review the Speech Anxiety Self-Assessment.
- Identify your own concerns in each area.

Speech Anxiety Self-Assessment

Symptoms: Before I have to give a speech, I experience:

- No symptoms of anxiety.
- Tightness in my chest.
- Dry mouth.
- Clammy palms.
- Stomach pain or nausea.
- Shortness of breath.
- Other _____

Level of Anxiety: Rate your level of anxiety on the following scale:

0 No anxiety	1 Simple Nervousness	2 Recurring Worry	3 Constant Anxiety	4 Overwhelming Fear	5 Physical Illness
------------------------	-----------------------------------	--------------------------------	---------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------------------

Anxiety Triggers: My level of anxiety increases with:

- Lack of familiarity with the topic.
- Size of the audience.
- Use of microphones.
- Existence of camera equipment.
- Negative attitude of the audience.
- Power or seniority of the audience.
- Expectation that I will have to answer questions “off the cuff.”

Other Sources of Anxiety: My anxiety relates to:


- General lack of self-confidence.
- Body image.
- Tendency toward occasional mispronunciations.
- Other _____



CONTROLLING YOUR NERVES

Visual 4.16

Gaining Control

- Prepare ahead of time.
- Practice and visualize the presentation.
- Connect with the audience first.
- Convert nervousness to positive energy.
- Maintain a sense of humor.
- Realize the audience wants you to succeed.
- Know it is OK to pause and gather your thoughts.



 **FEMA** 

Visual 4.16
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Whatever the sources of your anxiety, there are many steps that you can take to reduce nervousness and gain control of your presentation. Most presenters control their nerves by:

- Preparing ahead of time.
- Practicing and visualizing the presentation.
- Connecting with the audience before starting the presentation.
- Converting the nervousness into positive energy.
- Maintaining a sense of humor.
- Knowing that there is no such thing as a perfect presentation.
- Realizing that audiences want the presenter to succeed.
- Knowing it is okay to pause to gather thoughts.

The job aid on the next page provides additional tips for controlling your nerves.

Lesson 4. Preparing for Oral Presentations

Job Aid: Tips for Controlling Your Nerves

Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know your audience.• Preview the venue, if possible.• Do your research and know your facts.• Consider the emotional issues of your message.• Anticipate the questions you may be asked and prepare answers.
Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present the speech aloud, to yourself, until it is completely familiar.• Read the speech in front of a mirror and ensure that your body language aids your message.• Seize all opportunities to speak aloud so that you become more comfortable (e.g., ask questions in meetings, join Toastmasters or another public-speaking group, speak to small friendly groups, present slides to your family, or teach a course).
Acceptance and Relaxation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accept your nervousness as normal.• Accept that you may misspeak during your presentation and plan to correct yourself immediately and smoothly.• Use relaxation techniques, such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Stretching.○ Muscle tensing and relaxing.○ Deep breathing.○ Body alignment.○ Consciously choosing to let go of tension.○ Visualizing an effective presentation.


ACTIVITY: ORAL PRESENTATIONS REVIEW

Visual 4.17

Activity: Oral Presentations Review

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if it is true or false.
- Be prepared to explain your answers.



The slide footer features the FEMA logo on the left, a blue star in the center, and the text 'Visual 4.17 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)' on the right.

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to review the information you have learned about preparing for oral presentations.

Time: 5 minutes

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if it is true or false.
- Be prepared to explain your answers.

Statements:

- For most presentations, the makeup of your audience should not affect the content or manner of delivery.
- Most presentations are strictly informational or motivational, seldom both.
- Practicing is an essential part of preparing to deliver an effective oral presentation and controlling your nerves.
- To engage the audience, it is better to move around in the available space rather than remain behind a podium.


POST-COURSE ACTIVITY: PREPARE AND DELIVER A BRIEFING

Visual 4.18

Post-Course Activity: Prepare & Deliver a Briefing

Instructions:

- Prepare a briefing or other oral presentation using the provided worksheet.
- Deliver the presentation to a friend or colleague. Have your listener record feedback on the provided observer checklist.
- Review the feedback. Identify strengths and areas for improvement.



The slide footer features the FEMA logo on the left, a blue star in the center, and the text 'Visual 4.18 Effective Communication (IS-242.b)' on the right.

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to practice preparing and delivering a briefing or other oral presentation.

Instructions:

- Prepare a briefing or other oral presentation using the worksheet on the next page. You may choose to use a regular work-related responsibility or event as the basis of your presentation, or you may wish to use this activity as a practice opportunity.
- Deliver the presentation. Ask a friend or colleague to observe the presentation and give you feedback using the provided checklist.
- Review the observer's feedback. Identify strengths and needed improvements, and develop strategies for improvement.

Lesson 4. Preparing for Oral Presentations

Job Aid: Presentation Activity Worksheet

Plan the Presentation:

Presentation topic:

Occasion/event and goal:

Audience (size, makeup, characteristics):

How will the characteristics or needs of your audience impact the content of your presentation?

