

# Silver Linings

BHSC Webinar

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**L.B. Sandy Rock, MD, MPH**

Risk Communication

HPMC Occupational Medical Services, Hanford

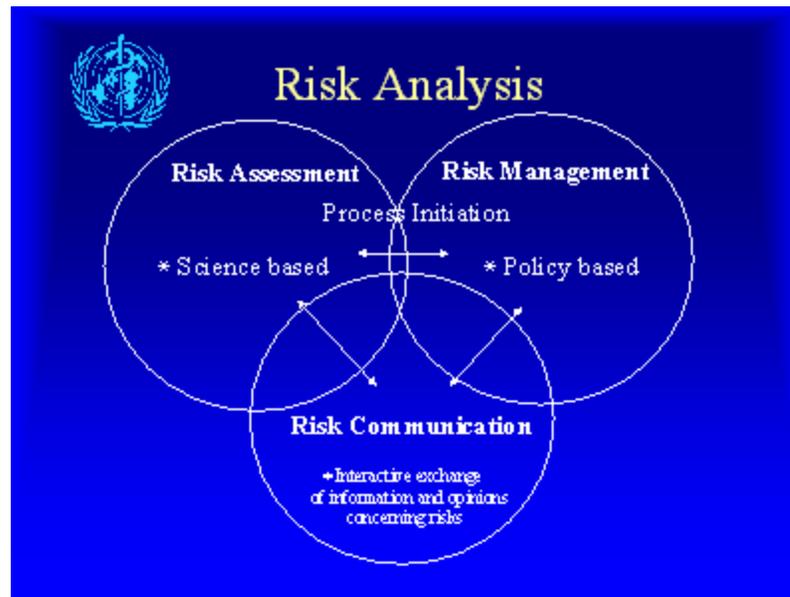
## SILVER LININGS WITHIN A TEDIOUS PROCESS

Spin-offs from the Hanford Beryllium Corrective Action  
Plan

A group discussion, lead and facilitated by  
Doctor Sandy Rock

# What Is Risk Communication?

- [The application of] a research-based set of principles that foster an effective means of exchanging views about [workplace] hazards.



# Risk Communication Compliance

- Integrated Safety Management System (ISMS)
- Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA)
- ISO Environmental Management Standards
- CERCLA or Superfund
- Hanford Chronic Beryllium Disease Prevention Program (CBDPP)
- Beryllium Corrective Action Plan (BeCAP)

**It's the right thing to do.**

# What Personal Factors Determine Our Worldviews?

- Race
- Age
- Geographic Location
- Friends
- Education
- Parenthood/Marriage
- Health
- Media
- Gender
- Culture
- Family (Origin and Creation)
- Religion
- Job Title / Position
- Income (SES)
- Military
- Hobbies

# What Hazard Characteristics Influence Risk Perception?

Factors	More Acceptable	Less Acceptable
Voluntariness	Voluntary	Involuntary
Level of Control	Within Control	Out of Your Control
Equity (fairness)	Fair	Unfair
Level of Trust	Trustworthy Source	Untrustworthy Source
Catastrophic Potential	Not Catastrophic	Catastrophic
Distribution of Benefits	Benefits Equal	Benefits Unequal
Level of Familiarity	Familiar	Unfamiliar
Moral relevance	Ethical	Unethical
Origin	Natural	Artificial (“human” made)
Level of Understanding	Easy to Understand	Hard to Understand
Detection Potential	Detectable	Undetectable

# How to Reach an Understanding



# Three-Part Message



# I Speak, Therefore I Communicate

## I Hear, Therefore I Listen

### I Speak, Therefore I Communicate

- Communication is a learned skill

### I Hear, Therefore I Listen

- Hearing is a biological function
- We think 4 times faster than the speaker is speaking
- Active listening is a learned skill



# How Can We Carry Through with the Three-Part Message?

- Partner with credible others (who are viewed as competent, committed, and caring)
- Together, brainstorm options to resolve issue or come to an understanding
- Together, evaluate the options
- Select and implement a solution

1. Actively listen

2. Communicate using the three-part message

3. Carry through on part 3 of three-part message



# What Does It Take to Be an Effective Risk Communicator?

- Trust and credibility are the most important factors in communicating risk
- Trust and credibility are built upon:
  - Empathy
  - Honesty
  - Competence
  - Commitment

# What Are Some Risk Communication Obstacles?

Obstacles	Solutions
Management not supportive	
Takes too much time, costs too much money	
Don't see immediate results	
Varying attitudes about the risk itself	
Fall back into old habits	

# “What we have here\* ....”

Mike McCawley (to I.H.'s and management): “If you are [requiring workers to use] PPE, you are failing at your job.”

Sandy Rock (to anyone responsible to and for workers): “If you are interacting with hazardous materials workers and NOT recognizing the variation in personal worldviews and perceived hazard characteristics, you are failing to understand worker concerns. And you are failing to communicate.”

\*“....is a failure to communicate...”

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Replete with **uncertainty** at every step along the way, beryllium disease is challenging at best for both healthcare professionals and affected individuals. Questions about exposure, screening, testing, sensitization, lung disease—occurrence and progression, and compensation programs are often met with an **“I don’t know” or vague or equivocal answers**. Nothing ratchets up **anxiety** more than uncertainty<sup>i</sup>, and this has never been more evident than during the process of developing the products mandated in the Hanford Beryllium Corrective Action Plan. This process is the quintessential example of scenarios in which **excellent risk communication skills are paramount**.

- Hanford Beryllium Corrective Action Plan (BeCAP) is **meant to improve** (“world class;” “best in class”) the Chronic Beryllium Disease Prevention Program at the Site.
- **Multiple stakeholders** were and are involved in developing the plan—line item by line item—and in participating in the relevant “product teams” that evolved from the final plan.
- Many **different points of view** have been expressed throughout the process (still ongoing), thus making progress both frustrating and tiring.
- Positive aspects of this process have “spun off” over the past three years.
  - Examples:
    - Behavioral Commitments (similar to Ground Rules)
    - Risk Communication training *per se*
    - Education and awareness about CBD of both on- and off-Site personnel
- **What principles of Risk Communication have been employed and/or highlighted throughout this process (and in discussing beryllium disease in general), how have they been used by those engaged in the process, and how could they be improved?**

In a one- to two-hour session, these and other examples of need for and application of Risk Communication principles will be **presented for discussion**.

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<sup>i</sup> Miller, Jeffrey: The Psychosocial Effects of Beryllium Sensitization and Chronic Beryllium Diseases

# Your input....

- Comment 1
- Comment 2
- Comment 3
- Etc.....