How will the characteristics or needs of your audience impact your delivery?

Logistics:

- Room size
- Available equipment
- Other speakers
- Time constraints

Develop the Presentation:

Type of presentation:

- Informational
- Motivational
- Combination

Outline the presentation, including key points for the introduction, key messages, and sequence of ideas.

Lesson 4. Preparing for Oral Presentations

Job Aid: Presentation Activity Worksheet (Continued)

Develop the Presentation (Continued):

What information, research, or experts are needed to support your message?

Write the Presentation:

Develop the introduction, discussion, and conclusion.

Get Ready To Deliver the Presentation:

- Practice delivering the presentation aloud, using a mirror if possible.
- Record your practice sessions, critically review your performance, and identify needed improvements.
- Use personal strategies to control your nerves, as needed.
- Continue practicing!

Deliver Your Presentation:

Ask a friend or colleague to observe your presentation and provide feedback using the provided checklist.

Identify Strategies for Improving Your Presentation Skills:

After your presentation, review the observer's feedback and summarize below:

Strengths:

Areas for Improvement:

Strategies for Improving Presentation Skills:

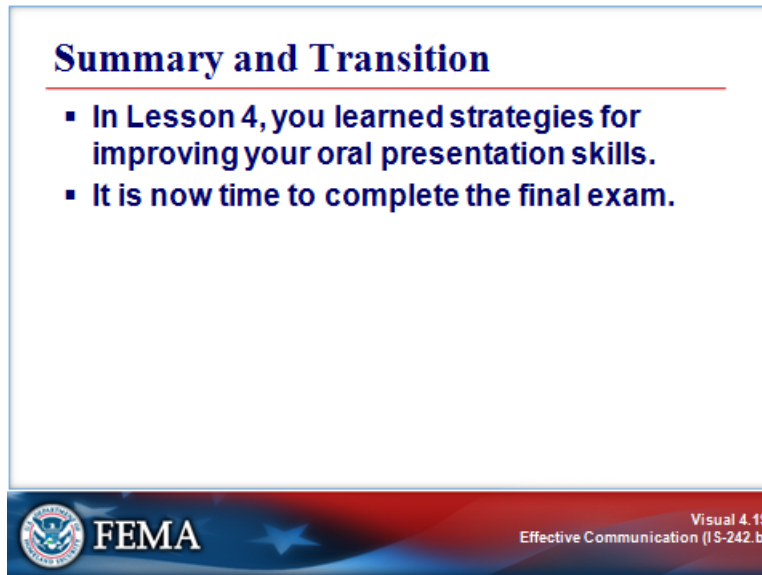
Lesson 4. Preparing for Oral Presentations

Job Aid: Observer Checklist

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Nonverbal Communication			
Eye contact with audience			
Body language—posture			
Facial expression			
Natural, spontaneous gestures			
Body control (no fidgeting, unconscious mannerisms)			
Body language reinforces the message (no mixed messages)			
Suggestions:			
Use of Voice			
Vocal intonation (pitch, tone, inflection)			
Volume, projection			
Rhythm, timing (e.g., effective use of pace, silence, pauses)			
Avoids fillers (er, um, like)			
Suggestions:			
Engaging the Audience			
Response to audience's nonverbal cues			
Appropriate use of:			
• Paraphrasing			
• Open-ended questions			
• Response to questions (not defensive)			
• Positioning, movement (e.g., doesn't stay behind podium)			
Suggestions:			
Delivery			
Clear and concise language and enunciation			
Enthusiasm			
Use of techniques to engage the audience			
Suggestions:			

SUMMARY AND TRANSITION

Visual 4.19



Key Points

This lesson has presented strategies for improving your oral presentation skills. You should now be able to:

- Identify strategies for conducting effective oral presentations.
- Identify your own anxiety about public speaking and take steps to reduce your anxiety.
- Prepare and deliver an oral presentation in a manner that effectively delivers the message and meets the needs of the target audience.
- Identify personal action steps to improve your oral presentation skills.

It is now time to complete the final exam.


FINAL EXAM

Visual 4.20

Final Exam

Instructions:

- Take a few moments to review your Student Manual and identify any questions.
- Make sure that you get all of your questions answered prior to taking the final exam.
- You must take your test online at:
<http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.aspx>
- You may refer to your Student Manual when completing this test.



FEMA

Visual 4.20
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Key Points

Instructions:

1. Take a few moments to review your Student Manual and identify any questions.
2. Make sure that you get all of your questions answered prior to taking the final exam.
3. You must submit your test online, and upon successful completion will receive an email message with a link to your electronic course completion certificate.
4. Go to: <http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.aspx> and click on the link for IS-242.b
5. Click on “Take Final Exam”
6. When taking the exam . . .
 - Read each item carefully.
 - Select your answer on the test.
 - Check your work, then complete the course registration form on the last page of the online examination.

You may refer to your Student Manual when completing this test.